

THE HARSH REALITIES OF “ACTING BLACK”: HOW AFRICAN-AMERICAN POLICY  
DEBATERS NEGOTIATE REPRESENTATION THROUGH RACIAL PERFORMANCE  
AND STYLE

by

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(Under the Direction of CHRISTINE HAROLD)

ABSTRACT

Public discourse about education reform, particularly that which revolves around the black/white achievement gap, requires the use of race, class, and gender imagery that is intelligible to the general public. This project interrogates the use of social stereotypes in the news media and educational contexts and the resistance to such stereotypes by black youths. To investigate the relationship between racial stereotyping, representation, and identity performance, I utilize ideological criticism as the rhetorical method. I have chosen academic debate, at the high school and college level, as a localized example of social stereotyping in educational contexts. Current efforts within the policy debate community to increase diversity and inclusion offers an opportunity to study the rhetorical strategies engaged in by varying social actors in an educational context. I conclude that negative social stereotyping is embedded in reform efforts targeted at black youths, and that these same students develop diverse methods of performance, specifically through the use of black cultural styles, to combat such stereotyping.

INDEX WORDS: Race, Representation, Performance, Academic Debate, Resistance, News Media, Rap Music, Acting White

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## Chapter One

### Representation and the Performance of Blackness:

#### The Rhetorical Dimensions of Black “Underachievement”

*Ladies and gentleman, these people set – they opened the doors, they gave us the right, and today, ladies and gentleman, in our cities and public schools we have 50% drop out. In our own neighborhood, we have men in prison...The lower economic and lower middle economic people are not holding their end in this deal. In the neighborhood that most of us grew up in, parenting is not going on. In the old days, you couldn't hooky school because every drawn shade was an eye. And before your mother got off the bus and to the house, she knew exactly where you had gone, who had gone into the house, and where you got on whatever you had on and where you got it from. Parents don't know that today.*

*Bill Cosby  
“Poundcake” (2003)*

As we near the end of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, American education is undergoing decisive changes. As other nations around the world have strengthened the public education offered to their youths, Western nations, including the United States and Great Britain, are experiencing a sharp decline in the effectiveness of their public education systems.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, it is the persistent framing of poor and minority populations as most productive of this decline that seems to drive such feelings of discontent. For as we are told over and over again by the news media, political pundits, candidates, politicians, and experts, to be poor and of color in the United States exponentially increases one's chances of failing within the public education system. Images of young, black and Hispanic youths in failing inner city schools resound through the American social imagination. And, these youths become representative of a “lost generation,” defying all social and institutional attempts at saving them. Bill Cosby's 2003 “Poundcake” speech, from which I quote at the beginning of this chapter, is one such example of the rhetoric of educational failure that surrounds economically disenfranchised youths of color.



Delivered on the anniversary of the 1954 *Brown vs. the Topeka, Kansas Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, Cosby's speech has had resounding consequences for the contemporary representation of black youths.<sup>2</sup> Cosby's remarks produced a maelstrom within the news media, creating a public frenzy around the issue. Cosby was interviewed, and re-interviewed. Important black public intellectuals like Cornel West and Michael Eric Dyson weighed in on the issue. Suffice it to say, everyone had an opinion.

As you read the excerpt from Cosby that opens this chapter, it is important to note that he never mentions race, although blackness clearly haunts the address. One envisions the "kind" of people Cosby's rhetoric represents through the use of rhetorical tropes like "prison" and bad parenting which signify upon images of young, poor Blacks. The audience for Cosby's remarks is racially mixed, and news accounts of the speech note laughter and applause from the audience. So his remarks were intelligible and well-received across racial lines. Cosby's speech is representative of a strengthening public discourse from within the black middle and upper classes that reproduces and rearticulates ideologies of race, class, and gender that have been traditionally used within the white mainstream.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, the black middle and upper classes finds themselves ideologically allied with more conservative representation of minorities and the poor. So inner city youths of color have become the American scapegoat for the social, political and economic difficulties the nation faces. For don't at risk black youths become drug users and sellers, welfare mothers, thugs, gangsters, and all around criminals?

Within public discourse about black students in particular, the state of disparity within public education across race, ethnic, and class lines has achieved a spot on the American public agenda, often referred to as the "black/ white achievement gap."<sup>4</sup> Many factors are said to contribute to the achievement gap between black and white students.<sup>5</sup> According to both

academic literature and popular press portrayals, black students face achievement difficulties because of cultural differences between black and white culture, lack of parental support, and structural and institutional barriers, including teacher and administrator attitudes and behaviors.<sup>6</sup> Thus, a great deal of academic scholarship and public discourse has been targeted at remedying the “achievement gap.”<sup>7</sup>

The rising public concern for a lagging educational system has resulted in the manifestation of public discourse and governmental action that revolves around reforms that increase both standards and accountability.<sup>8</sup> Educational leadership scholar Reginald Green notes that “the current reform agenda is focused on establishing academic standards for students and identifying assessment measures to determine the extent to which those standards are met.”<sup>9</sup> The standards and accountability movement supports the use of quantitative data taken from “high stakes” exams designed to universalize both the school experience and the parameters defining educational success.<sup>10</sup>

The attempts at educational reform are not limited to institutional actors such as the local, state, and federal governments. Non-profit organizations dedicated to alleviating the black/white achievement gap have also proliferated. One such organization, the Urban Debate League, claims that “Urban Debate Leagues have proven to increase literacy scores by 25%, to improve grade-point averages by 8 to 10%, to achieve high school graduation rates of nearly 100%, and to produce college matriculation rates of 71 to 91%.” The UDL program is housed in over fourteen American cities and targets inner city youths of color to increase their access to debate training. Such training of students defined as “at risk” is designed to offset the negative statistics associated with black educational achievement. The program has been fairly successful and has received wide scale media attention. The success of the program has also generated renewed

interest amongst college debate programs in increasing direct efforts at recruitment of racial and ethnic minorities. The UDL program creates a substantial pool of racial minorities with debate training coming out of high school, that college debate directors may tap to diversify their own teams. The debate community serves as a microcosm of the broader educational space within which racial ideologies are operating. It is a space in which academic achievement is performed according to the intelligibility of one's race, gender, class, and sexuality. As policy debate is intellectually rigorous and has historically been closed to those marked by social difference, it offers a unique opportunity to engage the impact of desegregation and diversification of American education. How are black students integrated into a competitive educational community from which they have traditionally been excluded? How are they represented in public and media discourse about their participation, and how do they rhetorically respond to such representations? If racial ideology is perpetuated within discourse through the stereotype, then mapping the intelligibility of the stereotype within public discourse and the attempts to resist such intelligibility is a critical tool in the battle to end racial domination.

Education theorist Ludwig Pongratz argues that the testing focus in the standards and accountability movement is “probably the most effective means of realizing disciplinary procedures.”<sup>11</sup> He argues further that the contemporary “reformist drive” sweeping western nations is a tool designed to replicate normative practices, values, beliefs and behaviors consistent with the broader society. In other words, building on the work of Michel Foucault, Pongratz argues that the educational system, including reform efforts, function as a disciplinary “apparatus” that shapes and molds social bodies into normalized social systems.<sup>12</sup> The disciplinary character of modern education systems do not operate through institutional control, but instead through the positioning of social bodies to engage in self-control, an internalization

of the discourse of institutional power. Pongratz notes that “in this way, it becomes possible to integrate school pupils into the school’s institutional framework more effectively than ever before.”<sup>13</sup> Acclaimed French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’ theory of habitus is useful here. For Bourdieu, habitus represents the incorporation of the “social into the corporeal.”<sup>14</sup> Gender theorist Terry Lovell argues “Through habitus, social norms are incorporated in the body of the individual subject.”<sup>15</sup> An institution, like those attached to public education in the U.S. “can only be efficacious if it is objectified in bodies in the form of durable dispositions that recognize and comply with the specific demands of a given institutional area of activity.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, the disciplinary character of the school system only functions in so much as disciplinary parameters can be internalized by the members of a social body.

What is missing from the study of education reform and the black/white “achievement gap” is an analysis of the discursive construction of racial “images and stereotypes with which” the public is “confronted.”<sup>17</sup> Public discourse about education reform, particularly that which revolves around the black/ white achievement gap, requires the use of race, class, and gender imagery that is intelligible to the general public. In essence, from experts to politicians to the news media, public representations of black underachievement and reform efforts depend on the versatility of social and cultural stereotypes consistent with the argumentative structures and social ideologies that make rhetorical efforts at reform intelligible. Education reform engages in a discourse of “paradigm shift.”<sup>18</sup> In essence there is a discursive consistency amongst education reform proponents for characterizing reform efforts as a change in perspective from previous values and beliefs about how best to educate America’s youth. Philosophy of education scholar Jeff Stickney argues that scholars interested in the production of education reform discourse should be concerned with “how a change of perception is to be brought about or secured.”<sup>19</sup> In

other words, Stickney argues that the discourse supporting educational reform functions to discipline educators into a compliance that belies any attempt to critique and engage the viability of the reform effort to the specific contexts educators find themselves working within.<sup>20</sup> While Stickney is interested in engaging such discourse for the purpose of furthering theoretical scholarship on curriculum development, his study raises the question of how the public discourse surrounding education reform may function to discipline its differently situated stakeholders.

Child and youth studies scholar Linda Graham's 2007 essay seeks to engage in a rhetorical consideration of education reform within Australian public deliberation.<sup>21</sup> Specifically, her study seeks to read "social texts" that function "to (re)secure existing relations of power" in Australian education reform.<sup>22</sup> She analyzes the discourse of education reform as a "strategic rhetoric" designed to "privilege dominant perspectives."<sup>23</sup> Such a "strategic rhetoric" functions to "naturalize traditional and privileged contemporary cultural norms as the 'proper' way of being in the schooling context."<sup>24</sup> Education sociologist David Gillborn also seeks out the "strategic rhetoric" of education reform.<sup>25</sup> His analysis focuses on British government documents to analyze the rhetorical strategies for arguing in support of education reforms. Gillborn takes a particular interest in the rhetorical construction of the racial inequalities associated with minority academic achievement in public education institutions. Making a similar argument to Graham's, Gillborn also notes that the rhetorical construction of education reform discourse functions to maintain white privilege and racial inequities.

Education administration scholar Julia Koppich engages in a rhetorical analysis of education reform rhetoric as well.<sup>26</sup> Yet, she is less interested in government discursive practice, and more interested in the rhetorical response of teacher professional organizations to government sponsored education reforms, specifically George W. Bush's 2002 No Child Left

Behind Act. Annegret Staiger, an anthropologist, engages in an analysis of a California school designed to foster vocational education amongst inner city, minority youths.<sup>27</sup> She found that teachers and other students viewed the “at risk” students as “unmotivated,” disrespectful, and as significant disciplinary problems.<sup>28</sup> Staiger notes that the students identified as “at-risk” in a school system are largely racial and ethnic minorities. Such a characterization negatively impacts teacher and administrator educational interactions with such students. She notes further that the “at-risk” students were well aware of the stereotypes associated with them and often internalized them, believing that they were true.<sup>29</sup> Through an analysis of the organizations’ discursive construction of the students, the normal practices of the educators, and student behavior, Staiger argues that racial inequities are often reproduced even within contexts designed to address such inequality. She argues that the school program targeted at “at risk” youths that she studied “itself inadvertently contributed to the production of racial stereotypes, in particular, the stereotype of blackness-as-intellectual-lack.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, Staiger is interested in the circulation of racial stereotypes within an education organization and the implications of that circulation on those racialized bodies constructed through the stereotype.

Each of these previous studies indicates a burgeoning area of interdisciplinary engagement between rhetorical criticism and the public discourse surrounding education. For as Dworkin and Roman note, at any given moment public discourse about education is “part of a contradictory bundle of assertions. Yet all are having real effects on education and on the language and conceptual apparatus we employ to think about its role in society.”<sup>31</sup>

So, within public discourse, how race is coded rhetorically in public deliberation is of critical importance in evaluating the efficacy of efforts to increase racial and ethnic diversity. We need knowledge of how rhetorical style in American public deliberation functions within a race,

class, and gender hierarchy. How is race signified in public deliberations? How does this signification impact efforts to create a more diverse or inclusive public sphere? How do language, social structures, practices and styles signify race? And, how does white privilege affect the deliberation process? These series of questions must inform our critical efforts at understanding the rhetoric of race, ethnicity and diversity in American education discourse. Racism is ever so much more subtle now than it has been in the past. It is this subtle nature of racism and white privilege that provide a cover for the normal, “everyday practices” that reproduce racial separations and social dominance.<sup>32</sup> We can only study these normal, everyday practices of subtle racism by studying localized examples of racial conflict.

The dependence on standards and accountability discourse is especially significant when attached to discussions of racial inequity in student academic performance.<sup>33</sup> In terms of the European context, Gillborn notes that such reform efforts have resulted in higher rates of minority academic underachievement.<sup>34</sup> Educational psychology scholar Jerome Taylor argues that the conditions are similar in the American context.<sup>35</sup> In America, this persistent problem within public education has been connected to the “black/ white achievement gap” mentioned above. The last two decades have indicated a measured decline in the academic achievement of black students in relation to white students in the U.S., particularly as measured by standardized testing measures. Reform efforts designed to offset the inequities in the educational experience of the poor and racial and ethnic minorities demonstrates a limited effectiveness in reversing the current underachievement trend.

Thus, America faces a grave difficulty in resolving this situation. We find it difficult to understand why such a situation exists in the first place. In essence, it is difficult to believe that the Civil Rights Movement and the passage of legal legislation to end segregation and

discriminatory practices, targeted at racial and ethnic minorities, did not permanently resolve the problem. Theoretically, all Americans have equal access to the tools that are necessary to lead a successful life with the full benefits of citizenship. The Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Movement ensured that racial and ethnic minorities and women achieved equality with white men and thus barriers to their successful participation in society had been removed. If equality has been achieved, and yet we find that the heretofore excluded populations are still unable to achieve the educational and economic heights of the American dream, then one must look to that population for the explanation rather than to American society in general.

“Acting White,” Representation and Performance: The Rise of Cultural Explanations of  
Black Underachievement

Rather than characterize black underachievement as an effect of systemic and social, race and class oppression, U.S. news media focuses on cultural explanations of the gap, including the “acting white” thesis. Black students are characterized as agents who choose not to participate in successful educational practices as an opposition to educational spaces marked and mediated by whiteness. Education scholars Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu coined the phrase “acting white” in their groundbreaking essay on low income black student failure in the public education system and it has become increasingly commonplace in news media vocabulary.<sup>36</sup> Fordham and Ogbu offer a qualitative analysis of a low achieving, majority black, high school in Washington, D.C. Their findings indicate that these students associate academic achievement in schools with whiteness. Education researcher Prudence Carter notes that according to Fordham and Ogbu's study, “black students equate speaking Standard English and other achievement oriented behaviors, such as studying hard and excelling in school, with whites.”<sup>37</sup> Tony Sewell adds “...listening to white music and putting on ‘airs’,” to this list.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, as a result of such



associations, according to “acting white” proponents, black students often develop oppositional identities that reject educational achievement. In other words, “to avoid being labeled as ‘white,’ these students succumb to peer pressure not to do well in school.”<sup>39</sup>

The “acting white” hypothesis has generated significant academic discussion, garnering both support and criticism.<sup>40</sup> Those who argue in support of the hypothesis note that cultural values and practices amongst low income black families, when performed in school settings, are a significant barrier to the educational success of black students.<sup>41</sup> Carla Monroe notes that such “scholars...hypothesize that Blacks, as a cultural entity, bear responsibility for their educational failure based on a collective ethos, as well as personal choices, which fail to value traditional avenues of success.”<sup>42</sup> The cultural norms that students develop at home and in their communities are framed as directly oppositional to the social norms of the broader society. Such differences are characterized as that which creates barriers to success.

Various education scholars have launched criticisms of the “acting white” thesis. As Carla O’Connor, Erin Horvat, and Amanda Lewis discuss, the proponents of the hypothesis “fail to contend substantively with (1) the theoretical unpacking of race as a social phenomenon; (2) the heterogeneity of the African American experience; and (3) the specifics of social context.”<sup>43</sup> Prudence Carter argues that none of the “acting white” studies can prove a necessary connection between “acting white” as a controlling social ideology and a rejection of schooling and academic achievement as representative of whiteness.<sup>44</sup> Through her research Carter found that students opposition to achievement practices were often a response to the race and class ideologies perpetuated by teachers and administrators. “Acting white,” she argues seems to be more about engaging in certain “acts” that have meaning within students’ social grouping and less about educational achievement.<sup>45</sup> The students in her study were often critical of the

stringent performative parameters that limited who could represent academic achievement and success as determined by those in charge. However, they did not necessarily define achievement in terms of whiteness, as much as they understood that those with institutional power portrayed achievement that way. Those critical of the “acting white” hypothesis also note that there is little statistical evidence to support that the “acting white” phenomenon is widespread across black communities in America.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the considerable academic criticism of the “acting white” hypothesis, it has become the most “popular claim” for explaining low achievement amongst inner city black students.<sup>47</sup> O’Connor, Horvat and Lewis note that the “acting white hypothesis” has received widespread public acceptance, becoming “a foregone conclusion, a taken-for-granted reality.”<sup>48</sup> They note further, that current public discussion of the hypothesis ignores the references to structural inequities in schools in Fordham and Ogbu’s original study.<sup>49</sup> Thus, “acting white” is characterized as a cultural problem within the black community that hampers the intellectual development of children in those communities.

There is no substantive analysis of the “acting white” phenomena within public discourse, nor any rhetorical analysis of black/ white achievement gap rhetoric in public argumentation. And yet, the public has responded to the “acting white” theory as largely explanatory of black underachievement. A rhetorical interrogation of this public discourse is critically needed. Beverly Tatum argues that rather than blaming the students for their opposition to school culture, we should be asking, “How did academic achievement become defined as exclusively White behavior? What is it about the curriculum and the wider culture that reinforces the notion that academic excellence is an exclusively white domain?”<sup>50</sup> Public discourse surrounding race, culture, and academic achievement may have critical implications to the

development and support of legislative policies, the focus of academic scholarship, the development of curriculum, the strategies of teachers, and the practices of individuals within various social institutions. Thus, the rhetorical analysis of the public discourse surrounding these issues across varying contexts might offer a critical intervention into the maintenance and production of contemporary racism.

The significance of the “acting white” hypothesis in American discourse is evidence of the changing nature of racism in contemporary American society. “Acting white” represents the agency by which racial bodies may choose to perform themselves based on ideological representations of race. In other words, the most significant result of the “acting white” hypothesis and other cultural explanations of the black/ white achievement gap is a strengthening of the general public’s understanding of culture as a clear referent in their reflection on the achievement gap. Such a shift in public discourse is an excellent example of the difference between modern racism and contemporary racism.

For contemporary scholars, race is no longer seen as merely biological. In other words, it is no longer seen as merely “of the body.” Instead, race is constructed according to social practice, belief, and values. Thus, race is no longer about biology, as much as it is about culture. Globalization theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that we have experienced a shift from biological explanations of race to cultural explanations for racial difference. They argue that the divisions of race are no longer binary, based in exclusion, opposition, or maintained through the construction of fixed boundaries: "Imperial racism or differential racism, integrates other with its order and then orchestrates those differences in a system of control. Fixed and biological notions of peoples thus tend to dissolve into a fluid and amorphous multitude, which is of course shot through with lines of conflict and antagonism, but none that appear as fixed and

eternal boundaries."<sup>51</sup> They note that difference, whether it be racial, ethnic, gendered, or sexual, is no longer rejected in favor of sameness, rather it is sought, accepted and embraced, as society moves away from biological to cultural explanations of racial difference. Racial difference no longer articulates itself within racial hierarchies, according to Hardt and Negri, instead race read as cultural difference exists along a plane of equality, each race equal to the other.<sup>52</sup> The shift away from biological explanations of race to cultural explanations of race has precipitated the weakening of racial binary oppositions and thus has changed the nature of race as a signifier.

According to the dominant public discourse, if race is no longer a biological construction, but is instead a cultural one, then the material conditions faced by racial minorities within U.S. society are more about failures of minority cultures than a statement about discrimination and oppression within the broader society. In other words, we can blame racial and ethnic minorities for their social and economic difficulties because cultural affiliation is a choice rather than an essential characteristic.

And yet, this shift from biological explanations of racial difference to cultural explanations still indicates a considerable dependence on the signifying body as critical to articulating racial difference. In other words, cultural explanations of difference remain dependent on the visual difference of racial bodies that are attached to cultural practices and result in the maintenance of racial ideologies bred out of biological explanations of race.

Philosopher Tamas Pataki writes:

The classical conceptions of race are incoherent, and the ideologies that incorporate them are false; both are generally repudiated in considered discussion today. But their shadows remain, and preserve some of their menace. Even where racism is conceived broadly to include enmity against cultural, national, and kindred groups, these categories may in

certain circumstances be treated as if they were classical racial ones: the enmities directed against these groups take on the conformations projected by racial conceptions.<sup>53</sup>

As Pataki argues, classical conceptions of race, which include the belief in fundamental biological differences between races, remains a critical narrative within contemporary racism. While biological explanations of racial difference seem to have waned, even cultural explanations are necessarily affected by the remnants of beliefs in the biological differences between races.

Or consider the relationship between culture and biology in another way. Professor of Philosophy Lawrence Blum argues that “new ways of talking about the very groups previously alleged to be biologically inferior have been used to exclude these groups or to sustain them in inferior positions. For example, these groups are thought to have inferior cultures, or to be wedded to ways of life allegedly inconsistent with some vision of a particular national culture.”<sup>54</sup> For Blum, society may no longer adhere to biological notions of difference, but instead produces new discourses by which to maintain “inferior positions” previously substantiated by biological difference. Those examples of inferiority that had been previously attached to biological difference are now explained by cultural affiliation. Whereas within classical conceptions of race, racial inferiority was represented as a state of nature, the result of “God’s Will,” cultural explanations of such inferiority is about individual choice. The racial minority becomes the active agent in their own subjugated status, for it is through their individual choices, guided by a misguided culture that produces racial inferiority.

While culture has become the politically correct means of targeting racial minorities as the active agents of their own disadvantage, the racial and ethnic body remains the signifying reference for cultural explanations of inferiority. Although, the biological, here read as the

internal structure of the human body, may no longer hold explanatory sway, race is still read as hereditary, signified through visual markers on and of the body. Certain bodies thus can be marked by cultural inferiority, but such markings remain necessarily, not tangentially, attached to certain kinds of bodies.

Particularly, I am interested in the speaking body of the other, that body that pollutes, or darkens the purity of the holistic social body. Post-structural education theorist John Warren describes schooling in terms of the institutional maintenance of purity.<sup>55</sup> Schools represent at their best, a pollutant and contaminant free environment, as critical to the educational and social maturation of student minds. Warren notes that "the body is perceptually rendered absent in an effort to center perceptual attention on the mind."<sup>56</sup> In other words, in the school environment the presence of the body is a social pollutant of the educational space. The body must be invisible in order to focus on the mind. The educational system attempts "to erase the impact of the body."<sup>57</sup> Warren suggests that bodies of color, in particular, exceed attempts to render them absent.<sup>58</sup>

For cultural theorists Homi Bhabha and Franz Fanon, the colored, or more specifically, the black body signifies a difference from white bodies that makes the colored body significantly more visible in majority white societies.<sup>59</sup> The black body represents dirt or a stain, or to use symbolic anthropologist Mary Douglas' language, a "pollutant," on and in the social body, one that must be controlled and contained. Color is written on the skin, encrusted on the "flesh" of the body at the "surface" level.<sup>60</sup> The Deleuzian metaphor of a body without organs is particularly useful here. For it is the flesh that signifies, not the internal processes of the body. And, yet the flesh signifies on internal processes of the biological body. The colored body signifies a biological difference, an inherent difference, from non-colored or white bodies. In other words, despite the fact that significant gains have been made in reducing the social belief in

the biological difference between the races, American public and social discourse tends toward that belief, while political correctness reduces the ways in which such beliefs can be expressed. Such an ambivalent stance results in the shading of the consistencies between all human bodies, resulting in a body without organs, where the surface level of the skin comes to (re)present biological difference.

The fact that bodies of color remain present despite the fact that they are supposed to be absent "is exactly what maintains white privilege."<sup>61</sup> Educational structures may or may not be directly racially discriminatory, "rather, they take the form of cultural values, methods of learning, styles of interaction, and other educational rituals that continually reinforce the culture of power."<sup>62</sup> In essence, Warren suggests that bodies of color represent a bodily contaminant that can only result in a systemically cycling psychosis as these bodies can never fully be rendered absent. Thus, if the body can never be rendered fully absent then it is exceedingly relevant to the racial signification process in educational spaces and public discourse about those spaces.

The speaking subject is a talking body. The body becomes critical in understanding and evaluating what the speaking subject says and what is said about the speaking subject. Thus, a rhetorical consideration of the representation and performance of black people in a majority white environment, must engage the body as rhetorical. Rhetoric and argumentation scholar Melanie McNaughton's essay, "Hard Cases: Prison Tattooing as Visual Argumentation," suggests that "Given daily contact with the bodies of others, understanding the ways that bodies argue visually is important to understanding the operations of rhetoric in our lives."<sup>63</sup> For McNaughton who is interested in visual argumentation through prison tattooing, the body as an integral site of rhetorical voice problematizes our current emphasis in the field of rhetoric toward ignoring the body in favor of a focus on verbal discourse. If the body speaks, whom does it speak

to and what might it be saying? McNaughton's study leads us toward theorizing the body as argumentative, and yet her study does not really look to the body as argument, as much as it looks to the style or the styling of the body as argument. Tattoos are an overlay on the surface of the body, and while certainly difficult and painful to cover or remove, they simply cover the body and are not of the body. While tattooing may represent and signify violence to the average onlooker, according to McNaughton, that violence is indicative of a cultural affiliation and not an inherent state of that marked body. In other words, the tattoo wearer could signify other than a violent subjectivity were the tattoo not there. Thus, tattooing might still clearly fit under the more traditional rubric of style or performance.

Despite these limitations, McNaughton's essay leads rhetoricians toward asking the question of whether or not the body signifies within and through verbal, rhetorical communication and if so how might we begin to read and theorize the speaking body. McNaughton's essay reads the tattooing of bodies through the theoretical vocabulary of argumentation theory, intent on justifying such rhetoric as "operating by way of claims supported by evidence and reasoning."<sup>64</sup> However, a focus on the body per se may demonstrate a greater difficulty than McNaughton's essay implies. As prison tattoos are overlaid on the skin in distinctive patterns chosen by the wearer, its function as visual argument is more cleanly interpreted by onlookers. Yet, I seek to interrogate the manner in which racialized bodies supplement verbal argument in public discourse. Such a supplement will not be cleanly identifiable as engaging in "claims supported by evidence and reasoning."<sup>65</sup> Instead, an analysis of the racialized body might very well depend on a level of irrationality and subconscious reasoning, as racism in signification is hardly ever completely rational. In this project, I theorize the racialized body as speakerly, particularly within interracial public interactions. I read the



body, both its social representation and its performance, as critically implicated within any rhetorical situation, and as such, I argue that it must read out of the visual surface of the speaking body.

This project will not directly analyze the representation of young blacks in public rhetoric about the “acting white” thesis. Instead, I use this public and academic discussion as a critical example of the changing public discourse about race and educational inequality. The term “acting” in reference to acting White, Black or Latino does imply that race is simply a performance. If race is only a performance then one can choose what to perform. Thus, those who perform cultures that are outside the normative mainstream make a choice and must be responsible for the consequences. Such a stance constitutes an ambivalent position by which one believes and actively supports efforts to ensure racial equality while simultaneously insisting that help must come with socially responsible behavior. Stereotypical images and representations strengthen this ambivalence. Racial stereotypes are par for the course in public discourse. As the public and the media engage in argumentation about the education crisis, racial stereotypes function to make the discussion intelligible. And, it is not just the black body that must be intelligible, but the discussion depends on the very intelligibility of the white body. Cultural explanations of race may prevail, and yet, the body remains a specter of the natural, that thing that cannot be changed. And, the stereotype remains tied to it. Public representation of poor, black students is bound within this complex narrative of race, culture, and performance.

#### Methodology: Power, Ideology, and Domination

To begin an investigation of these questions of race, representation and performance, I utilize ideological criticism as a rhetorical method. This project is interested in the ideological discourses and representations of race, class, gender, and sexuality within the public

conversation about race and education. The dominant narratives, bred within institutional structures, must be interrogated for processes of normalization implicated in the success and achievement of black students in American society. In other words, an ideological analysis provides us with an opportunity to critically analyze the networks of power through which ideologies flow and gain discursive and representative dominance.

The Marxist conception of ideology, reformulated and popularized by Louis Althusser, revolves around the assumption that social bodies are trapped within a “false consciousness” that blinds them to the truth. Althusser argues that “ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence.”<sup>66</sup> Such a conception of ideology was necessary to explain why the working class did not rise up against the ruling class. Such ideologies were theorized as part of the superstructure resulting in the limited ability of subjects to exercise agency. For Althusser, dominant ideologies allowed the social structure to reproduce itself without ensuing conflict. Ideology functioned to naturalize the dominant structure encouraging individuals to participate by engaging in practices and behaviors designed to maintain that system. More importantly, ideologies were thought to construct an imaginary reality by which social beings became dependent on the structure as it functions, in order to make sense of their very lives. In essence, ideology was considered to be deterministic, binding individuals to the imaginary reality.

However, current scholarship has been expressly critical of such a conceptualization of ideology, particularly, within the field of cultural studies, as it made the critical turn away from the study of dominant ideology and toward the cultural and everyday practices by which subjects engage ideological domination. Noted theorists, including Michel Foucault, Raymond Williams, and Stuart Hall have offered significant critiques of such a view of the relations of power in a

social system. One criticism of this version of ideology is that it assumes there is a truth, somewhere out there, that we are unable to ascertain because of the false consciousness produced through ideological discourses.<sup>67</sup> Second, as Foucault argues, “ideology stands in a secondary position relative to something which functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant, etc.”<sup>68</sup> In other words, ideology is defined as a result of economic structures. Thus, the economic structures are pre-existent and thus, uninfluenced by ideology, but simply productive of it. And, third, if the individual or the subject is not critical to the development of such ideological structures, but are instead *determined by* them, then social subjects become agent-less. They become simply social beings *produced by* the superstructure.

Despite significant criticism of the concept of ideology, it remains significantly useful in the study of social domination. We can agree that there is not some true expression of reality out there that we are somehow blinded from seeing. We can agree that ideology is both produced by and produces economic and social structures. And, we can agree that social actors and their actions are not determined by ideology as much as social actors are strongly influenced toward accepting those ideologies as within their best interest, an internalization of ideological discourse as inscribed through various apparatuses of power. Yet, as media and communications scholar Nicolas Garnham cautions, the focus on resistance in cultural studies can prevent us from studying the manner in which dominance is maintained, both through structure and discourse.<sup>69</sup> He notes that it is the responsibility of intellectuals to map out structural and social dominance.

Social actors participate in the production and maintenance of culture, both dominant and subordinate. In any given situation, both dominance and resistance are likely to be active in varying degrees. Thus, this project is not simply interested in the study of the production and

maintenance of dominant ideologies; simultaneously, we must look to the manner in which social actors engage in resistance efforts within and through such dominant ideologies.

Contemporary racism is reproduced and maintained through discursive constructions that are circulated through ideologies. Ideologies help to make stereotypical representations intelligible to an audience. As long as racism remains a social phenomenon in our society, racial ideologies will likely remain a critical tool by which racial difference is signified. All racial ideologies do not function the same way; they are often complicated by intersections of class, gender, sexuality and context. And, as ideologies often function to dominate, they also create circumstances for resistance. This project seeks to engage both dominance and resistance; how racial ideologies reproduce social dominance, and how those affected by that dominance attempt to resist it. The rhetoric surrounding race and education offers one space from which to analyze the social reproduction of racial dominance. Looking to specific contexts through which we analyze the significance of racial ideologies allows us as scholars to map out the forces of power active through racial difference. Specifically, a rhetorical focus can map the public discursive maneuvers that (re)produce and resist these social ideologies.

The rhetoric surrounding race, culture, and performance within educational discourse is of critical importance to the future course of educational opportunity in American society. We must understand the strategies of signification that are most persuasive and powerful to the general public audience. What representations of racial others are most intelligible to the public and how might racial others respond to that intelligibility? As our previous discussion of the “acting white” thesis and the rise of cultural explanations of racial difference indicate, contemporary ideological representations of race have changed and in some ways remained the same. We must interrogate the use of ideological representations of race, gender, class, and

sexuality as rhetorical strategy in public deliberations. And, it is important to read the social actors involved and watching as embodied.

It is quite clear, that the public discourse surrounding race and education is extensive and far beyond the space allotted for this project. Thus, I have chosen a localized context from which to interrogate the ideological representations of race that may operate in any given American educational context. Academic policy debate is a competitive activity available to high school and college students. The activity dates back to the early 1900's in American history.<sup>70</sup> It is an extracurricular activity that pits students against one another in a rigorous mental and verbal challenge.

To engage in the ideological analysis of race and education discourse, I analyze three case studies within American policy debate and its representation. Chapter Two is an analysis of a non-profit organization for minority, inner city youths, the Urban Debate League, that has received wide media representation. I analyze the representation of UDL participants in local and national newspapers, as well as, an extended primetime story by *60 minutes* on the Baltimore Urban Debate League. In this chapter, I argue that successful black students are scapegoated in news media representation and then redeemed by their debate participation. More specifically, I argue that the news media relies on racial stereotypes of black youths to make the UDL participants intelligible to the viewing and reading audience. It is necessary for the audience to view the students as “at risk” in order to later demonstrate their exemplary status. It is the students’ ability to mimic the performative dynamics of success that allows their race, class, and gender status to be redeemed in news media representation. I conclude that such a practice demonstrates the social significance of the stereotype even in positive portrayals of inner city black youths.

Chapter Three is an analysis of race and performance in national college policy debate. The rising interest in diversifying policy debate at the high school level through non-profit organizations has fueled attempts to diversify at the college level. This chapter analyzes the University of Louisville Malcolm X debate program as it pushes the debate community to confront its race and class privilege. In this chapter, I ask how do black students respond to the racial ideologies surrounding their debate participation? What are the rhetorical strategies by which they engage a majority white audience in public discussion about race, privilege, and performance? I argue that these students use black sub-cultural styles, including signifyin', and black popular culture such as gospel and hip hop, to engage in a critical re-negotiation of intellectual knowledge making practices within the debate community. I argue further that the Louisville students engage in rhetorical practices that violate the genre of policy debate speechmaking. To engage in this investigation I review three elimination round debates at the Cross-Examination Debate Association's National Championship Tournament. I specifically focus on the most successful of the Louisville teams made up of the partnership between Elizabeth Jones and Tonia Green. I argue that the use of subcultural style offers a means for the Louisville students to resist the norms of white privilege that permeates the traditional debate landscape.

Chapter Four is an analysis of the debate community's response to the Louisville Project. In this chapter we are interested in how a majority white community responds to confrontational protest rhetoric in resistance narratives centered around racial representation and performance. I argue that the debate community engages in anti-movement resistance strategies. Instead of an outright rejection of the Louisville Project, the debate community attacks the Project's violation of the community's notion of order and decorum.

Through these three case studies, I seek to demonstrate the connection between the public representation of blackness and the performative strategies engaged in by Blacks in the attempt to resist the stereotypes associated with such representations. This project takes seriously the use of performative and cultural style as a strategic and rhetorical engagement with contemporary racism in America.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Redeeming Inner-City Youths:**

#### **Media Representation of the Urban Debate League**

As I mentioned in chapter one, inner city youths of color have become quite visible in American public discourse (re)presenting the failure of American public education and the ills of poverty. In our national imagination inner city youths are the Lost Ones, those left behind in under-funded school systems, with outdated materials, in dilapidated buildings. Representation of black youths in both the news media and popular culture articulate and/or maintain race, class, and gender based stereotypes that demonize inner city black youths.<sup>1</sup> Turn on a television, go to the movies, listen to the radio and it is often clear that these youths represent the vast underbelly of American society, signifying criminality, violence, gratuitous sexuality, and irresponsibility.<sup>2</sup> Such representations breed an unreasonable fear of poor black youths. And yet, simultaneously, the representation of such realities also sadden us: The newborn black baby born with HIV inherited from a crack-addicted mother; The pre-teen who lives with her seventy year old grandmother, in a poor neighborhood in the city, because her parents are indifferent or unavailable; Or, the seven year old in ragged clothing who only eats a healthy meal because he received free lunch at school. For some, such images tug at the heart strings. For others it breeds contempt, creating a certain level of ambivalence toward poor, youths of color. For what can we do with a population that we fear, desire, and feel sorry for all at the same time?

It is because of such ambivalence and the rising national discourse about black underachievement that the news media may increase positive stories of black achievement. This



chapter interrogates the news media representations of educational reform efforts targeted at minority youths. The Urban Debate League serves as a case study for this investigation. Since the program's inception, the media has maintained an interest in stories about the program. Therefore, the Urban Debate League provides media and educational scholars with the opportunity to study news media attempts at creating socially responsible representations of poor, black youths. In the next section, I provide background information on the national Urban Debate League movement, both its historical development and its recent practices.

### The Urban Debate League Movement

In 1985, Emory University's debate team, the Barkley Forum, under the direction of Melissa Maxcy Wade, began an urban outreach program in Atlanta funded by a small grant from Phillips Petroleum and the National Forensic League. The five thousand dollar grant spanned a consecutive three year period with the mission of increasing the participation of minority, inner-city youths in high school forensics. Beginning with D. M. Therrell, an Atlanta public high school, the Emory outreach program grew to encompass numerous Atlanta inner city schools.<sup>3</sup> The Emory program focused on bringing competitive policy debate to inner-city students with the attendant benefits of improving reading, writing, speaking, and research skills. To that end, Melissa Wade sent students from her nationally ranked college debate team to volunteer coach at the Atlanta city schools participating in the program. Consequently, having outreach schools maintain a connection to a local college debate team became a critical tenet of the program. The Barkley Forum also raised money to offer partial and full scholarships to attend the Emory National Debate Institute, a residential summer camp held at Emory.<sup>4</sup> The Atlanta model of the Urban Debate League has since grown into a nationwide "education reform movement" with programs in over fourteen American cities and counting; including New York, Baltimore,

Washington, D.C., Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay Area.<sup>5</sup> The migration of the program across American cities has received national press attention. Even First Lady Laura Bush has identified the program as an exemplary example of a program designed to increase opportunity for minority, inner-city youths. Currently, the programs are largely funded through start-up grants from the Open Society Institute (OSI) run by the Soros Foundation (sponsored by progressive financier George Soros). Soros believes that debate can provide an invaluable tool to disenfranchised populations all over the world. In 1995 OSI sent Beth Breger, a program director, to investigate the possibility of bringing debate to economically disadvantaged inner city youths. Once Breger began her investigation, she was quickly pointed in the direction of Wade who had spent the previous ten years attempting to integrate African-American, inner-city youths into the Georgia high school debate community. In the ten years since the initial meeting between Wade and Breger, the Urban Debate League (UDL) has expanded from a handful of young, black urban students, to over 14,000 participants, of various races and ethnicities, nationwide.<sup>6</sup>

In 2002, OSI began to phase out its funding of UDLs forming a new national organization to take over the UDL. The new organization, the National Urban Debate Initiative, was renamed the National Association of Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) in 2005. NAUDL provides a number of critical services in the maintenance and support of UDLs around the country. It “promotes” and “advocates” on behalf of all the UDLs. It serves as a vital hub for all the UDLs providing an “Urban Debate Network.” Lastly, NAUDL provides programmatic support to individual UDL’s through professional, curricular, and technical development. NAUDL’s mission is to move beyond the gains made by OSI by extending the UDL into new cities while providing support to maintain current leagues and school participation.

The goal of the UDL is to bring the advantages offered by participation to disenfranchised populations. Various studies of academic debate demonstrate that debate participants receive critical benefits from their participation, including increased critical thinking, communicative, and argumentative skills.<sup>7</sup> Such skills have proven critical to educational success and achievement.<sup>8</sup> The UDLs success has been notable, as its participants generally demonstrate an improvement in academic achievement demonstrated by increased GPAs, increased levels of participation in other extra-curricular activities, and increased matriculation to four-year colleges.<sup>9</sup> UDL supporters have argued that the program serves as a tool of empowerment for educationally disenfranchised students providing them with the opportunity to develop communication and academic skills that increase the likelihood of their future success.<sup>10</sup>

Sociologist and ethnographer, Gary Fine's 2001 study of high school policy debate, *Gifted Tongues*, notes a lack of diversity in high school debate, but projects that the rise of the UDL may remedy that situation.<sup>11</sup> Sociologists Nick McRee and Renee Cote's 2002 study disagrees, arguing instead that there is an over-representation of women and minorities in high school debate.<sup>12</sup> However, the McRee and Cote study draws its data from an Ad Health Campaign national study that requested information on high school students' extra-curricular activities including debate. The authors note that speech teams were not included on the survey and that as a result, those who participated in speech may have identified themselves as members of the debate team. It is important to note that there are various kinds of debate and speech competitions available to high school students, including but not limited to, Lincoln Douglas debate, individual speech and theatre events, parliamentary debate, and policy debate representing various national and regional debate organizations. McRee and Cote's use of the Ad Health Campaign data limits the generalizability of their study. They are unable to distinguish

across the forms of debate, such as whether or not a student was a member of a debate club or debate team. They are unable to determine the race and gender breakdown for regional versus national competition. As Fine notes, policy debate, which is the most competitive and time intensive of the forms of debate participation still remains a majority white activity. Thus, the McRee and Cote essay may be misleading as it suggests that the claims to a lack of diversity in high school debate are false.

Part of McRee and Cote's difficulty is that there is an imprecision in language among community members when discussing diversity and representation. Oftentimes, people use the term debate without specifying what kind of debate. There may well be differing levels of diversity across the different types and at the different levels of competition. In other words, there may be a greater diversity in Lincoln-Douglas, Parliamentary, and Individual Events and less diversity in policy debate. There may be a greater diversity at the regional levels of policy debate and less diversity at the national level. Clearly, more demographic research comparative of the different types and levels of debate communities needs to be done. Suffice it to say, that as one looks around at the majority of high school policy debate tournaments, excluding UDL tournaments, the dominant representation of white students should be fairly clear.<sup>13</sup>

The UDLs success at increasing the academic achievement of inner-city youths of color through debate participation in spaces marked by race and class privilege has rich human interest appeal. As a result, the media has indicated a significant interest. Local television and print news in the cities that house UDLs have featured program participants in human interest stories. National news organizations have also demonstrated an interest, including CBS's *60 Minutes*, the *New York Times*, and *Newsweek*. The press coverage has been consistently positive, one might even say glowing, in its support for the program, its participants, and their accomplishments.

This chapter is concerned with the affects of these positive news representations of the UDL. I argue that the framing techniques deployed by the news media provide an excellent opportunity to study the participation of news organizations in the maintenance or subversion of dominant discourses that surround black youths. How news organizations frame the body and life experience of the UDL participants may offer a critical space from which to interrogate race, gender, and class ideologies as they operate within educational discourse through news media representation. In the following section, I explore the scholarly literature on black representation in the news media, including print and television news. The literature demonstrates systemic problems in the representation of people of color across various mediums of the press. These framing practices demonstrate that media practices are critical to the development and maintenance of racial stereotypes and thus, racial inequality.

#### Race, Representation, and the News Media

The analysis of representations of the UDL and its participants requires an intertextual analysis of print news, local television news, and in-depth national prime-time news. Across the varying genres of media news, scholars note that the representations of racial others has remained consistently problematic. Franklin Gillam, Jr. and Shanto Iyengar, critics of racial representation in the news media, note that "Local television news is America's principal window on the world."<sup>14</sup> Since the local news market is highly competitive "local news organizations...favor an 'action news' format."<sup>15</sup> Of the variety of genres of news stories that appear on the local news, crime news is the most prevalent.<sup>16</sup> As Gillam and Iyengar observe, crime scripts require a cast of characters including a suspect which is most consistently portrayed by a racial minority.<sup>17</sup> They note further that irrelevant "of the type of crime, African-Americans comprised the largest group of minority suspects."<sup>18</sup> More specifically, speech communication

scholar Travis Dixon and journalism scholar Christina Azocar note that "the media in general and television news in particular have inculcated stereotypes about young Black criminality."<sup>19</sup> Carolyn Martindale observes similar practices in her study of major newspaper coverage of blacks in the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, and the *Atlanta Constitution*.<sup>20</sup> News coverage of race influences public perception of racial difference. Political scientist Martin Gilens argues that "Media content has...been shown to affect the importance viewers attach to different political issues, their standards for making political evaluations, their beliefs about the causes of national problems, their positions on political issues, and their perceptions of political candidates."<sup>21</sup>

In recent years, as media scholar Peter Parisi notes, the news media has begun to respond to criticism that it invariably portrays minorities in a negative light.<sup>22</sup> Parisi's essay analyzes extended stories "on race relations and life in urban African-American neighborhoods."<sup>23</sup> Parisi wants to move the scholarship on race and news media representation toward offering specific alternatives in "journalistic narrative method: how to exactly achieve the rich, socially responsible journalism sought by critics of racism and the press."<sup>24</sup> Thus, Parisi analyzes examples from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, to engage attempts by the news media to accede to the critics and provide "more context and compassion" in representing lower economic and minority communities.<sup>25</sup>

As Martindale indicates, the concern is that those in charge of story decision-making "may unconsciously convert the stereotype into a sort of mental grid or framework through which news about blacks is filtered."<sup>26</sup> Scholars who study the news media refer to this process as the technique of framing. Sociologist Todd Gitlin, for example, argues that "Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and

exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual."<sup>27</sup> Framing is a significant tool of analysis in evaluating news media, both print and television, as it provides a means to trace consistencies in representation across media.<sup>28</sup> As scholars interested in race and representation in the news media have noted, the media uses the technique of framing to make news stories intelligible to the reader or viewer. In other words, viewers are trained to make sense out of the verbal and visual cues in newscasts and news stories that suggest a particular perspective or viewpoint from which the media event should be understood.

The question we must ask about such news representation as Parisi investigates is why these kinds of stories are interesting to the American audience. From *Oprah* to *20/20* to the *New York Times*, media stories attempting to humanize populations and people that have been demonized in American discourse have become quite significant in media representation. Meyers engages in an analysis of redemption rhetoric surrounding news representation of crack addicted mothers within black communities.<sup>29</sup> Her study of news representation of black, crack-addicted mothers and their children argues that the media enacts a narrative that "redeems the mother and saves the children."<sup>30</sup> Yet, she does not articulate a connection between the majority white viewing audience and the need to redeem these black women. Why might the rhetoric of redemption be a recurring narrative in stories about low income blacks?

Literary theorist and critic Kenneth Burke suggests that we view redemption through the motive of guilt. Communications scholar James Jasinski notes that for Burke, "Guilt arises from disruptions to, or violations of, the social order or from threats to the social order."<sup>31</sup> Guilt is "debilitating," thus, "...there emerges a need to 'cure' the social order -- to cleanse it of guilt and achieve a state of social redemption."<sup>32</sup> Burke identifies two strategies of redemption: mortification, or "Self-victimization in which the members of society internalize the 'sins' that

threaten the social order and engage in other behavioral reforms; and victimage (scapegoating) - "Some individual or group is selected, and all of the society's problems - its sins are blamed on the chosen individual or group."<sup>33</sup> For this discussion of the coverage of the UDL, our focus will be on the rhetoric of victimage or scapegoating. For Burke, the scapegoat is a "chosen vessel" designed to "cleanse" a social community "...by loading the burden of their own iniquities upon it."<sup>34</sup> Burke notes further that these "iniquities" exist within both the social body and the scapegoat population, so it is critical to dispose of these "iniquities" through a "ritualistic" cleansing of the social body.<sup>35</sup>

But, if guilt is motivational in the representation of black youths, what is the source of such guilt? The ugly underbelly of American society must be blamed on someone. It is unacceptable to assume that American social and political culture is at all responsible for this ugliness. Thus, as Parisi notes, we need the identification of a "problem people" to blame for the vast social problems that plague our society.<sup>36</sup> As Burke argues, with the Holocaust as his example, we can only absolve ourselves of responsibility, by displacing the blame from ourselves onto a population that can be easily defined as Other.<sup>37</sup> It would seem that guilt could be assuaged by simply scapegoating "problem people." Our society can turn to "those people" and displace fault onto them as representative of why our society faces such turmoil. But, it is important to note that American culture has been greatly affected by American slavery, the Holocaust, and the numerous American social movements throughout the 20th century. The severe oppression faced by Jews, Blacks and women, in the not so distant past, can only create discomfort amongst Americans, making it difficult to engage in the dialectical confrontations of scapegoating. Thus, some of the American public also experiences feelings of guilt associated with the incontrovertible evidence that not all Americans have been able to attain or achieve the



American dream. In other words, placing blame to assuage this guilt is in itself problematic for the social body. It does not result in the redemption sought. You can not just scapegoat Blacks. Political correctness won't allow such a clinical, simple cleansing of guilt. Instead, the guilt remains as the social body deals with the fact that children in this country are being left behind. So, the redemption of the social body requires redemption of the scapegoat population. In other words, black youths, or at least some of them, must be redeemed in the eyes of the social body in order to fully assuage the guilt. The redeemer must redeem the scapegoat in order to receive redemption for themselves.

The analysis of the news representation of the UDL is based on the review of eleven articles from major U.S. newspapers and magazines covering the years 2000 to 2006. Each article was initially analyzed for race, class, and gender based frames. However, this is not just a content analysis. I am also interested in the rhetorical strategies engaged in by journalists to signify race, gender, and class ideologies. To find news representation I searched for any reference to the UDL through various search mechanisms. Those include Lexis/ Nexis, Ebscohost, and the Internet.

In this analysis I identify and analyze the media frames used to represent the program participants. These frames, demonstrate a rhetorical dependence on stereotypes signifying race, class, gender, and sexual difference. Thus, I identify the frames that most consistently frame the news representations of blacks, in general, and black youths, in particular. The frame of poverty is the most significant framing of the UDL. Yet, the poverty frame is simply one frame around which frames of race, gender, and sexuality are clustered. It is this clustering of frames that indicates how ideologies articulate to strengthen networks of power. These framing techniques function to build the scapegoating and redemption narrative. We are redeemed because the media

assures us that we are good people, that those in need are not forgotten by American society. Programs like the UDL assuage our guilt.

Scapegoating and Redemption: Framing Race, Class and Gender in News Coverage of Urban Debate Leagues

*Framing Poverty and Racial Dysfunction.* Blacks are disproportionately represented in the total population of the poor or near poor in the United States. For the past twenty-five years, the black poverty rate has hovered around the 30% mark, and while this is an improvement from the 1970's and 1980's, on average black households earn 60% on the dollar in comparison to white households.<sup>38</sup> Despite the higher percentages of poverty amongst the black population, the media often portray the connection between poverty and blackness in excess of the actual representations of blacks within that economic class. Gilens calls it a "racialization of poverty images" in the news media. As he argues, since the 1960s "the complexion of the poor grew darker."<sup>39</sup> Prior to the 1960s the image of poverty was white, thus government support and media representation of the poor lacked any racial character.<sup>40</sup> He argues further that the white poor, the elderly, and those in the working class were portrayed in a much more positive light, as the hardworking American down on their luck.<sup>41</sup> While Blacks became increasingly representative of the image of the American poor, the framing of racialized poverty recycled the historical stereotyping of Blacks as lazy.<sup>42</sup> Black poverty was more a symptom of pathology, rather than an example of being down on one's luck.

As the 21st Century begins, the image of poverty and welfare has consistently been portrayed by black faces, although the rising Hispanic population is becoming a representative image of poverty as well.<sup>43</sup> Geography and media scholars Myrna Breitbart and Ellen Pader observe: "Interestingly, media commentaries rarely, if ever, mention racial differences as a

barrier to success. Socioeconomic class, a code for race in the national discourse, provides a way for the reporters to avoid talking about racism."<sup>44</sup> Conversations about social ills that are characterized in terms of race or racism are fraught with difficulties. The general white American society opposes racism, but dislikes taking action to address systemic racism. Thus, Americans are more responsive to arguments that economic class provides a barrier to achievement and success. Class shields race in our national imagination. It supplements structural and social racism.<sup>45</sup> Low income, poor, urban, and inner city are code words for racial minorities.<sup>46</sup> Race becomes argumentatively neutral as socioeconomic class becomes the explanation of choice for characterizing the issues UDL students face.

In news coverage of the Urban Debate League, journalists consistently utilize racial code words hidden within the discourse of poverty.<sup>47</sup> Specifically, reporters most often refer to spatial characterizations to indicate poverty, but which are also marked by blackness. For example, in an opening paragraph of a 2004 *Christian Science Monitor* article, the reporter writes, "Urban high school debate teams are defying the odds."<sup>48</sup> Here the reporter refers to "urban" students, which is designed to signify both race and class status. Urban city centers are constructed as spaces that are run-down, dirty, and infested with crime and drugs. As whites moved to the suburbs, they left the city to lower income populations, largely minorities. The use of the phrase "defying the odds" indicates that these poor children are likely to realize the negative expectations assigned to urban youths of color. The "odds" signifies a statistical representation of the ills commonly associated with poverty in urban city centers. The odds are, at least as implied by news representation, that these children will fail in educational systems, end up in low paying jobs or as part of the welfare system. This population is considered most likely to participate in drug culture and criminal activity. Similarly, a 2005 Associated Press article that notes that the UDL

"instructs kids in poor areas in the traditionally upscale art of debate."<sup>49</sup> The article defines the students in terms of their class. The marker of class is supposed to indicate certain information to the audience. It requires that the stereotypes associated with class be previously intelligible to the audience so that they might accurately read the media representations. As the image of poverty in America is represented by people of color in general, and Blacks, in particular, the use of the term "poor" signifies racial and ethnic minority status. If poverty signifies race or ethnicity, then so does the use of the phrase "upscale art" which can only function to signify whiteness.

While the students are characterized as not responsible for their economic situation, they are held responsible for the choices they make to change their individual circumstances. Post-structural theorist and education reform scholar, Linda Graham argues that "Those who either do not/ cannot/ will not position themselves to take advantage of 'opportunity' become positioned themselves. Once constituted as an object of a particular sort, individuals can be dispersed into disciplinary spaces and, from there, become subject to particular discourses and practices."<sup>50</sup> In other words, students are constructed as agents of change that must actively avoid the pitfalls associated with lower economic status. Note the following example from a 2002 *Teacher Magazine* article: "How can low-income kids break away from failure and get folks to recognize their hidden talents?"<sup>51</sup> "Talents" are "hidden" and simply need to be unearthed so they might be recognized by others who are able to help. Through this characterization, low income kids are connected to failure as a whole population. To break away from such a dire reality requires a certain level of committed responsibility on the part of the child. The child's choices become the critical determinant of whether or not he or she succeeds or fails. Their economic situation is a barrier, but one that can be overcome with hard work. This is part of the "pull yourself up by the bootstraps" narrative that has historically permeated American culture. Agency here is with the

child; they must battle structural barriers created by their class, which will provide them with an opportunity for success. Structures of racism remain invisible and the media describes class as the biggest barrier. Class can be overcome -- that is the very nature of the American dream.

The poverty frame along with the frame of opportunity here constructs the students in opposition to the stereotypes people often have of inner city youths. Blacks are generally stereotyped as lazy, irresponsible, and lacking in work ethic. Thus, the media constructs UDL participants as responsible, active agents committed to bettering their own lives. Communication scholar Tali Mendelberg observes that "large numbers of white Americans believe that blacks tend to shirk their responsibilities and...this belief leads whites to oppose many government policies on matters of race."<sup>52</sup> Psychologist David Schneider's 2004 study of race and class stereotypes reveals that whites are more likely to "generally" believe that most blacks are of lower socio-economic class status and identify them through stereotypes including "welfare blacks, streetwise blacks, and ghetto blacks."<sup>53</sup> It is likely that the consistent media representation of the poor as differently raced, the more likely racial and ethnic minorities are perceived of as lower class. Thus, the white poor are crowded out of representations of poverty. Blacks that are perceived to be middle class face less racial stereotyping by whites. Schneider concludes that this may not "prove that the stereotype of blacks is really a stereotype of working class/ unemployed people, but it certainly is consistent with the idea that to the extent that perceivers have a prototype of blacks as working class or unemployed, the occupational group rather than the race will dictate stereotypes." Yet, Schneider's conclusions seem overly simplistic in explaining the complexity of stereotyping at the intersection between race and class. In other words, it may be the articulation of race and occupational status (or socio-economic status), a blending of stereotypes that fits within the sphere of modern racism. In the contemporary

American context of increasing calls for diversity from the public and social institutions and the social importance of politically correct speech, class functions to remove some of the *stain* of race and ethnic difference. Such a cleansing increases the likelihood of assimilation into the normative cultural practices associated with economic class status. In other words, how one dresses and speaks, what extracurricular activities one participates in can drape the colored body in representations of economic success and vocational achievement. Thus, to some extent, class status can function as a cleanser for bodies historically stereotyped as different and thus other. Those Blacks of lower socioeconomic status do not have the same protection; they are naked bodies, their color and gender visible to the racial majority. Thus, they are bound by the stereotypes attached to race.

Reporters do not all neglect race or ethnicity. Considering the connection between socioeconomic class and race, that news reporters refer to them together, affects a certain tangibility to the connection. In other words, class status and race are necessarily associated, such that lower economic class status often implies a racial character. Low income and Black become synonymous. Thus, low class status marks one as a racial other and vice versa. While the poverty frame often seems to represent a stand in for race, some journalists do refer to the racial representation of the UDL population. For example, the *San Francisco Chronicle* notes, "The majority of the students are minorities from lower-income households."<sup>54</sup> The Associated Press State and Local Wire describes UDL member schools as places "Where all the students are minorities and half qualify for free or reduced-price lunches."<sup>55</sup> *Teacher Magazine* observes that "The goal is to offer UDL kids - mostly minorities, 78% of whom live at or below the poverty level - a shot at improving their verbal, research, and critical-thinking skills."<sup>56</sup> And, the *Denver Post* argues that since the beginning of the UDL movement, "about 12,000 inner-city teenagers -

mostly Latino and African-American - have flocked to debate.”<sup>57</sup> In each of the examples, the authors are upfront about the racial representation of the UDL. And, yet their characterization still remains ambivalent. First, mentioning race, instead of allowing class status to stand in, seemingly disconnects class status from an assumption of race. By mentioning both, the reporters achieve a certain level of dissociation from the practice I critique above. And yet, simultaneously, the reporters signify minority populations as the largest proportion of the poor, solidifying the traditional image of poverty as black and brown, not white.

While poverty functions as a critical theme in the representations of the UDL, it is the surrounding frames that provide the poverty frame with its racialized context. It is within this context that we can map the intersecting networks of both race and gender as critical to decoding the visual and verbal frames in the news stories. The similar sign value of stereotypes around race, gender, and poverty indicates the similarity of classificatory schemes across varying ideological networks. Such stereotypes include laziness, licentiousness, criminality, drug abuse, violence and other anti-social behavior.<sup>58</sup> Poverty frames are often constructed through a rhetorical clustering of “verbal stereotypes” aimed to “suggest” or imply lower economic status.<sup>59</sup> Entman and Rojecki note that these “clusters” occur in news representations of poverty and result in an association between poverty and a multitude of other social ills.<sup>60</sup> They offer drug abuse, violence, crime, and mental illness as examples of such associations. This study of the news media found some examples of direct statements referencing class in the UDL’s press coverage; yet, my findings are consistent with Entman and Rojecki’s findings that the news media rarely refers to poverty directly, but instead uses other stereotypes to imply class status.

Current statistics indicate that more than two thirds of black children live at or below the poverty line.<sup>61</sup> Poor black families face harsh criticism within social, political and economic

discourses for their consistent “dysfunction.” Such discourses developed during slavery pertaining to the sexual mores of the black female “jezebel” and the hypermasculinity of black males which provided a plausible explanation of the instability of the black family. These narratives continue throughout American history with incidents such as the publication of the Daniel Moynihan report on the state of the black family in which the percentage of female headed households were held to blame for the failure of the black family.<sup>62</sup> It is the failure of the family structure, defined in terms of the white heterosexual family structure normative to the American community that is blamed for the persistence of poverty and the social and political disenfranchisement that traps so many blacks in a generational cycle of poverty. Hip hop and black culture scholar S. Craig Watkins notes: “The notion that black familial life is largely responsible for ghetto poverty pervades the cultural landscape. The representation of black familial pathology achieves its hegemonic position precisely because it appeals to the larger society as common sense and thus indisputable.”<sup>63</sup> The connection between the black family and urban poverty becomes a critical narrative by which to evaluate society's responsibility toward black youths. If the culture of the black family is to blame for the pathologies within black communities then the larger society need not accept any responsibility for the effects of the problem. Thus, black pathology in the family is a black problem, one that is indicative of the dysfunction of black culture in general.

The black family proves to be a significant frame within the poverty cluster. Note the following characterization of UDL participants proffered by Heather Hollingsworth from the *Associated Press*: “Over the years, high school debate coach Jane Rinehard has taught a student so poor that his home was heated with a kitchen stove cranked up to 500 degrees with its door open and the burners blasting. Others spent their early years in foster homes or shuffled among



relatives."<sup>64</sup> And another example of the clustering of poverty themes comes from Stacy Teicher at the *Christian Science Monitor*: "Many urban debate coaches still labor away with few resources or accolades - sometimes taking on the extra roles of chauffeur, fundraising, and even parent figure to students whose home lives are coming apart at the seams."<sup>65</sup> In both of these examples, the lack of family stability is a critical narrative describing the general experience of UDL participants. In the Hollingsworth quote from the *Associated Press*, parents are either inept at providing the basic needs of their child or they abdicate responsibility altogether. The Teicher quote then positions the debate coach as an unsung hero who must become everything to the students because of lack of community and parental support. Parental involvement in the UDL is rarely mentioned, other than the characterization of dysfunctional or disinterested parents, in the news representation of the program. Note the following quote about the UDL from the *Chicago Tribune*:

These kids, in many ways, have been largely abandoned by traditional support systems. There are a lot of family issues around employment, substance abuse and other challenges," said Wade, who helps run the Atlanta program. "There is a lot of fighting and if you have a dispute, you hit. We work a lot with respect issues and learning to use our words so we don't have to use our fists."<sup>66</sup>

Wade constructs the barriers students face as a family issue rather than a structural issue. Unemployment or underemployment and substance abuse are the family's problem, relegating these to the realm of the private sphere, hence outside of public consideration. According to this position, it is within the family and cultural context that children are taught values and behaviors that are antithetical to their future success. It is not the structural ills of class or race that are to blame for the black achievement gap; it is the family and the culture that breeds pathology.

Physical and verbal aggressions become associated with black poverty where certain sections of black culture are the representative image of violence. And, we accept the image of the violent black youth seeing him or her as of course violent because of what we have been taught to assume about their day to day experiences in urban ghettos.

It is not just the black family, in general, that is constructed as pathological; it is the black mother, in particular, who is the representative cause of this pathology. As Roxanne Donovan and Michelle Williams note, “Black women are seen as the major contributor to inner city poverty and all its associated problems, including the poor academic performance and high incarceration of Black youths. This image made it easier to ignore how poverty, under-funded schools, employment discrimination, and institutionalized racism created these social problems.”<sup>67</sup> At the intersection of race, gender, class, and sexual oppression, black women have faced varying negative stereotypes, most notably those connected to black women’s sexuality.<sup>68</sup> Such a portrayal often posits black women to blame for the instability of the black family unit. Particularly, the prevalence of female headed households in black communities has resulted in the cultural demonization of black mothers. The welfare queen, or the devious black mother is a stereotype that is recycled within American public discourse. Most often the welfare queen is a black woman, although Latino women are increasingly being included within the purview of the stereotype. This stereotype is culturally connected to the devastating congressional report filed in 1965 by Daniel Moynihan. While attempting to describe the structural barriers to “negro” progress in America, the Moynihan Report served a devastating blow to the black community. The report posited that the instability of the black family was caused by overbearing black women who displaced needed male presence. The welfare queen is simply a modern narrative produced through a stereotype of black femininity made popular by the Moynihan report.<sup>69</sup> In the

news representation of UDL participants, the media utilizes the stereotypes of dysfunctional black families and bad black mothers.

Here is an example from a local television news station in Minnesota in the fall of 2005: "Two years ago, a pilot program started recruiting kids from housing projects onto the debate team."<sup>70</sup> Housing projects are characterized as the breeding ground for inner city failure. As housing projects rarely include intact family structures, they become a critical representation of the pathologies associated with black, female headed households. Housing projects signify on the welfare queen stereotype. As Breitbart and Pader argue, "Images of landscapes of poverty--dark, dirty hallways, vandalism, drug dealing, occupants who are alleged not to care about each other or their children--have become associated increasingly with young, low-income, unmarried mothers, primarily women of color."<sup>71</sup> Note the following quote from *Teacher Magazine* describing the family related problems that UDL students are constructed as having: "Patricia grew up in a family that moved frequently. During her freshman year, she, her mother, and her sister went from Oakland to Richmond because of what she calls 'family difficulties.'"<sup>72</sup> Another example, from Heather Hollingsworth at the Associated Press, describes a teen in the Kansas City UDL as "a boy with a serious speech impediment who powered through troubles with his crack-addicted mother and an endless string of foster homes to win a top debate award on the national circuit."<sup>73</sup> Breitbart and Pader note that "When single women of color are depicted in this fashion, their children are racialized and seen as the epitome of urban disorder, and hence, a threat."<sup>74</sup>

The following examples demonstrate the manner in which black mothers or caregivers are clustered around images of poverty. Ruenzel writes about a California UDL student, "Randy arrived at Kennedy from New York City, where he lived with his grandmother after his mom

moved to California for work."<sup>75</sup> In the United States, African-American children are three times more likely to cohabitate with their grandmother.<sup>76</sup> The image of the grandmother who is made the sole care-giver of her grandchildren when the parents are financially and/or emotionally unavailable is increasingly more recognizable as an extension of both the mammy and welfare queen stereotypes. The mammy lovingly cared for the children of others, providing them with the unconditional love normally provided by parents. Yet, the mammy is now tainted by the image of the welfare queen, as grandmothers may be on public assistance themselves, or at the least, may need to seek such assistance to care for children abandoned by their parents.

Note the following example from a 2000 *New York Times* article: "...in New York City, debaters are as likely to be low-income, nonwhite and female. Ms. Martin, who was raised by a single mother after her father died, attends Franklin K. Lane High School, a largely black and Hispanic school in Woodhaven, Queens, where 43 percent of students receive free lunches and 39 percent graduate in four years."<sup>77</sup> The author identifies important identity characteristics of the NYUDL population, the race, gender, and class status of the participants. Young women of color from the inner city now represent the image of an academic activity traditionally signified by young white males from the upper class acts to destabilize the race, gender, and class ideologies that often stereotype poor women of color. In this way, the news media may act to destabilize stereotypical images of this population, in an attempt to respond to the criticisms of its representations of the poor and racial or ethnic minorities.

*Discipline and Aggression.* Black and Hispanic youths in the media are often framed as 1) disciplinary problems and 2) violent resolvers of conflict. The UDL is noted in the media for its success at reducing disciplinary problems amongst their participants, leading to increasing success in school. To strengthen the scapegoat narrative, the news media frames negative

stereotypes of black youths within public education. Remember that these frames do not stand alone, but are clustered around the frames we have already discussed. For example, the frames around black family dysfunction are critically attached to representations of black children as "problem people."<sup>78</sup>

Note the following example from the *Chicago Tribune*: "...initial studies have shown that disciplinary problems among debate participants fell by 50 percent."<sup>79</sup> Note also this example from staff writer Tara Bahrapour at the *New York Times*: "Urban Debate League debaters have also seen their grades rise and discipline problems fall. Many report an increased sense of confidence, an ease with the world beyond the neighborhoods they grew up in."<sup>80</sup> A *Seattle Times* reporter quotes a UDL coach: "One of the things I found out was that some of the worst kids in school were the best speakers. People were amazed when I would get these troublesome kids and they would do amazing things."<sup>81</sup> Carolina Gonzalez at the *New York Daily News* quotes a UDL participant as saying: "'I was always argumentative and I always questioned my teachers,' said Benjamin, 18, 'I was always getting in trouble, but I had no outlet for my intelligence and curiosity until I joined debate.'"<sup>82</sup> Each of these examples depends on the reader's understanding that disciplinary issues are significant among urban students of color. The UDL argues that its program reduces disciplinary problems, as is evidenced by Melissa Wade's public rhetoric about the program; thus, many of the major news outlets have used it as a discussion point. Black students are characterized as undisciplined, out of control bodies that seem to deny attempts to constrain them, other than through the criminal justice system. Their lack of discipline, at least within narratives of this type, indicates a lack of responsibility for their own future welfare and success.<sup>83</sup> In other words, these students disciplinary problems are a result of irresponsible choices. If they are irresponsible, then the broader society need feel little

sympathy for their plight. Yet simultaneously, we do not want to attribute this as a necessary condition of class or race status, thus, the students have an opportunity to be redeemed if they participate in such programs as the UDL.

Black youth culture has gotten increasingly more violent according to academic literature, resulting in what some refer to as an "epidemic of violence."<sup>84</sup> However, Russell Kick argues that the unreasonable fear of the young, black predator has greatly exceeded the statistical projection of the number of violent thugs operating in America.<sup>85</sup> He notes further that rough projections indicate that at most 30, 000 new thugs or "superpredators" are likely to be produced in the next generation.<sup>86</sup> He argues that in comparison to the "12 million serious violent and property crimes" committed in the United States every year, black youths only represent a small percentage of total crime.<sup>87</sup> For example, in a 2005 *Chicago Tribune* article, journalist Dahleen Glanton observes two UDL participants noting that: "A year ago, Shirley and Render were more likely to have been in a fight on the playground than arguing over torture."<sup>88</sup> These UDL students are characterized as quintessential examples of inner city dysfunction spilling out into educational settings. Before debate, it seems, these student's choices would have led them to engage in violent and anti-social behavior that appears, at least in this new representation, as a normal practice in low-income communities of color. In the American social imagination, youths of color are both "blamed and punished...for their social and economic problems."<sup>89</sup> If the youths themselves are to blame, then the disparities they continue to face as young adults are a result of the decisions they make for themselves, thus limiting society's responsibility for responding to those disparities. Note the following quote from Melissa Wade, co-founder of the UDL, as quoted in *Teacher Magazine*: "If students could use words to tackle issues and get the attention of decision makers, they would not need to use their fists."<sup>90</sup> Wade notes again during a

local news broadcast in Boston, "words can command attention, negating the need for violence to get that attention."<sup>91</sup> Glanton, from the *Chicago Tribune* notes: "Across the nation, in cities such as Chicago and Atlanta, thousands of mostly black and Hispanic students from poor neighborhoods are learning to use words as a weapon in their personal war against poverty, underachievement and violence."<sup>92</sup>

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, black youths in inner city school systems are characterized stereotypically as violent, aggressive, disinterested troublemakers that create obstacles to their own achievement. Social troubles among this population such as disciplinary problems in the classroom, high rates of truancy amongst black students in inner city schools, and the use of violence as a resolution to conflict become themes through which the media characterizes the successfulness of the program. The UDL's ability to positively affect these concerns within "problem communities" makes it attractive to a viewing audience that is used to being presented with negative images of this population.

*Framing Black Masculinity.* Although, black youths in general, face negative stereotyping in the news media, it is black males in particular that foster the most media attention and generate the most discomfort and fear. The rise of gangsta rap in the late 1980's and its continued growth through the 1990's and into the early 21st century generated a new racial persona and stereotype. Black males in the inner city are often "portrayed through the dominant gaze as a nation of thugs and savages."<sup>93</sup> The "thug" signifies criminality, violence, and irresponsibility. As much as the black male "thug" is a racial stereotype with its origins in European colonialism and American slavery, it is critical to simultaneously note that the thug identity is a social performance taken on by some young black males.<sup>94</sup> The "thug" rejects school, traditional employment, and normative American values. Ronald Jackson argues that the "thug, by nature, does not abide by the rules."<sup>95</sup>

The “thug” engages in criminal behavior that results in direct harm to the average citizen and as such is a threat to American society. The “thug” is also a fashion statement. Low-riding jeans, brand new and completely clean tennis shoes, sports caps, a little bling bling (around your neck, on your hands, around your wrists or on your teeth) have become stylistic elements in the “thug” performance. The prevalence of the “thug” image in both the news media and in popular culture makes black bodies outsiders if they are marked by the stereotypes of the broader American society. The relationship between the news media and popular media in the material significance of the stereotype represents a dialectical tension within which young black males are demonized in the news while remaining a resilient image in American iconography. Thus, Americans find themselves ambivalent in their engagement with young black men whose bodies signify the “thug” identity. We often find ourselves afraid of the "thug" on the street corner while we revere him in movies, on our televisions, over our radios and through our ipods.

Within the space of public education, "thugs" represent all that is wrong with failing inner-city schools. “Thugs” are nightmarish agents in the educational environment, violating school rules, disrupting class, engaging in physically and sexually aggressive behavior. Melissa Wade makes significant use of the “thug” image in her rhetorical communication with the news media. Note the following excerpt from the *Teachers Magazine* article discussed earlier:

“We have all kinds of students participating in debate, but some of the best kids I lovingly call 'thugs,'" says Melissa Maxcy Wade, who created UDL. “But in debate, you enfranchise kids. Instead of being bad, they walk around saying: 'Wow, I just beat Elite Academy. Look at me!'”<sup>96</sup>

Wade's use of the term "thugs" creates an image in the mind of the audience. All that is defined above as part of the “thug” stereotype is called forth by Wade. Wade is specific here about what



she means by thugs in the context of the educational classroom: "they disrupt class, get kicked out, etcetera."<sup>97</sup> These are the students normally represented as impeding the progress of a classroom environment, forcing teachers to spend a significant amount of time dealing with disciplinary issues. Such disciplining serves only to raise student ire and encourage further disengagement from the education system. That Wade notes her use of the term "thug" is done in a "loving manner" functions to romanticize the young black men to whom she refers. They become mythical figures, a beast that can be soothed by the caring touch of a white female hand. In essence, the image Wade constructs is a renegotiation of a mythical literary and pop culture figure of the misunderstood hero crossed with the ebony saint. If one considers the plethora of black film representations that depend on the image of an out of control black teenager saved by the white star of the film one begins to understand why this representation of Wade's relationship with the young black men in the program is significant as a media framing of the league. One might recall a similar image in Hollywood films, specifically Michelle Pfeiffer in *Dangerous Minds* comes to mind.

Wade argues that "These are kids who won't participate in a system that is oppressing them - they know they're being screwed."<sup>98</sup> She argues similarly, in the *Chronicles of Higher Education*, that these "thugs" are "...smart, they've found a way not to learn in a classroom. Debate gives them the value of their voice. If they have communication, if they have their voice, they don't need to use their fists."<sup>99</sup> Critical in Wade's argument here is a pinpointing of structures outside of the students control as responsible for the decisions students make about their educations. In other words, students are constructed as thinking agents that recognize the state of their situation and the limited options they have for changing it. Thus, their rejection of

the education system is posited as a rational choice considering what is available to young black men without the benefit of class privilege.

The desire to reform the "thug" is critical in these representations. Note the following example from the *New York Times*: "Coming in, the students knew little about debate. Some were lured by the prospect of travel; one freshman said he attended his first meeting after a scary-looking older student cornered him and ordered him to go." In inner city schools, a "scary-looking older student" is, in the general American imagination, more likely to engage in actions that verbally harass or cajole younger students into inappropriate activities rather than encouraging them to attend debate team meetings. Such reform efforts redeem the "thug," making him or her a more palatable, more sympathetic, and therefore a more redeemable figure.

In order to redeem the youths for the audience, the news media must bring into frame the race, gender, and class based stereotypes that signify bodies of color. The media code these raced and classed bodies to make them intelligible to the viewing audience. The process of scapegoating is a necessary step in the journey to atonement. We must believe that the vast majority of inner-city, black youths engage in behaviors that maintain their state of subjugation. Putting such behaviors central in the frame encourages such representations to appear normal for that population. Thus, each news story distinguishes the UDL students from the population of "trouble-makers" they might otherwise represent. These students' choice to avoid the pitfalls associated with their complex identities makes their story significant. They become exemplars, demonstrating to the audience that choice and responsibility are the only assets they need to overcome the hardships they face. The American social body can now be relieved of its guilt.

## Urban Debate Leagues Go Primetime: Scripting Racial Others

In this section, I turn our attention to a primetime television special on a member school of the Baltimore Urban Debate League. On March 7, 2003, CBS's *60 Minutes* aired a nine minute segment on Walbrook High School's debate team. Under the direction of debate coach, teacher, and police officer, Angelo Brooks, the Walbrook Warriors had proven themselves successful not only within the BUDL, but also in integrated competition against suburban schools. Leslie Stahl covered the story for *60 Minutes*.

News media framing techniques are not just verbal frames of reference, they are also critical in determining what images will be chosen to accompany the verbal presentation of a story. Paying attention to the visual frames surrounding racial representation is critical to interrogating the racialized body in the news media. I argue that *60 Minutes* frames the bodies of the UDL participants by scapegoating them based on race, class, and gender ideologies. The scapegoating narrative is necessary in order to then redeem these students as exemplars.

The *60 Minutes* segment begins with Stahl seated in front of a life sized photo replica of two black students engaged in a debate competition. Stahl begins the feature by noting that high school debate has changed from an activity that only served suburban schools to increasing representation from inner city schools. She notes, "In the last six years, 12, 000 students across the US have joined what are called Urban Debate Leagues, supported by educators who believe debating is a better learning tool for inner city students than anything else they've tried." With the pictures framed in the background, and Stahl's identification of these students as from the inner city, the audience is instructed in how to read the scene. The young black students in the picture are from the inner city, they are framed by stereotypes associated with race, class, and gender. Stahl continues in the effort to contextualize the students that are featured in the story. She

observes: "Most of the students at Walbrook High School come from low-income families, many from broken homes. The question is: Can debate change the odds for them?"

While Stahl speaks, the camera surveys the entrance and hallways of Walbrook High School while students are moving through the building to attend class. At the front doors, we encounter six young black males, in urban hip hop attire. Most of the young men are sporting oversized white or black t-shirts, baggy pants, and tennis shoes. One young man in particular fills the screen, making notable the jewelry in his ear and around his neck, and the tattoos on his arm. The viewer is encouraged by Stahl to read the young black men as the representative image of low-income black youths. Haymes argues that "the black body... carries a pathological image that signifies threat and disorder."<sup>100</sup> As Stahl indicates verbally that many of the Walbrook high school students come from broken homes, the camera spans rapidly moving students in the hallway. The students are faceless, the speed of the camera not allowing a clear picture of their faces. However, their race and gender is clear. The students are clearly black (or at least appear so), with both males and females represented. The faceless students function to represent a faceless statistic of poor, black youths who face varying social problems. It is important to note that poverty and family problems, particularly when discussing black families, is a recurring frame in the description of UDL participants and the schools and communities they come from. Stahl refers specifically to this frame of black familial dysfunction: "Brooks says his students have overcome tremendous adversities like child and sexual abuse and drugs in the family." While Stahl is speaking, the camera shows five Walbrook debaters working on debate in a classroom. One is white and the other four are racial or ethnic minorities. The viewer is encouraged to read these students as examples of students facing familial dysfunction. That the majority are students of color encourages the audience to interpret that the majority of students facing physical abuse

and drug addiction in the family are children from minority, presumably black, households. Stahl's description scripts the young bodies of these students, branding a cultural text on their bodies that allows them to become intelligible to the majority white and middle class viewing audience.

*60 Minutes* also uses spatial contrast to signify the social status of the students. For example, note the following interchange between Stahl and the Walbrook coach Officer Brooks:

Stahl: You show up, and they're all in suits...

Off. Brooks: Yes.

Stahl: ...and jackets

Off. Brooks: Yes.

Stahl: And your kids?

Brooks: We're in jeans, and T-shirts, and you know...

Stahl: And that was intimidating to your kids, wasn't it?

Brooks: It was because they felt, you know, ostracized.

During this conversation, the Baltimore students are pictured approaching a suburban high school that appears to be housed in a modern castle. The architecture seems designed around the image of an old European castle with grey stone walls, Cathedral like structures, a large majestic front door, all surrounded by beautifully manicured green lawns. The other suburban students at the tournament are dressed in the prep school uniform, khaki pants for boys, calf length khaki skirts for girls. Males are attired in button down shirts, blazers, ties, and dress shoes. Females are draped in skirts, tights, crisp blouses, blazers, and dress shoes. The population seems significantly represented by white and largely male students. In contrast, the Baltimore debaters are shown in jeans, t-shirts, tennis shoes, sports coats, and sports hats. While it seems that the

framing of the clothing difference can be characterized through the lens of class alone, the difference of race and ethnicity is critical to creating a significant image contrast. These bodies are scripted through their contrast. In other words, such a sharp contrast in imagery is designed to encourage the audience to read the UDL students as outsiders facing insurmountable odds when facing the bodies scripted to represent social and economic privilege. It is not just the difference in attire that creates such a critical contrast, although, Stahl and Brooks' conversation indicate otherwise. More significant is the racial contrast between the UDL and suburban students. Within the sea of whiteness, the Walbrook students look uncomfortable and out of place. Such contrasts frame them as inferior to those they are being visually compared to. Thus, they have been effectively scapegoated. They have been brushed with the frames associated with at risk black youths. The audience can attach the assumptions associated with their race and class status to make the redemption narrative more satisfying to the social body.

Lastly, the visual representation of Officer Angelo Brooks perpetuates the racial frames embedded in the race and class stereotypes associated with young, black bodies. Brooks is shown in his Baltimore Police Department uniform during scenes at the school. Stahl makes sure to mention it. While the camera shows Brooks at practice, Stahl explains to the audience that Brooks teaches classes and coaches the debate team "in full uniform, which includes a loaded gun." Stahl's tone is incredulous which assures the audience that such a practice is indeed unusual. Brooks is shown during a speaking drill at an afternoon practice. He walks around the classroom holding a timer, while students speed read through a debate speaking drill. The camera pans in on Brooks' shoulder, zooming in on the patch on his arm that identifies him as a member of the BPD. The camera then pans out and refocuses on the nine millimeter firearm strapped to his waist.

Brooks' police uniform does not seem out of place, despite the fact that the practice is taking place in what is clearly a public school classroom. In a suburban setting, a police officer teaching in a classroom would only seem intelligible if it were crime safety prevention day and the police had sent an officer as an ambassador of good will to local schools. Yet, with Brooks surrounded by young, black students, his police uniform seems more acceptable, intelligible as a normal presence in a school dominated by minorities. If one simply looks at these images without the context of the verbal story, then one might be convinced, that the students are juvenile delinquents engaged in some type of rehabilitation ran by a correctional officer. And yet, it is not just the uniform itself that signifies to the audience. It is that the uniformed officer is carrying a (presumably) loaded firearm into a public school and into the classroom with students. That Brooks carries a weapon while he teaches students would seem to signify that some threat, or imminent danger, is present in his day to day interactions with students. And, such a threat would seem reasonable because of the student population with whom Brooks works. In other words, inner city youths of color signify chaos and disorder. Their supposed propensity for violence, crime, and various other social infractions mark them as likely offenders. Such a status breeds fear within the broader American society, of young, black, Hispanic, and Asian vicious criminals. Thus, if one arms oneself, while working with such students, that reaction can only appear reasonable.

With these verbal frames, the viewer is convinced that their reactions to the images are entirely correct. Earlier in the piece, Stahl notes: "A cop in the classroom, so committed to making a difference that he let a kid who was a gang member and a drug dealer join the team." Stahl's voiced is overlaid onto video footage of the Baltimore students at an after-school practice. As Stahl mentions "gang member" and "drug dealer" the camera zooms in on a young, black

male, wearing eye glasses, khaki's and a button down shirt. Stahl's assertions in conjunction with the visual images tell the viewer that the young man is very possibly one of those dangerous students that Brooks' has reformed. With the verbal frames attached to the bodies of these young students of color, any lack of clarity about the kinds of students serviced by the program can be put to rest.

Yet even as these students are constructed as facing insurmountable "odds," the negative stereotypes associated with their general representation in not only the news media, but in popular culture and politics, must be redeemed. For it is through their redemption, through saving them that we are ourselves redeemed. I offer the following interchange as an example of the segway between scapegoat rhetoric and the rhetoric of redemption. Eric Beale is one of the Walbrook debaters featured in the story. Eric had been a special education student who faced serious difficulty with reading and speaking out loud. While Stahl describes him, Eric's voice is being faded into the background as he responds to a question Stahl asks. Eric is then, pictured walking confidently down a street in Baltimore. He is dressed in slacks and a nice sweater, appearing to be a young, educated black male. Cutting back to the interview Eric describes his difficulties and the viewer can tell that he still faces a slight speech impediment, but has a great deal of control over his speech. Then Eric is pictured in debate competition and his impediment is hardly in evidence. As his voice is phased out, Stahl notes that "After two years of debate, Eric tested out of special-ed. He now reads at his grade level and is applying to college." Then Eric is once again on camera saying: "It taught me never to believe what other people say about me, never to sit back and put myself down." Stahl replies: "You've been saved." Eric responds: "Yes, by a great team and a great person." Overcoming a disability is a particularly salient narrative for the television viewing audience.<sup>101</sup> Particularly within the educational system, black students are



more likely to be placed in special education courses.<sup>102</sup> That Stahl uses "saved" here is significant. Eric has been redeemed. The probability that Eric would otherwise be an at-risk black youth is clearly high, he is a black male and faces a learning disability. Such a young man might have faced insurmountable odds to his successful participation in school. He might have developed into a "thug." Yet, it is debate that has saved him. He can be redeemed because participation in the activity has changed the likely path his life might have followed.

Stahl returns to the image contrast between the Walbrook students and the suburban students. Note the following exchange between Stahl and Brooks:

Stahl: At the suburban debates, it's his kids with their one bin of research vs. tubs and mounds of materials on the other side. It was obvious that first time they were going to lose.

Off. Brooks: I told them, 'Well, there's a lesson, you know, in a loss.'

They came back, they worked harder, they made corrections, they improved, and then they started winning. So I said, 'Well, what was the difference...'

Stahl: They started winning even in that league?

Off. Brooks: Absolutely.

Stahl: And they're now anything but intimidated.

As Stahl speaks, the Walbrook students are featured on screen at an integrated tournament. They are seated in a classroom at two desks with their single "bin of research" in front of them. The camera then pans to the opposite side of the room, where two white suburban debaters stand in the midst of multiple "bins" of debate evidence. Even though the students may lose to the more privileged kids, Brooks position indicates that it should serve further as a motivator for the inner city kids. These kids then appear as representative of American progress, they represent the

journey to success; the American success story of confronting numerous obstacles in order to succeed. That economic and racial disparity can be overcome allows the audience to alleviate any guilt associated with race and class privilege. The students are redeemed by their "hard work" and tenacity, which is rewarded based on our contemporary systems of merit. Their redemption is our redemption. We need not feel guilty that some people will fail to achieve the American dream as long as we can believe that our society creates ample opportunity for everyone to achieve.

One more example indicates the significance of the contrast. Stahl briefly interviews one of the suburban students at the integrated tournament he attends. Tore Debella, a high school student in suburban Maryland is featured with three other unidentified white males in a large school auditorium. In slacks, button down shirts, and blazers, these young men represent the epitome of prep school white males.

Stahl: Tore Debella is captain on the top suburban team in the area, Loyola Blakefield.

Tore Debella: I think a lot of other people have the misconception that maybe they'll be easier. I mean, they are, by far, our toughest competition.

Stahl: Are you saying that you think they're tougher competition than the other suburban and private schools?

Debella: Yes.

The Walbrook students began to win against some of the suburban schools. That the students were able to obtain such competitive success functions to strengthen the underlying argument that race and class stand in one's way only if one allows it to. Thus, the broader society is absolved of its responsibility for creating or perpetuating circumstances that increase the

likelihood that certain populations are more likely to face poverty and that poverty is often passed on through generations.

Here are two last examples of the rhetoric of redemption. Stahl notes: "Before she joined the debating team, Regina was thinking about dropping out of school. Now she wants to become a Supreme Court justice." Again, Stahl speaks: "Before debate, William had no interest in going to college. Not anymore." As Stahl discusses each student, the camera view shows each student engaged in speaking during an actual debate round. Regina is a young black woman. As we listen to her speak her voice characteristics and tone mark her as a minority of lower socio-economic status. However, Regina is arguing passionately about prison mental health care practices and problems with a particular public policy offered to change current practice. Regina is loud and aggressive, exactly the stereotype of black women that can be off putting to the racial majority. Yet, in this context, what can be read as an appropriate context of debate competition, allows Regina's strength of personality to be a benefit. William, the young man featured in the second example, is a large young black man. One might imagine that if he were encountered on the street at night, he might be taken as dangerous because of his size. But, he is shown engaged in debate competition against another black male. They are shown using their argumentative skill to win a debate, in sharp contrast to the stereotype of young, inner city black males as violent aggressors. Through Stahl's scripting of William's body, he represents a population of young black men deemed "troublemakers" by traditional educational systems. Yet, simultaneously, he is redeemed from such stereotypes by his debate participation.

### Conclusions

The representation of the UDL participants through the frames of scapegoating and redemption demonstrates the significance of racial stereotyping in news media representation of

racial and ethnic minorities. This chapter responds to the call by media scholars to interrogate examples of socially responsible media. As I have argued throughout this chapter, socially responsible media representations of racial minorities, often depend on themes and frames that are normal for crime news. Graham notes that “education reform discourse effectively fashions a scapegoat for social and systemic problems – the difficult child, the unruly body.”<sup>103</sup> In other words, scapegoat rhetoric frames black youths as a “problem people” in order to construct them as redeemable figures. Yet, such redemption is predicated upon “problem people” using their own agency to redeem themselves. And, if they do not engage in responsible action then we need not feel responsible as a social community. These media representations are cathartic; they alleviate the guilt the social body feels for the social and cultural problems within U.S. society. Redeeming these youths, functions as atonement for that guilt.

Future studies of the UDL movement should seek to interrogate the image politics of the non-profit organizations that both run and/or support the program. Such a study may add to our understanding of the frames that become significant in media representation of the program. In other words, non-profits are stakeholders in such politics of representation. How they present the program to journalists is likely to be significantly influential in influencing the framing techniques of news organizations. And, secondarily, we might seek to learn how such representations influence the student populations participating in the program.

This chapter also suggests that scholars investigate the rhetoric surrounding discourses about education and black underachievement in the news media. Since the passage of Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act, significant economic resources, both non-profit and governmental, have been funneled into varying programs designed to positively effect achievement amongst racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. Thus, the media representation of such efforts has

simultaneously increased. Such representation should be analyzed for the manner in which race, gender, and class ideologies articulate to script social bodies.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Rhetoric of Contemporary Black Social Protest:**

#### **The Louisville Project and the Rhetoric of Confrontation**

The UDL movement has expanded beyond attempts to increase high school participation. The college policy debate community has become increasingly interested in diversifying the racial representations at the collegiate level. As debate theorist Pamela Stepp notes, historically the statistical representation of Blacks in the college debate community has been far lower than black representation in the American college population.<sup>1</sup> Although, Stepp and Gardner's 2001 study indicates that the numbers are changing indicating a slow, yet progressive increase in the numbers of minority participants in general.<sup>2</sup> There are a number of competitive debate organizations including Lincoln-Douglas, parliamentary, model U.N., and the international debates. Policy debate is considered the "granddaddy" of those activities. It is a highly intellectual game that requires an extensive time commitment in order to be successful. It is research intensive and requires specialized training. Thus, the lack of diversity in one of the oldest and most prestigious academic programs available to American students is a critical space from which to interrogate the parameters of the educational gains achieved since the end of legal segregation. There are many academic spaces from which minorities remain excluded and it is from these spaces that we might learn the methods by which such exclusions are maintained.

Despite the UDL's success at increasing the participation levels of racial/ethnic minorities and women in high school policy debate, the program has not resulted in a significant increase in the participation levels in national level college policy debate.<sup>3</sup> Even with the

financial resources made available to UDL students to increase their successful participation in high school and the specific interest of college debate teams in recruiting minority students, UDL participants are largely choosing not to participate in college policy debate.<sup>4</sup> Jon Brushke, debate scholar and debate director, notes that “If even a very small percentage of those UDL students went on to college debate there should be an obvious and profound change in participation by ethnic groups, and that has not happened.”<sup>5</sup> He notes further, that “Whatever other benefits these leagues have offered their participants; they have not managed to change ethnic participation levels in college debate.”<sup>6</sup> Stepp notes further that the activity remains primarily dominated by white males, from middle to upper class backgrounds. Even those UDL students who have chosen to debate in college still remain statistically under-represented at the most successful levels of national competition.<sup>7</sup> Stepp and Gardner note that although female and minority participation is increasing, there does not seem “to be a proportional increase in their winning,” including both team awards and speaker awards.<sup>8</sup>

As the UDL movement gained attention from those in the debate community interested in diversifying the activity, Dr. Ede Warner at the University of Louisville became significantly involved in the development of debate curriculum, the training of UDL summer institute faculty members, and the instruction of UDL students.<sup>9</sup> In a 2001 essay, Warner along with Brushke argue:

With UDL support, students from under-served high schools can go to tournaments and compete against students from wealthy school systems. Debate thus addresses at all levels the problems that the under-served confront when approaching institutions so often governed by the graduates of rich, private schools: Skills of discourse are equalized, economic disadvantages become less of a barrier when confronting rhetors, and the

economically under-served gain a conduit to positions of institutional power...More basically, when students from UDL schools debate against elite high schools and win, the students learn that victory is possible and that economic disadvantages can be overcome.<sup>10</sup>

Warner and Brushcke demonstrate their commitment to the UDL's ability to be efficacious in encouraging and producing educational success and achievement amongst "under-served" communities. For these authors, the UDL movement creates a sense of hope that educational opportunities can significantly impact the social consequences of race, ethnicity, gender and class. In other words, "Offering debate at under-served schools addresses...inequalities."<sup>11</sup>

Warner and Brushcke go on to note that "debate-as-outreach" can be particularly powerful as the debate community learns to become increasingly more accepting of stylistic differences that are likely to result from the diversifying of that activity. They argue that debate "audiences must appreciate these new forms."<sup>12</sup>

However, as Warner observed the national development of the UDL and its impact on the nationally competitive high school circuit and the college debate community, he experienced a growing discontent. By 2005 Warner's position on the UDL had drastically changed:

Students are hoodwinked and bamboozled into believing that they can receive access to all of the benefits of interscholastic debate, in the same way that I have convinced students that the game could change to allow for more diversity. They are told that debate is a "way out" and can improve their lives. They are told that if they learn the norms and procedures of traditional debate they can achieve just like everyone else. What they are not told: that debate tools alone won't overcome their disadvantages, especially within the debate community, that the best they can generally hope for is becoming the best in that



UDL and perhaps getting recruited by the local UDL partner, and ultimately living their life as a regional debater or a non-competitive national debater. They will not share in the resource expenditures of the larger debate structure, they will not be on the pre-bid track and they will not receive the rewards reserved for a select few in national debate. Why? Not because of anything they do, but because the game is rigged against them, who they are, and what the community asks them to become to achieve ‘success.’<sup>13</sup>

In the 2001 essay, Warner believed that the UDL was a “way out” for many students of color. However, by 2005 it had become clear that the UDLs were not, in general, training students to be nationally competitive on the high school level or preparing students for nationally competitive college debate. According to Warner, the UDL administrators had misrepresented the programs successfulness to the student participants. In other words, UDL students are told that their agreement to learn the norms of traditional participation will equalize the playing field with students who have greater economic and social advantage.

Warner’s position indicates the significance of race to social performativity in educational settings. It is the difference of race and class, the marking of not only blackness, but economically dis-privileged blackness, that scars the bodies of UDL students. And yet, it is not simply the significance of skin color, it is also the styling of the colored body that becomes significant in reading racial performance. In spaces dominated by whiteness, blackness exceeds the edges of propriety.<sup>14</sup> UDL students must master their bodies, must learn to style themselves in a manner that tempers the excessiveness of blackness. Thus, Warner asks a significant question, what does the community ask these students *to be* in order to be granted access to national success? Ultimately, Warner suggests that UDL students will be trapped in the less competitive fringes of college debate.

There are varying explanations within the debate community regarding the lack of racial diversity, particularly amongst Blacks and Hispanics.<sup>15</sup> Is it a recruitment issue?<sup>16</sup> The debate community seems to have staked its claim on this explanation as generally demonstrative of why black students seem under-represented in the activity. Many of the nationally and regionally competitive debate teams have reached out to recruit racial minorities and women in an effort to diversify their teams and the community. Brusckke notes that the “aggressive recruiting of minority participants” has been the most “pleasant alternative.”<sup>17</sup> And, there is a general level of support for such inclusion efforts within the community. Yet, as Brusckke observes “this is work largely left to the Urban Debate Leagues.”<sup>18</sup>

In such an environment one then must wonder why the community’s efforts have resulted in a limited increase in minority participation and few, although notable, examples of nationally successful racial minorities.<sup>19</sup> If one accepts that the college debate community’s efforts to become a more diverse and inclusive social and competitive space are in earnest, then one may be compelled to wonder if there is something about the college policy debate activity itself that results in low levels of minority participation. Brusckke notes that “Perhaps it is time to start talking and thinking about how the style of debate might influence participation levels.”<sup>20</sup> Debate scholar and director, William Shanahan notes that there must be a simultaneous challenge to both the “content and style of traditional debate.”<sup>21</sup> For both Brusckke and Shanahan it becomes quite clear that style is a critical space from which to engage in lasting change in the debate community. More specifically, it is the questioning and re-visioning of such norms that may result in significant changes in the ethnic and racial make up of the debate community; and I imagine, an important transformation to the practice of the activity itself.

Stepp argues that cultural and behavioral barriers exist within the national college policy debate community that contribute to an environment hostile to racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual differences.<sup>22</sup> I think it is important to theorize the performative implications of this hostility. If the image of the successful, national level debater is signified by a white, male, and economically privileged body, then the stylistic practices of those bodies become the standard by which all other bodies are evaluated. Their practices, their behaviors, their identities become the models or thrones upon which others must sacrifice their identities in the pursuit of “the ballot” or the win. It is the combination of cultural values, behavioral practices, and the significance of the flesh that remain barriers to the inclusion of othered bodies and identities. In other words, the *habitus* I mention in Chapter One.

The “stylistic procedures” of the community are but one way in which the boundaries of participation are maintained. Warner notes that “stylistic procedures” refer to, but are not limited to, “rate of delivery, note-taking techniques, what qualifies as evidence, and other technical presentation issues.”<sup>23</sup> Shanahan notes that there are “violent forms of domination throughout debate practice” that include “brutalizing forms of technique – that is, outrageous levels of speed in concert with impressive word economy, slavish devotion to the...minutiae of flowing where ink passes for argument” and the “inevitable, speech reconstruction by debaters.”<sup>24</sup> Warner notes that these “stylistic procedures” are developed and maintained through systems of privilege that lock out minority participants. Yet, the “stylistic procedures” of the community also include certain parameters or boundaries for identity performance. Style includes bodily performance, from how we style the body, to how our bodies signify as part of our rhetorical practices. It is not simply the “stylistic procedures” relevant to actual debate competition itself, but the social and cultural stylistic practices of the debate community relevant to the performances of race, gender,

class, and sexuality. In other words, the performance of identity is integral to the “stylistic procedures” that produce a social and competitive environment hostile to shades of difference.

The stylistic norms of the policy debate community are inextricably attached to the social performance of identity. In other words, if the stylistic norms privilege the stylistic choices of white, straight, economically privileged males, as is clearly indicated by their statistical representation at the heights of competitive success, then difference marks one as other unless the individual performs according to those stylistic and identity-based norms. Racially and/or ethnically different bodies must perform themselves according to the cultural norms of the debate community. For UDL students it can often mean changing one’s appearance, standardizing language practices, and eschewing cultural practices at least while participating in debate. In essence, students of color are performatively “whitened” in order to have an opportunity for achieving in debate competitions. “Acting black” or brown is problematic because those performative identities are not privileged in terms of successful participation. In fact, they signify a difference, an opposite, a negative differential. It is not that the debate community actively operates to exclude based on race, instead it is an exclusion based on racial performance, in other words, how the differentially colored body chooses to style itself.

So, if the stylistic procedures and practices of the national policy debate community function to exclude those considered other, then engaging style might be a tactical attack on the viability and maintenance of the traditional system. Once Warner became critical of the UDL he made the difficult choice of rejecting the traditional debate practices he had heretofore participated in and developed new methods of debate competition, judging, and coaching.

Thus began the Louisville Project in 2001. The Louisville Project is a radical engagement with racial performativity and privilege in debate. Rather than supporting continued inclusion

efforts that require students of color to assimilate to be successful, the Louisville debaters attack the very structures and practices of the activity itself. Rather than engaging the debate resolution chosen by the debate topic committee, these debaters reframe the debate as an opportunity to actually create change on the local level rather than pretending to argue for changes in the actions of the federal or U.S. government that debaters have no actual power to effect. They critique the normative practices of the community, which they argue, has negative effects on the participation of those constituted as “others.” Rather than attempting to play a rigged game by the rules, the Louisville students interrogate the stylistic rules and create alternative styles. To participate in debate on its own terms, they argue, traps debate participants in a universal norm that has serious consequences for those marked “different.” The Louisville Project and its proponents attempt to “break free” from these “traps.”<sup>25</sup> This analysis engages in the interrogation of a particular example of resistance rhetoric. Rather than seeking out the dominant representations of race in the debate community that maintain race, class, and gender ideologies, this analysis turns our attention to the manners in which black students attempt to resist and critique the normative social practices and educational procedures that create barriers to meaningful black participation in national policy debate.

While the Louisville Project in the form under study for this dissertation spanned the years 2000-2005, the focus of this study will be the year 2004 in which the project achieved its greatest competitive success. In that year, Louisville’s most successful team was comprised of Elizabeth Jones and Tonia Green. During the year, Jones and Green broke through the pack into the elimination rounds of every tournament they attended.<sup>26</sup> I engage in an analysis of their elimination rounds at one of the national policy championships. Three debate rounds from the 2004 Cross-Examination Debate Association National Championships elimination rounds will

serve as the texts for this chapter. The Louisville team's participation in the more prestigious NDT competition will be discussed in Chapter Four. These two tournaments occur at the end of the tournament year. They are the two most prestigious policy debate tournaments. The topic that year read: "Resolved: That the U.S. Federal Government should enact one or more of the following: Withdrawal of its WTO complaint against the EU's restrictions on GM Foods; Increase economic or conflict prevention aid to Greece &/or Turkey; Withdrawal from NATO; Remove barriers to EU/NATO participation in Peacekeeping and Reconstruction of Iraq; Remove TNWs from Europe; Harmonize DNA intellectual property law with EU; Rescission of 2002 Farm Bill Subsidies." Debaters spend the year engaging in competition in preparation for these tournaments. The topic remains the same throughout the year. Thus, during the regular season, debaters test out new arguments, modify others based on their successfulness in competition, study the strategic choices of important teams, and so on. All of this prior work and preparation is designed to put the teams that seek national recognition in the best possible position to succeed at either one or both of these tournaments.

Yet, it is important to distinguish between the two tournaments and the organizations that sponsor them. CEDA Nationals has an open tournament invitation and so it regularly accommodates hundreds of entries from around the country. It is often referred to as the "People's Tournament." Teams that have been active on the national circuit for the entire year find themselves pitted against teams that may have never attended a national tournament. The 2004 Nationals were held on Jones and Green's home turf at the University of Louisville from March 19 – 21. Jones and Green were Quarter-finalists at CEDA Nationals, losing that debate to the California State University, Fullerton team of Clark and Ward.

In contrast, the NDT is a great deal more difficult to enter. First, the tournament offers first round bids to the top sixteen teams, “the sweet sixteen,” in the nation by national competitive record over the year. These teams are automatically entered into the tournament. After the first rounds have been determined, other teams may apply for a second round bid to the tournament. The second round teams must be voted on by the district NDT chairpersons. All others must compete in district level competitions around the nation, held in the Spring semester, to earn a spot on the tournament roster. There were 74 teams from around the country invited to the 2004 NDT held in Washington, D.C., at Catholic University from April 2 - 3. It is because of the tournaments exclusivity that it is considered the NBA Championships of debate. Those teams with first round bids included, Emory, Harvard, Dartmouth, Wake Forest, Texas, Northwestern, Michigan State and others. The top sixteen are chosen strictly based on their records for the year, their wins are assigned a numerical value and they are ranked from one to sixteen.

Jones and Green, while successful throughout the year, were not first round picks.<sup>27</sup> However, these young black women resoundingly demonstrated to the debate elite that they were a force to be reckoned with. By the end of the pre-elimination rounds, Jones and Green had won 6 of their eight debates. That record ranked them as the fifth seed at the tournament. Debate elimination rounds work similarly to other sudden death tournaments. Rankings are important because a teams seeding determines the teams that they confront in the early elimination rounds. Higher seeds are power protected, in essence, they are protected from debating one another early on, by being pitted against lower ranked seeds. Thus, seeding is critically important strategically. Jones and Green ended up Quarter-finalists, finally losing to UC Berkeley’s Dan Shalmon and Tejinder Singh, the number one team in the country. The number one rank meant that they were also that year’s Copeland Award winners. The Copeland is like the “Most Valuable Players”

award. Tonia Green was awarded the 5<sup>th</sup> place speaker award tournament wide and Elizabeth Jones was awarded the 8<sup>th</sup> speaker award. Of the top twenty speakers, five were women and two were black women. Their wins are significant for it is the first time in the history of the most prestigious policy debate tournament in the country that any black woman has attained such achievement. Thus, they serve as exemplars of the project.

I also chose to limit my focus to the elimination rounds because so-called “out rounds” are widely attended by spectators. We’re not talking about sports fans who travel around watching their favorite debate team. Policy debate isn’t really that accessible to outsiders, those not in some way attached to the debate community. Yet, many teams do not make it to the elimination rounds and many judges may not be used during those rounds. So, they are the spectators for elimination debates. In the pre-elimination rounds, it is usually just the debaters and the judge/ judges. Yet, elimination rounds often provide a platform for speaking to the broader community. Not everyone may see an important elimination debate, but they will surely hear it discussed by those who did. I suggest that elimination day is singularly significant in transmitting the cultural norms of the community. The most successful debaters are on display in front of the community. That they are successful encourages them to be mimicked. Many a young debater will learn a great deal about what it means to be the best by watching those the community has already marked as the best. The rounds used for this analysis from the 2004 CEDA Nationals include the double octo-finals round against Emory University’s, Bob Allen and Mike Greenstein, a team that had been ranked one of the “sweet sixteen;” the octo-finals round against Brad Hall and Jamie Carroll from Wake Forest University, also members of the “sweet sixteen” (they would also go on to be the number two team at the 2006 NDT) and the quarter-finals round against California State University at Fullerton’s Clark and Ward.



## The Louisville Project: Rhetoric of a Social Protest Movement

The Louisville debaters metaphorically withdraw from the debate community, rejecting its stylistic procedures. They refuse to read or speak fast, to flow, to affirm governmental action or to rely solely on expert research. In essence, they refuse to play the policy debate game as it is traditionally played. Instead, they engage in a performative style of debating that makes use of rap music, poetry, personal experience and visual performances. The Louisville debaters argue for creating spaces within the debate community where alternative knowledges are not only accepted, but critically engaged.

The Louisville Project is a significant example of youth protest rhetoric within and through an educational institution. The Project has already generated significant scholarship from within the academic debate community.<sup>28</sup> Debate scholar C. Thomas Preston notes that the Louisville Project has been a particularly significant “educational reform movement” in college policy debate.<sup>29</sup> Yet, current academic debate scholarship has not begun to analyze the rhetorical nature of the Louisville Project. Instead, current debate scholarship is more concerned with the proprieties of the argument, rather than with any detailed analysis of the stylistic practices of the Project. In addition, no current debate research makes the Project the central focus of its study. Thus, a more extended critical engagement with the Project is warranted.

In the second edition of *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, Richard Jensen notes that “dissent is quite different” in our current social context, than when early rhetorical scholarship began the study of social movement discourse.<sup>30</sup> He notes that traditionally social movement scholarship has focused on large, national movements that achieve media attention. Instead of broad national movements Jensen argues that dissent is characterized by more localized and single-issue activism. The Project represents a grassroots social movement, a localized example

of social protest foregrounding issues of race and inclusion. First, the Project engages in rhetorical argument for the purpose of instituting social and institutional change. Second, the Project is a collective effort by members of the Louisville debate team. And, the Project members request that others in their immediate and extended audience join in solidarity with them. Third, the Project is clearly defined around collective identity. The majority of the team is African-American and thus their advocacy specifically revolves around the social and cultural history of Black America.

Movement scholarship has traditionally analyzed social movements linearly, identifying the process by which an individual movement matures and decays.<sup>31</sup> As Stephen Lucas notes, a rhetorical focus on a movement benefits from a “comprehensive” study of the discourse of individual movements.<sup>32</sup> For this reason Lucas argues that critiques of contemporary social movements suffer from “myopia.”<sup>33</sup> He believes that without the distance of time the critic’s view is necessarily incomplete. Yet, a limiting of rhetorical scholarship on movements to an abject historicism requires that our disciplinary community remove itself from the social problems of our times. Let us learn from our disciplinary past. In 1968 the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* published four essays in “The Forum” intended to articulate the need for a commitment from the discipline to understand and better interracial communication in America.<sup>34</sup> Veilleux argues:

Many teachers of speech feel that the speech profession responded to our last great internal crisis, the McCarthy era, with less moral assertion than one would have expected from those concerned with the ethics of communication. I would hope that speech departments everywhere would respond to today’s challenge of social responsibility with true moral commitment. It should not be the fear of Black Power that makes us act, but

the sad realization that only the extreme rhetoric of violence has made us aware of our own neglect of a communication problem now so far out of hand.”<sup>35</sup>

This statement describing the race relations of the late 1960’s sounds eerily similar to our present context. While it is clear that race relations have improved since the Jim Crow era and post the Civil Rights Movement, racial conflict remains a critical part of the American cultural, political and economic landscape. Thus, Veilleux argues that the speech communication discipline has a “moral” obligation to intercede in racial communicative conflict. For, in his opinion, it is the inability to communicate which generates fear and violence. Thirty-eight years later, racial conflict is still tangible, particularly across college campuses. The increasing importance of Interracial Communication as a sub-discipline in Speech Communication demonstrates the continuing need for this discipline’s intervention into contemporary racial conflict. The racial conflicts of the 1960’s necessitated a response from our community as we found ourselves unable to sit silent and safe in the ivory tower. We can choose to invest ourselves in the crisis moments of our time, or we can choose to ignore them. But, our commitment to studying the conflicts *in the now* may very well be critical to the next phase of changes that our society *will* undergo.

The impact of globalization on the contemporary horrors of poverty and socio-political destitution will only become increasingly clear over the next twenty years. Many decry the supposedly destructive elements of gangsta rap, the violence, misogyny, gratuitous sexuality, and excessive consumerism; these are only examples, not unique or definitive of hip hop, of the ugliness within our society that will continue to make it-self known, visible, and felt. If we want to avoid the possibility of a future infested with violence, distrust, anger, and bigotry, we must be willing to turn our scholarly attention, the power of our tools of theory and analysis, toward the

controversial rhetorics of the day. That necessitates a particular engagement with rhetorics of resistance and localized social movements. In other words, we very well may not have the time to wait and study these local resistance movements historically if we see our scholarship as at all relevant to impacting the social, political and economic environments in which we live.

We must concern ourselves with today's social movements; the protests against oppression and subjugation that are happening now. Thus, rhetoricians may choose to study rhetorical moments in a movements' activism efforts. The "...themes, strategies, arguments, ethos, values, rhetorical forms, and a whole host of other rhetorical concerns may not be time bound or sequential."<sup>36</sup> The study of the Louisville Project is not a linear or historical project. Instead, I am interested in studying brief snapshots of the Project's rhetoric in the hopes of theorizing about the use of style and performance in black protest rhetoric utilizing hip hop music and black culture.

This chapter is less concerned with whether or not the movement rhetoric is persuasive. Radical rhetorics of confrontation are often not immediately persuasive to those in power.<sup>37</sup> Then why is this study of the Project relevant? It is an example of social protest designed to disrupt, to create critical irruptions in the normative process of a social systemic reality. Herbert Simons refers to this type of social movement rhetoric as a "militant" rhetoric.<sup>38</sup> Militant rhetoric is characterized by "direct action techniques and verbal polemics, militants threaten, harass, cajole, disrupt, provoke, intimidate, coerce."<sup>39</sup> Rhetorical theorists Robert Scott and Donald Smith note that "A rhetorical theory suitable to our age must take into account the charge that civility and decorum serve as masks for the preservation of injustice, that they condemn the dispossessed to non-being, and that as transmitted in a technological society they become the instrumentalities of power for those who 'have'."<sup>40</sup> The strategies of confrontation used by more militant social

movements are designed to disrupt normative practices in order to highlight the social practices that maintain dominance and subjugation. These strategies are often “expressed in dress, manners, dialect, gestures, in-group slogans, and ceremonies.”<sup>41</sup>

Significant for this project is the importance of style and identity performance as a rhetorical strategy in social movement rhetoric. Specifically, this project investigates the significance of sub-cultural style as a strategy for confrontation in “militant” rhetoric.<sup>42</sup> Dick Hebdige defines sub-cultural style as “...the expressive forms and rituals...of subordinate groups.”<sup>43</sup> The use of African-American and hip hop music and aesthetic styles in the traditional spaces of academic policy debate may operate to combat the ideologies of whiteness that actively maintain the dominant, normative order of debate. Hebdige contends that sub-cultural style is a “challenge to hegemony” that “offends the silent majority.”<sup>44</sup> The use of African-American and hip hop cultural styles in debate are “improper” and as such function as “tactics” that “insinuate” themselves “into the other’s place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance.”<sup>45</sup> As a “tactic,” the use of sub-cultural style is a maneuver through enemy territory in an attempt to negotiate dominant norms. Style, according to Hebdige, can either maintain or subvert social dominance. He notes that as a means of resistance style can be a means of revolt; a “refusal” to perform the self through the normal practices of a community.<sup>46</sup> He further contends that if language “shapes and positions the subject” then the “ways in which things are said” result in “rigid limitations on what can be said.”<sup>47</sup> And, if there are limitations on what we can say, then there are limitations on what we can be.

In this critical analysis of the Louisville Project, I argue that the Louisville debaters engage in two rhetorical strategies designed to disrupt the normativity of traditional debate practices: 1) the African American practice of signifyin', and 2) genre violation as a means of

using style and performance to combat the social ideologies that result in unequal power relations across race, gender, and class within the national policy debate community. It is these two rhetorical strategies that make Louisville's rhetoric seem argumentative and confrontational. Yet, as I argue at the end of this chapter, without the radical nature of their protest, the connection between the normative practices of policy debate participation and the lack of racial diversity on the national tournament circuit may have remained hidden. Secondly, I argue that the Louisville projects dissemination onto the high school level, particularly amongst UDL students, may foster a crisis within the UDL structure that necessitates a re-evaluation of non-profit partnership with local cultural communities.

#### Signifyin' on Traditional Policy Debate: The Use of African-American Rhetorical Practices to Confront Social Normativity

The Louisville debaters signify on a number of practices and procedures of the policy debate community. Henry Louis Gates defines signifyin' as "the trope of revision, of repetition and difference, which" he derives "from the Afro-American idiom."<sup>48</sup> Signifyin' is "often characterized by pastiche, and, most crucially, it turns on repetition of formal structures and their differences."<sup>49</sup> Signifyin' may "include marking, loud-talking, testifying, calling out (of one's name), sounding, rapping, playing the dozens, and so on."<sup>50</sup> The Louisville debaters repeat traditional practices and engage in a strategic reversal of those practices in an effort to create new meanings and norms. Through this process, the debaters critically analyze the race, class, and gender ideologies critical to the normative practices and procedures of the community. Such practices and procedures that are under review include the use of and dependence on expert evidence in debate speeches. Green and Jones, in particular, also engage in the signifyin' practice

of loud-talking, most evidently in the cross-examination period where debaters directly engage one another.

Policy debate is distinct from other kinds of debate competition in its commitment to highly evidenced speeches that require the extended citation of quotation materials from reliable media or expert sources. In debate lingo, "cards" refer to such extended evidence quotations. Such quotations are usually a paragraph or more long and are preceded by a brief one to two sentence summary of the evidence. Policy debate is so research intensive that each college debate team may produce thousands of pages of research briefs relevant to that year's debate topic. Debaters rely on media news reports, academic journals, books, congressional reports, and so on. Debate privileges these institutional sources of knowledge over other sources.

The Louisville Project critiques the policy debate community's over reliance on expert or objective evidence. In the First Affirmative Constructive or 1AC of the octo-final round against the team of Hall and Carroll from Wake Forest (ranked in the sweet sixteen), Jones attempts to problematize and revise our understanding of the power relations involved in the definition of objectivity and expertise:

And do they know about the cards we hold  
Like stories of homes heated with stoves  
Unequal education, no healthcare, empty stomachs  
Past due rent bills and pockets filled with lint  
Mothers are cryin' as their children's tears hit concrete floors  
And clocks tick away at childhood.<sup>51</sup>

Implied in Jones' interpretation of "cards" is a certain ownership over the knowledge produced by experience. Such ownership is implied by the traditional use of evidence as well. Cards are

not just resources, they are strategic tools in attacking the positions of one's opponents. Those who hold the "best" evidence as defined by community standards have a greater control over the judgment of their argumentative efforts. In other words, traditional "cards" grant institutional authority to the debaters using them. Those debaters who choose to forego this community standard can be characterized as anti-intellectual if they eschew their commitment to the use of acceptable forms of evidentiary claims.

Jones argues that real "cards" are held by those who suffer the most in a society. In other words, those who are subjugated in a social community are often uniquely situated to comment upon the normative social and political practices engaged in by dominant social group members that maintain that subjugation.<sup>52</sup> As Cheryl Kleinman notes, "people on the margins have the distance required to stand back and analyze the mainstream world."<sup>53</sup> However, if they lack conventional status, subjugated voices are often overlooked. They can be ignored as expert voices stand as the final word on any given subject. The pain of subjugation often only becomes real when it is sanctioned by expert authority. For the Louisville debaters, real "cards" represent experiential knowledge that is "legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination..."<sup>54</sup>

Jones does not simply create a dialectical opposition between debate "cards" and the "stories" told by the subjugated. Instead, she reconfigures the meaning of "cards," signifyin' on its traditional meaning in the debate community. In Jones' performance, "stories" become "cards." The meaning of "cards" is not simply reversed, resulting in the replacement of traditional evidence as the measure of expertise. Instead, Jones seeks to revise our understanding of what counts as knowledge. Such an expansion will necessitate a re-negotiation of the power and authority afforded this type of expertise. For it is important to recognize that what is



discounted as knowledge is the very basis upon which what counts as knowledge can be defined. It is their dialectical negotiation that maintains the normative significance of expertise and authority. It is necessarily a negative dialectic that posits expertise as the good and experience as the bad; only expertise can be trusted.

In Green's first speech (the second affirmative constructive or 2AC) in the Wake Forest debate, she provides a similar criticism of expertise. In the following quote, she responds to a piece of traditional evidence (or card) read by the opposing team in the first negative constructive (the negative's first speech):

It doesn't take a genius to recognize that the USFG is a superpower

And has used its privileged power and greed for its self benefit

It doesn't take a brain surgeon to recognize that the US is the number one military spender

And out of 220 countries combined still doesn't add up to how much we spend

It doesn't take a policy expert to recognize that NATO justifies its power of militarization when it chooses because it has the determination or the authority to determine what is and is not a war.<sup>55</sup>

Green's repetition of the phrase "it doesn't take" is delivered in an angry and rhythmic tone. Green appears to be "loud-talkin'" her opponents, in essence she indicates her frustration and disgust with their reliance on expertise. The repetition of the phrase seems designed to demonstrate the irony of experts who identify and define for people what is occurring when people have the ability to observe it for themselves. Even more important, her tone implies distrust for expertise, particularly the kind that often attempts to mask reality or convince people to ignore what they see, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Her intent seems to be to raise

the common knowledge of the average person to the level of real knowledge. In other words, she questions the normative acceptance of expert testimony in contrast to lay testimony. She notes that the common person can make observations about the practices of state institutions and international organizations. Such observations may be even more legitimate as the average person has less direct connection to the levers of institutional power. Green's argument also represents the significance of social knowledge as oppositional to expert knowledge within the traditions of black communication practices. If expertise is not a necessity in interrogating the actions and practices of institutional state apparatuses, then Green's argument begs the question of why the debate community continues to privilege expert evidence. Such a privileging of expertise creates parameters through which certain kinds of speakers have the right to speak through public discourse. It is not that Louisville rejects the use of traditional evidence types. Note the following argument from Green's 2AR in the octo-finals against Wake Forest: "One of the things that they talk about how – they talk about debate research is a unique space and things of that nature. Ok, granted, we understand that you know, we're not saying that research is bad or things of that nature, it's how you use that research is what becomes the problem."<sup>56</sup> In other words, the practice of signifyin' is not as simple as an outright rejection or negation of traditional or dominant practices.

The process of signifyin' engaged in by the Louisville debaters is not simply designed to critique the use of traditional evidence. As Green argues, their goal is to "challenge the relationship between social power and knowledge."<sup>57</sup> In other words, those with social power within the debate community are able to produce and determine "legitimate" knowledge. These legitimating practices usually function to maintain the dominance of normative knowledge-making practices, while crowding out or directly excluding alternative knowledge-making

practices. The Louisville “framework looks to the people who are oppressed by current constructions of power.”<sup>58</sup> Jones and Green offer an alternative framework for drawing claims in debate speeches, they refer to it as a three-tier process:

A way in which you can validate our claims, is through the three-tier process. And we talk about personal experience, organic intellectuals, and academic intellectuals. Let me give you an analogy. If you place an elephant in the room and send in three blind folded people into the room, and each of them are touching a different part of the elephant. And they come back outside and you ask each different person they gone have a different idea about what they was talking about. But, if you let those people converse and bring those three different people together then you can achieve a greater truth.<sup>59</sup>

Jones argues that without the three tier process debate claims are based on singular perspectives that privilege those with institutional and economic power. The Louisville debaters do not reject traditional evidence per se, instead they seek to augment or supplement what counts as evidence with other forms of knowledge produced outside of academia. As Green notes in the double-octo-finals at CEDA Nationals, “Knowledge surrounds me in the streets, through my peers, through personal experiences, and everyday wars that I fight with my mind.”<sup>60</sup> The thee-tier process: personal experience, organic intellectuals, and traditional evidence, provides a method of argumentation that taps into diverse forms of knowledge-making practices. With the Louisville method, personal experience and organic intellectuals are placed on par with traditional forms of evidence. While the Louisville debaters see the benefit of academic research, they are also critically aware of the normative practices that exclude racial and ethnic minorities from policy-oriented discussions because of their lack of training and expertise. Such exclusions

prevent radical solutions to racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia from being more permanently addressed. According to Green:

bell hooks talks about how when we rely solely on one perspective to make our claims, radical liberatory theory becomes rootless. That's the reason why we use a three-tiered process. That's why we use alternative forms of discourse such as hip hop. That's also how we use traditional evidence and our personal narratives so you don't get just one perspective claiming to be the right way. Because it becomes a more meaningful and educational view as far as how we achieve our education.<sup>61</sup>

The use of hip hop and personal experience function as a check against the homogenizing function of academic and expert discourse. Note the reference to bell hooks. Green argues that without alternative perspectives, "radical liberatory theory becomes rootless." The term rootless seems to refer to a lack of grounded-ness in the material circumstances that academics or experts study. In other words, academics and experts by definition represent an intellectual population with a level of objective distance from that which they study. For the Louisville debaters, this distance is problematic as it prevents the development of a social politic that is rooted in the community of those most greatly affected by the status of oppression.

The use of hip hop by the Louisville debaters signifies on the normative construction of expertise. Hip hop and rap artists are hardly considered intellectuals. And yet, the Louisville debaters dub hip hop practitioners "organic intellectuals." A phrase taken from Mari Matsuda, the use of "organic intellectuals" as a basis for evidentiary claims repeats the significance of evidenced based claims, but revises it by making hip hop artists experts on race and racism in America. In Green's First Negative Constructive or 1NC in the double-octo-final round against Emory University's Allen and Greenstein (ranked in the "sweet sixteen"), she argues: "Mari

Matsuda, a Hawaiian American discusses her connections and parallels to the African American community and concluded that when we approach change, she felt that listening and opening up space for organic intellectuals are key ways in which we can begin to construct knowledge in a different way.”<sup>62</sup> According to Matsuda and the Louisville debaters, it is the intermingling of alternative knowledge practices with current practices that can lead to different methods of knowledge construction. For them, the introduction of “organic intellectuals” into the normative processes of knowledge production is a critical tool in developing new methodologies. Green notes further: “Not only do you open up space but you listen to them and follow some of their approaches, follow some of their methods. They have the power to construct a counter-hegemonic discourse to challenge power relations that is not through academia that is just as powerful at dismantling walls of institutional racism through their dissemination of subversive ideas.”<sup>63</sup> That Green distinguishes opening up space for organic intellectuals and actually listening to and following their methods, is a crucial discursive choice. Within debate rounds that are oriented toward critical interrogations of policy, debaters often argue for the importance of “opening up space” for those individuals and voices that might normally be excluded from policy discussions. However, simply opening space for those individuals to participate is often a maneuver by which dominant discourse can maintain itself. In other words, you can open up space within a dominant discourse for those who have been excluded to speak, but such an action does not necessitate that the dominant discourse respond to the call of the new voices.

*Signifyin’ on the Body and the Speaking Flesh.* Throughout this project I have argued that the bodies of debaters of color are critically relevant to their engagement in public argumentation. In this section of this chapter I want to turn our attention more directly to the raced and gendered bodies of the Louisville debaters. In chapter one, I argued that bodies signify to onlookers within

particular cultural contexts. As we've discussed, the race and gender constructions attached to bodies are critically important in defining and determining success and achievement in educational contexts. Specifically, recall Warren's discussion of the purity of educational environments where the body is invisibilized in favor of a focus on the mind. Thus, as Warren argues, the black body exceeds the purity of that social space as that body can never be fully hidden. The Louisville debaters find themselves in a space of public deliberation and education where the body is deemed irrelevant in favor of a dependence on the power of the mind. Yet, only those bodies that can remain un-marked, or unremarkable, in its social and competitive space can remain relatively invisible thus maintaining purity. Black bodies in particular are notable in these spaces if only because they are so few. Their bodies cannot be hidden or ignored, they exceed attempts to constrain them. However, these bodies can go through a process of purification by which the black body attempts to signify itself within and through the normative discourses that marks one as an in-group member. This is the process of integration and at its extremes, assimilation.

The Louisville debaters engage the normative practices of the community by resisting attempts to capture and purify their colored bodies. In other words, they make their bodies more visible. They signify on their bodies, bringing them forth to participate within competition and public deliberation, crowding out the visual normativity of whiteness. Other scholars have noted that body rhetoric has been a critical strategy of confrontation amongst radical or protest groups.<sup>64</sup> Deluca argues that it is an absolute necessity that social movement scholars analyze "the body when attempting to understand the effects of many forms of public argument, especially social protest rhetoric."<sup>65</sup> Deluca speaks specifically to protest movements that have the ability to gain television coverage. Thus, it is critically important for those protest groups to

use their bodies to effectively make arguments within a very small window of media coverage. While this type of study of the uses of the body in protest rhetoric are important to the study of rhetoric in the media age, it is equally critical that those studying the rhetoric of the body engage in the analysis of the body in social protest even if that protest does not receive broad media coverage. As Richard Jensen and John Hammerback note, communication scholars have studied large scale movements and protests or the rhetoric of particular national figures or leaders resulting in a limited understanding of social movements and protest rhetoric, with the Civil Rights Movement as their specific example.<sup>66</sup> Thus, they argue that communication scholars must concern themselves with local, grassroots examples of social movements for these are the building blocks of larger, more visible movements. While the Louisville Project has received some media attention, that it is not a nationally visible movement makes it no less useful for critical and theoretical analysis. Even without media attention, the Louisville debaters find their bodies to be useful platforms of public argumentation. That is not to say that the project has not been represented through mediated discourse. College Station Television (CSTV) produced documentaries of the NDT between 2004 and 2006 which were aired on their station. Jones and Green in particular are featured in the documentary in 2004.

I want to highlight a significant space through which Jones and Green use the social significance of their bodies to engage the normative representations of whiteness attached to successful debate participation. It is important to note that nationally competitive debaters often display aggressive personality traits in verbal competition. It is part of the communicative style that marks one as successful. Such aggressiveness can be delivered in speeches through choices in vocabulary, emphasis on words, volume, body movement, and ad hominem attacks. Yet, it is particularly within cross-examination periods that debaters can be most aggressive. Cross-

examination is one of the few times in a debate where debaters directly address one another. Cross-examination periods occur four times in each debate round. Policy debates are broken down into two major sections, the constructives and the rebuttals. The first four speeches of the debate are constructive speeches, where each two-person team is given two nine minute speeches to present and define their arguments. In between each of these speeches, the opposing team is given three minutes to ask questions about the previous speech from the speaker who delivered it. Cross-examination or cross-ex as it is referred to by debaters provides an opportunity to clarify and gain information that can be used to strengthen one's position during the subsequent speeches. Cross-ex can sometimes be hostile as each participant attempts to gain as much information as possible without giving anything away. Hostility in cross-ex can be a strategic tool of intimidation. In each of the Louisville debates that I analyzed for this project, cross-ex became a unique space through which the Louisville debaters signified on common performative practices in the national policy debate community. In every debate I watched, Jones engaged in direct, aggressive, and confrontational practices in the cross-ex period. Jones' questions were always pointed and she allowed no room for opponents to wriggle off her hook. If an opponent did not answer her question or seemed to be talking around the issue, she swiftly and aggressively turned their attention back to the heart of her question. She was pointed, controlling, sometimes bordering on rude with her interruptions, making sure to maintain her grip on the conversation. Her style during the cross-ex period is an excellent example of how a debater stays in control and obtains the best information for use in the next set of speeches. In this manner, Jones' style in cross-ex is representative of the normative styles of the community. In fact, one might even say she serves as an exemplar. Her presence was powerful during these periods despite the fact that she does her questioning seated from behind a table. And, considering that



the debate community is largely white, male, heterosexual, with class privilege, this young, fairly small, light-skinned black woman should have had great difficulty in intimidating more privileged participants within spaces clearly marked as theirs. Jones' confrontational style is not just a repetition of a style that is normative to debate practice. That is a simple reading of her performance, one that ignores the rhetorical function of the body and the identities associated with its physical surface. Jones' style occurs within a context that includes the operation and significance of the race, gender, and class representation and performance of bodies within national policy debate. In other words, one must read her repetition of these common practices, within the context of the broader project, as an opportunity to use a significant tool of debate as a rhetorical weapon.

Black women are often stereotyped as loud and socially aggressive. Both Jones and Green exhibit such behavior. For example, during their speeches, they often turn to speak accusatorily at their opponents, a pushing forward of the body in the direction of the opponent, use of staccato hand gestures, neck rolling and eye rolling. All behaviors that can be easily identified as "black women's attitude." Green provided an excellent example of this performative "attitude" in the CEDA Nationals Octo-finals debate against Wake Forest's Hall and Carroll. During the cross examination of Green by Hall, after her 2AC speech, Hall attempts to concisely define a particular argument Green makes during the 2AC and ask a question. He interrupts Green's explanation, but she attempts to push past his attempts to stop her explanation. Hall succeeds in stemming Green's flow of words wanting to move on to some other question. Green concedes, but note the following exchange:

Green: "Well, I'm trying to explain to you so that you can..."

Hall: "I have some other questions."

Green: Ok, well, go ahead. Cuz' it seems like you not getting it anyway. So, ask me something..."

Hall: "I may not be getting it..."

Green: "You're not, so ask me something else."

Hall: (Unintelligible as Green is speaking over him).

Green: "Ask me something else."<sup>67</sup>

Hall smiled a little, blushed, and then moved on. During the exchange, Green stood at a teaching podium, like the ones in a technology based classroom with the computer inset into the podium. The podium was table length and waist high. She leaned on one elbow with her body tilted away from Hall, even as she slightly faced him, mindful of the judge and the audience seated in front of them. During the exchange, Green's hands move in what appears to be a dismissive manner, quick shakes of the hand, simultaneous with a twisting of the wrist and a periodic dropping of her hand on the table in frustration or irritation. She was exasperated with Hall's mischaracterization of her arguments. She gives him attitude, without being rude, although clearly bordering on it. Her dismissal of him was comedic, as her tone clearly indicates frustration, but also the sense arises that she finds Hall somehow unworthy. She seemed willing to allow him to continue with his mischaracterization of her argument without correcting it, and her tone indicates that he somehow deserves such inconsideration. It is her very dismissive-ness that is amusing. That this interchange occurs between a young black woman and a young white man, who was one of the most successful debaters in the nation, added to the comedic strength of Green's rhetorical strategy in the cross-ex. Hall, was not only a young, white male, but he was also marked with economic class privilege and social privilege within the debate community. During his first speech he discussed his background at a particularly good high school with a

well-funded debate program, at the time he debated for a well-funded debate program at Wake Forest, and he and his partner were first round bids, part of the “sweet sixteen” I mentioned earlier. Thus, Green’s dismissiveness of someone whose privilege normally protected him from such public dismissals was amusing to the audience, as evidenced by the laughter.

Jones’ and Green’s behavior, while disconcerting to a majority white audience, is still representative of the aggressive behavior that the community has engaged in for years. Yet, the performance of such behaviors by black women, is often stereotyped as inappropriate. There is a crisis of representation here. Jones’ and Green’s blackness and femaleness exceed the boundaries of propriety. In other words, their behavior, as has been defined by the community, should be acceptable. Yet, it is clear that the majority white debaters who encountered this team in the out rounds often seemed to exhibit a level of fear and/or discomfort with these women.

I am also interested in the interplay between verbal frames and the speaking body. I do so with the full knowledge that Deluca cautions scholars interested in studying the body from viewing the body as "in any simple way determined or limited by verbal frames."<sup>68</sup> However, verbal frames can reframe the social significance of the body. Yes, bodies can be read outside of a verbal frame attached immediately to it; this is the power of the stereotype. When stereotypes are attached to bodies, they do so without a need to identify it verbally; the body simply signifies the stereotype. However, the articulation of verbal frames and the body can be a critical space from which to engage in public argumentation. As Steve Mailloux observes in his study of Frederick Douglass, sometimes the body must be on display, in conjunction with verbal argument, in order to persuade a hostile audience about the atrocities associated with oppression.<sup>69</sup> Note the following passage from Elizabeth's 1AC:

Let me own you for a day

And can you hear the auctioneer  
Selling someone's mother, brother, sister, friend  
But property is not human and has no kin  
Can you hear the screams produced by floggings, whippings,  
And bearing a slave masters child.<sup>70</sup>

Jones was not simply reviewing the atrocities committed during American slavery, she was using her and Green's colored and sexed bodies as a contemporary embodiment of historical oppressions faced by Blacks in America. As she spoke the words into existence, into the hostile space of whiteness, the words returned to her body, inscribing a cultural text onto her very flesh. Her body became transformed into marked flesh, carrying the brands associated with the violence of American slavery.

I use the term flesh rather than body purposefully, as black feminist theorist Hortense Spillers intends. She writes: "I would make a distinction...between 'body' and 'flesh' and impose that distinction as the central one between captive and liberated subject positions."<sup>71</sup> In that sense, before the 'body' there is the 'flesh,' that zero degree of social conceptualization that does not escape concealment under the brush of discourse, or the reflexes of iconography. If we think of the 'flesh' as a primary narrative, then we mean its seared, divided, ripped-apartness, riveted to the ship's hole, fallen, or 'escaped' overboard."<sup>72</sup> For Spillers, it is the flesh that registers the pain of oppression as it is "seared," "divided," and "ripped-apart." These markings of the flesh render the black body non-human and thus unable to qualify as a body. I do not pretend that Jones' or Green's flesh has been marked by the whip of an overseer, nor have they had to bear the child of a slave master, and yet during Jones' performance these historical markings seem transposed onto the flesh of their ancestors. According to Spillers, "This body whose flesh

carries the female and the male to the frontiers of survival bears in person the marks of a cultural text.”<sup>73</sup> The historical markings of the flesh produced from the horrors of slavery are born by the “liberated” bodies of contemporary African-Americans. Yet, the attempts by most of white America to ignore these markings, not to be confused with denying the history of slavery, are means by which the black body’s significance can be constrained. And, yet, simultaneously, the markings of slavery remain critically visible as the foundations of contemporary racial stereotypes depend on that very visibility.

In the previous section, I have attempted to demonstrate the use of the black cultural practice of signifyin’ as a rhetorical strategy by the Louisville debaters. They signify on the language and performative practices of the national policy debate community as a strategy of resistance to the normative projection of whiteness onto successful debate participation. I have attempted to show that the practice of signifyin’ is not just about the reversal of practices marked as oppressive, but instead involves a repetition and revision of such practices for new purposes. In the case of the Louisville debaters, it serves as a means of revising the normative practices of the debate community while critically engaging the repetition of such practices. In the next section, I argue that the Louisville debaters engage in rhetorical violations of the genre of policy debate practice in an attempt to question and dismantle those normative practices that sustain the lack of racial inclusiveness in the community.

#### Racial Performativity and Rhetorical Violations of Genre

The Louisville Project critiques the dominant style of debate by performing an alternative style steeped in black culture, in general, and hip hop practices, in particular. I argue that sub-cultural style combats domination through signifying practices, changing the meaning-making playground of a community and, in doing so, troubling the rigidity of the discourse community.

Subversive style, in the Louisville Project, is a “tactic,” a temporary performative practice that forces confrontations with the dominant order.

The use of hip hop music and practices in an academic space demonstrates the manner in which cultural products can be used by consumers toward subversive ends.<sup>74</sup> For many, rap is not just a commercial product to be bought and sold, it “is part of an African-American musical tradition defined by cultural and musical historians, authors and anthropologists as a cultural reflection of identity.”<sup>75</sup> However, the academic discourse surrounding hip hop has continued to question the political efficacy of hip hop music and culture. Hip hop scholar Mark Anthony Neal argues that hip hop does not provide a “concrete” form of resistance.<sup>76</sup> He further notes that hip hop is not a “politics of resistance and transformation.”<sup>77</sup> Angela Ards questions hip hop’s ability to be seriously influential in terms of effecting the political situation of Blacks.<sup>78</sup> Hip hop theorist and historian Bakari Kitwana notes that the lack of unification across goals and strategies of the hip hop generation limits their ability to develop a viable political movement.<sup>79</sup>

Yet, hip hop consumers, particularly in the Black community, find hip hop to be far more central in their lives than just their music listening practices. Hip hop exists as a social practice, but has also become increasingly important to political and activism efforts amongst Blacks in the hip hop generation.<sup>80</sup> Across the country, grassroots organizations are being started by members of the hip hop generation, where hip hop music and culture are central to their missions, goals, and organizing strategies. And while hip hop may be influential as a political mobilizing tool, hip hop and black culture theorist Todd Boyd notes that the political tactics of this generation are different, but more appropriate to their context, than the strategies of the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>81</sup> Hip hop provides a critical means of engaging the dominant norms of performative style. As such, the politics of its sub-cultural style function as an effective means of

engaging the localized practices of race, class, and gender exclusions broadly defined in the context of contemporary American society.<sup>82</sup>

In the next section, I argue that the Louisville debaters engage in hip hop performative style in their debate speeches as a “tactic” designed to disrupt the normative styles of the debate community.<sup>83</sup> They violate the structural norms of speech presentation, instead engaging in the performance of hip hop style. It is important to note here that hip hop style refers to the simultaneous interaction between form and content. As cultural theorist Jon Yasin notes, rap music engages at the level of both “(1) form, rap’s unique style of foregrounding highly rhythmic, poetic speech and (2) content, rap’s frequently sharp criticism of American society and flouting of mainstream values.”<sup>84</sup> Thus, this analysis of the use of sub-cultural style in confrontational social movement rhetoric looks to the violation of genre in terms of both form and content. It is these violations that function to destabilize the normalized practices of debate competition.

*Genre Violation One: Sonic Disturbance and Displacing Spatial Privilege.* The space in which debate tournament competition and training occur are critical to the performative strategies of community members. Debates are held in spaces marked by whiteness.<sup>85</sup> Debate tournaments are held over long weekends at varying college campuses around the country. The vast majority of tournaments are held at majority white colleges and universities. The college classroom represents the space of the ivory tower, space that has historically excluded racial others, particularly Blacks.

College classrooms are characterized by sanitized spaces where the body is rendered absent in order to focus on the mind and intellectual development. College classrooms are institutional spaces, a void in our social reality that mutes the body; a void that mutes sound and

bright colors. Such a void encourages students to think of the educational environment as an intellectual laboratory that allows for experimentation outside of the real world and thus avoids real world responsibilities or consequences. College is the place to try on new ideas, a place where students are encouraged to explore. Yet, the college environment simultaneously serves as a critical space by which the dominant hegemonies of American culture are replicated, producing individuals within and through discourses of privilege and subjugation. It is clear from discourses surrounding race and achievement gaps, retention and graduation rates of students of color, conflicts over affirmative action, etc., that the college environment and the intellectual enlightenment it represents are painted with the brush of European colonialism and American slavery. It is colored by the bodies that are traditional, normative to its spaces. In the traditional space of the American classroom, the cultural practices of subjugated communities are often excluded as either not relevant or not universal to the subject matter being taught.

It is this hostile environment that became the catalyst for the Louisville project. Note the following explanation from Green in the Quarter-finals round of CEDA Nationals against CSU Fullerton:

And so I started thinking – and, you know – and then like as far as being around in a tournament, I didn't really feel comfortable in the atmosphere. Not only that, I didn't see people that looked like me – you know, that was around in that atmosphere. And, not only that, I just felt like, some of our arguments was belittled because, you know, we would talk about issues of institutional racism, but they could get basically crowded out... And, you know I started questioning things that, you know, we did in debate and I was like, maybe I don't want to do this...And, we found out that everybody on our team was basically feeling that way...we need a revolution, the system not going to change unless



we make it change. We realized that we needed to take individual responsibility in order to do something, if we wanted to have more diversity in this activity, if we wanted to make change, if we wanted to feel comfortable in this activity or create an atmosphere that we would feel comfortable, then it was up to us to be able to do that...Like – you know – at the time we started as being novice, we was reading cards not really understanding what those cards were saying. But, you know we took time to understand that, you know, it's not just about reading cards, its not just about that, you know, we have some valid things that we can bring about from our personal experiences that can actually relate to the topic, and we can talk about some of those things and that's the reason we use alternative forms of discourse as well.<sup>86</sup>

This extended quotation from Green clearly indicates that the cultural environment of the debate community and the normative practice of debate discourage her and other black students from participation. The space within which they found themselves was often uncomfortable. With the recognition that others on their squad were engaged in a similar quandary, they built a coalition that gave them the strength to turn a critical gaze on the debate community.

The Louisville Projects use of black cultural artifacts inside of those traditional white spaces is a critical means of negotiating this spatial exclusivity and the maintenance of spatial privilege. In other words, the Louisville debaters “disturb the peace” and tranquility of educational spaces.<sup>87</sup> Jon Yasin observes that rap’s “overtly and sharply politicized strains reflect the anger and suffering that its creators witness in their social environment.”<sup>88</sup> The loud bass beats of hip hop music, or the sultry, spiritual sounds of African-American gospel music, infiltrate and disturb the pure space of learning, and in terms of debate, competition. Note the

following argument from Jones in the first affirmative rebuttal (1AR) against Wake Forest's Hall and Carroll:

Hip hop breaks down current constructions of power, when we press play on that CD player and you hear that music for yourself. It breaks that connection between social power and knowledge. Because it brings a new and alternative form of evidence into this debate community. And, that's why it's a counter-hegemonic discourse because in debate everybody reads cards, everybody does what they do, but hip hop provides that counter-hegemonic discourse and creates that aesthetic community of resistance.<sup>89</sup>

Jones argued that hip hop creates a sonic and argumentative disturbance. It is not just the disturbance created by the music, but a disturbance of the argumentative structure of policy debate.

To continue the discussion of the use of music in specific debate rounds, I momentarily step outside of my strict focus on Jones and Green. The next example is drawn from a second Louisville team of Ebony Floyd and Jennifer Harris. The examples are drawn from a sample debate taken from the Malcolm X Debate Program homepage. In the 1NC of this debate, after playing an excerpt from "Nobody Knows" sung by critically acclaimed gospel singer Mahalia Jackson, Floyd observed: "You see in the times of slavery the slaves would sing songs in front of the slave owners and while the slave-owners thought that they were just making racket, some of their kids would even sang along not knowing what was really going on. You see, in the music was directions to freedom."<sup>90</sup> Floyd notes that while those outside of black culture may simply consider black music "racket," it actually functions as a cultural call to freedom recognized by in-group members. She also posits that out-group members may find black music pleasing or entertaining, but this only serves to mask the real intent of the music, which is to use the music

as a tactical means of engaging white supremacy and black domination. As Joyce Jackson explains “The music created by African American slaves before and after the Civil War reflected their status and served as a response to the environment that controlled their lives.”<sup>91</sup> That slave-owners considered Negro spirituals to be at their best, entertaining, and at their worst a simple nuisance, provided the slaves with a tactical space of cultural development and communication. In other words, slaves were able to create safe spaces for themselves to combat their oppression under the very noses of the slave masters. As Floyd argues, within “Old Negro spirituals” were “the literal directions to freedom.”<sup>92</sup>

It becomes clear that Floyd’s discussion of Negro spirituals is an entrance to discussing the contemporary significance of hip hop music in black cultures. When she pointed to the children of slave-owners who would dance and sing along with the slaves without any real understanding of the music, one can only see the connection to be made to the contemporary popularity of hip hop music amongst youths in the White, middle class. If Negro spirituals provided slaves with the “literal directions to freedom,” then as Floyd argues, “hip hop music is the metaphorical direction to freedom.”<sup>93</sup> Blacks in America are no longer enslaved and thus songs that provide valuable information to fleeing slaves is no longer a necessity. Yet, the black body does remain “metaphorically” enslaved as it navigates within a national space defined by white supremacy. In other words, the black body remains confined by the processes of signification and the social and political acts that maintain racial subjugation. The tactics of resistance under these circumstances requires new forms of cultural negotiation of oppression and subjugation. For Floyd, and the other Louisville debaters, the use of hip hop music provides such a new form of engagement with contemporary racial subjugation.

Green notes that the Louisville debaters use hip hop because it “is an aesthetic form of resistance for African-Americans, which directly relates to” their “social location.”<sup>94</sup> In other words, Green agrees with Floyd when she argues that music can serve as a call to resistance for African-Americans. During the double octo-finals at CEDA Nationals against Emory, Green played a song by rap artist Twista, titled “I wish.” As the track plays, Green stood in front of the audience and sang quietly with part of the song. She drops her head, shaking it from side to side with her eyes closed as if carrying a heavy burden. One gets the sense of the toll that ceaseless struggle had taken on Green, but one simultaneously feels her commitment to continuing the struggle. The part that Green sang was about keeping hope central, as that energy or power that keeps one going. The song mentions that the music can help to “take you away” from those things that cause one’s oppression. Music has been a critical tool in maintaining hope and resistance to the tyranny of white racism in black communities around the world, for the Louisville debaters, tapping into this cultural practice creates an aesthetic place or home from which they might gain strength in their confrontation with the predominantly white debate community.

Twista talks about – you know that song is called “I wish” – and he talks about – you know – the problems of – the problems the United States as far as like the September 11 event, and the fall of the twin towers. And he talks about even though we get put into these types of situations, you know we got to keep that hope alive, we got to keep that hope alive and music is a way that we can teach about that and you know recover some of that oppression and talk about that and how we can use it to overcome some of our problems. And that’s another reason, why I – you know – use that music. And why it’s so important to be played into this round.<sup>95</sup>

For these debaters, the use of hip hop functions to create an aesthetic community within the often hostile space of the debate community. In essence, the use of this music overwhelms a space that would normally be uncomfortable. I remember walking down the hallway at a national college tournament and being drawn to the deep sounds of a hip hop base beat emanating from the walls. I stood outside and peeped through the small plastic window and it was a young Louisville team. The use of hip hop invaded the quiet and stillness of the tournament hallway as debate rounds are in session. The normal sounds of someone's rapid fire of words and cacophony of gasps (debaters must take quick and deep breaths periodically to maintain the speed) or muted notes of the timer beeping, papers shuffling, and the screech of chairs sliding against the cold floors were ripped away in an instant. Only the beat remained.

The use of hip hop artists did not just function to disturb the aesthetic environment of debate competitions. The Louisville debaters also used these artists as "organic intellectuals," using their lyrics as argumentative support for their interpretations and advocacy. They often used excerpts from message rap artists such as Nas, Immortal Technique, and Dead Prez.<sup>96</sup> Thus, it seems that certain kinds of hip hop in particular serve as a "metaphorical direction to freedom." These rap artists, and others like them, engage in "message word play" attempting "to reeducate and awaken the masses" in the same manner as early versions of rap like the Last Poets and Gil Scott Heron.<sup>97</sup> For example, in the debates analyzed for this chapter, the Louisville team plays an excerpt from Dead Prez's, "That's War," as a metaphor for conventional and nuclear war which are significant rhetorical impacts in debate rounds. War rhetoric is a critical strategic tool in comparing the costs and benefits of a potential policy option in debate competition. People who have been around the activity for years often joke about how almost everything in debate can be boiled down to the possibility of conventional, nuclear, or chemical

wars. In her first speech in the Wake Forest debate, Green observed that “We look for weapons of mass destruction, but what about the ultimate weapon of mass destruction of the AIDS epidemic within the Black and Gay community that a friend so eloquently pointed out to me.”<sup>98</sup>

She then played this excerpt from the Dead Prez song:

The cops stop you just cause you black, THAT’S WAR

Run your prints through the system, THAT’S WAR

When they call my hood a drug zone, THAT’S WAR

Slum lords charge me for the rent, THAT’S WAR

Why they so rich and we poor, THAT’S WAR

If you young and black you sell crack, THAT’S WAR

The White House is the rock house, THAT’S WAR.<sup>99</sup>

In essence, the debaters attempt to redefine the meaning of war. Such a stance is critical in a discourse community where war stands as the ultimate consequence, thus, those arguing quality of life consequences may often face a greater strategic battle. This same argument could be made without the music. However, it is a tactical choice by the Louisville debaters to bring these voices and experiences into the white spaces that they have been traditionally excluded from. Such an effort at inclusion can only serve to disturb the normative practices of the debate community as it has traditionally excluded music and lived experience as argument.

*Genre Violation Two: Strategic Norms of Policy Debate Speech Making.* The Louisville debaters choose to violate a number of rhetorical norms of tournament competition in the debates analyzed for this case study. Those to be discussed in this section of the chapter include the use of excessive speed in debate speeches, the commitment to “line by line” refutation, and the significance of the debate note-taking practice of “flowing.” As I note earlier in this chapter,

competitive policy debate at the national level engages in a form of debate speech making that is a swift refutation of debate speeches within debate rounds. The faster an individual speaker, the more arguments they are able to deliver within a timed speech. Related to speed, is the practice of line by line debating, a practice by which debaters engage in the process of compartmentalizing and refuting one another's arguments. Debaters tend to provide some numerical or alphabetical outline structure by which they can easily reference arguments. Line by line debate requires students to respond to arguments presented by the opposing team by referencing specific arguments through whatever structure has been implemented by the speaker that initiated the argument. As a result of this extreme organization of arguments, debaters have developed a short-hand notational system by which they record arguments in a debate round. This is the process of flowing or keeping a "flow" of the debate, a written record.<sup>100</sup> It is not just debaters who flow, judges do, too. It is because the judges flow that it is critically important for debaters to be efficient at line by line debating. The judges refer to their flow in deciding debate rounds. They know if a team has not responded to an argument because it will not be recorded on their flow (of course there is room for notational error). Thus, it is critically important that debaters attend to specific arguments point by point.

When the project first began, the Louisville debater's spent a great deal of time critiquing the use of speed, arguing that the discussion about race and debate could not be had under such conditions. They argued further, that it was the speed of debates, in particular, that has locked many individuals out of active participation and even spectatorship. It is clear that, in general, the community has acceded to Louisville's call to slow down the debate. Although, it is important to note that this moratorium on speed only occurred in debates against Louisville. In other debates, in general, speed still reigns supreme. Although many teams accede to the Louisville call, they

may still argue that speed is an important part of policy debate competition. Note Jones' response to the Wake Forest position that speed is good for debate:

Now the issue of speed, I think this is ridiculous, especially when you slow down, and you admitted that you slowed down so the judge could understand your arguments.

Furthermore, all the benefits you talk about from speed are for yourself. Were trying to make this activity beneficial to more people than just us in this room right now.

Furthermore, Tonia talked about it leads to the quantity of arguments over quality.<sup>101</sup>

Jones identified a number of reasons why speed is a problematic practice in debate. First, Jones noted that the practice of speed debating "benefits" those who are already privileged within the debate community. Learning to speak at a swift rate while remaining intelligible is a skill that requires a great deal of training and practice. Secondly, she noted the speed of debate rounds makes it generally inaccessible to those who have not been trained within the community. And, third she argued that the use of speed has resulted in the evaluative process of debate favoring quantity of arguments over the quality. In other words, speed is such an important skill to have because it can be used strategically to overwhelm opposing teams. The faster a team, the more arguments they can present in a given speech. If the other team is slower and is unable to respond to all of the other teams arguments then those arguments are considered concessions and are given a great deal of weight by the judges. Teams often lose rounds because of a speed differential between the two competing teams.

In keeping with their position on speed, Jones and Green argued further that line by line debating or direct point by point refutation of arguments also perpetuates the practice of quantity over quality in the use of evidence. Note Jones' response to Wake Forest's argument that the line by line practice of refutation is an important and critical tool for policy debates:



Now they talk about the line by line, but I talked about how the line by line separates arguments. And their own evidence talks about how speakers lose their argument in a mass of irrelevant detail and things like that. We think that's what happens when you get bogged down on the flow and bogged down on the line by line. We try to debate, we think all our arguments are interrelated. We try to create one big picture.<sup>102</sup>

Jones argued that line by line debating functions to "separate," or compartmentalize arguments. She noted that this process results in speakers whose position may be overwhelmed by the number of arguments in a debate. And, if you remember, when Green explained the circumstances that produced the Louisville Project, she noted that their attempts to discuss institutional racism were often lost in the quantity of arguments presented by the opposing team. In other words, point by point refutation often overwhelmed the big picture. It is important to understand that judges are also normalized into the practice of line by line debating, so judging decisions depend on an evaluation of the details of the debate rather than the "big picture." It is the excessively detailed nature of debate, along with the cost-benefit analysis stance of policy-based competition that results in the silencing of those issues and groups of people that cannot be easily plugged in to the framework normative for evaluating debates. For the Louisville debates this results in a methodological quandary. The issues, like race and gender oppression, that they find of key importance can often be ignored in favor of larger impacts like terrorism and nuclear war. For those are the impacts that are most easily weighed within the context of a debate. For example, in a given debate, the affirmative argues that they solve for three nuclear wars, but the negative argues that they simultaneously risk four or five more, the average judge chooses to vote negative. In other words, you add three and subtract five and cost-benefit analysis clearly identifies which policy stance is most beneficial.

Jones' argument is even more complex. She argued further that both the practice of line by line debating and flowing (note-taking) are of limited utility in responding to or recording certain kinds of argumentation:

And, furthermore that line by line, that flow you try to debate off of, excludes emotion, it excludes aesthetics and we think that is one important part of our advocacy, one thing that gets left out of policymaking, the one thing that gets left out of debate. How you feel about things.<sup>103</sup>

Jones argued that line by line debating and the practice of flowing discourage the inclusion of emotion and aesthetics as a part of debate. Even further, she implied that those practices themselves make it difficult, if not impossible to understand or feel emotion or aesthetics within that framework. Jones made this argument in the debate against Wake Forest's Hall and Carroll. It is the contrast of the two styles, Louisville and Wake Forest's, that made her argument particularly poignant. In the debate under analysis, Green and Jones were affirmative and thus start the debate. Jones represented them in the first speech. The room was eerily quiet right before she began to speak. There is always that kind of anticipatory hush before a speech begins. Jones' voice filled the room with strength, anger, rhythm, and beauty. She dominated the space with her presence. Yet, when Brad Hall stood to speak, despite drastically slowing down for this debate, his style was dry, robotic, strategic and efficient, an example of normative speaking style for a policy debate, at a reduced, although still clipped, speed. The debate continues in that manner as the teams directly rebut one another's arguments in later speeches. There is a passion and seeming spontaneity to Louisville's style that is more representative of African-American rhetorical practices, specifically their use of hip hop. The rhythm of their own speeches and the use of hip hop music seemed drastically out of place when compared to Wake Forest's

presentation. It is that difference that arguably can not be represented by the flow, or more generally by the framework in which debates are adjudicated.

*Genre Violation Three: The Resolution.* Traditionally in policy debate, the affirmative must argue in support of the resolution that has been chosen for that year's debate competition. In the first affirmative speech of the debate, the affirmative provides a structured nine minute speech in support of a specific policy idea that provides a justification for the correctness of the resolutional statement. The speech normally contains three observations or contentions that argue 1) that the status quo of a political situation provides a barrier to solving a problem and the affirmative suggests a course of action to rectify the problem; 2) they outline the potential advantages to their suggested course of action; and 3) they argue that their suggested course of action will solve the identified problem and result in the external advantages. Jones and Green were affirmative in the debate against Wake Forest's Hall and Carroll and Cal State Fullerton's Clark and Ward.<sup>104</sup> The structure of Jones' speech did not follow the pattern of a traditional first affirmative speech. Instead, her presentation followed the pattern of a hip hop song. There were four verses separated by a recurring chorus, or hook, to use hip hop terminology. For example, Jones repeats the following speech section:

So get down on the ground

Lay face down

And put your hands behind your back.<sup>105</sup>

The hook serves as a separator of the sections of Jones' speech. It thus, represents an organizational pattern.

Jones begins by playing a hip hop music selection about the difficulties of everyday life for those trapped by the simultaneous effects of both race and class oppression. After the song plays for about thirty seconds, Jones begins her speech:

Let me captivate your mind,

Sit back and unwind

Let your consciousness find

A calmer path.<sup>106</sup>

As she speaks, the listener trained in traditional debate practices easily recognizes that this speech has begun in a manner quite different from the average affirmative speech in policy debate. The spoken word style of performance is evidenced by the poetic structure of the first few lines of the speech. Policy debate speeches are not normally poetic in nature. Instead, these speeches are highly structured into outline patterns and linear argumentation. This section of the speech continues with a statement acknowledging Jones' social position and the privileges that she holds as a result. The next two verses engage in a socio-historical review of the experiences of black people at the hands of white America and makes connections to contemporary problems faced by Blacks who lack the protection of economic wealth. The final verse explains their metaphorical re-interpretation of the debate resolution and the alternative that their debate performance provides to traditional debate practices. Although, Jones' presentation seems poetic in structure, it is clear that she still maintains some of the debate format. In other words, she does identify a problem, its harmful effects, and suggests an alternative that might resolve those harms. Thus, we might argue that Jones' performance signifies on the traditional structure. It repeats and revises, even as it violates the norms of the genre.

Jones and Green violate the normative practices of arguing in support of the resolution as part of the affirmative's responsibility. For Louisville, the pretense of the game, trains debaters to consider certain types of knowledge and means of communication as most appropriate to the activity resulting in a lock out of alternative ways of knowing. Rather than a literal interpretation of the debate resolution that calls for the affirmative to take on the performative mantle of policymakers and more specifically the US federal government, the Louisville debaters engage in a metaphorical interpretation of the resolution. They use the topic as a metaphor for discussing issues relevant to the debate community. Such an interpretation engages in two direct violations of debate speech making as a rhetorical genre. First, the Louisville debaters do not offer a "plan text," or a specific policy statement. Normally the resolution functions as an overarching principle, it defines the parameters of actions that can be taken by the affirmative in any given debate, there is a level of predictability for every debate participant. The resolution establishes a predictable space of argumentation because of the limits it sets on the topic area. However, each affirmative team can choose a specific policy option by which they provide support for the overarching principle(s) set by the resolution. These specific policy options are written as a policy statement that includes all necessary steps for implementation, enforcement and even funding. In violation of this practice, the Louisville debaters do not engage in this hyper specific practice. Most significantly, although the Louisville debaters do offer a direct advocacy, they do not offer the opposing team a written plan text with specific policy directives. Having a written plan text is a common practice in the policy debate community because its argumentative center lies in policy considerations. The plan text is a strategic tool both for the affirmative and the negative; even though the affirmative is more likely to have a plan text because of their responsibility for supporting the resolution. A well-written plan text helps the affirmative defend

against negative attacks. A poorly written plan text can easily be taken advantage of by the negative team. For an affirmative to decide against the presentation of a plan text often creates a competitive obstacle to negative teams for it changes the framework within which they were prepared to debate. Although Louisville is not the only team to violate this practice, it is the most notable deviation from the normal practice of the genre.

Even though the Louisville debaters violate the “plan text” norm, they do define a position for their advocacy, when affirmative, that argues in support of the resolution. In their affirmative rounds, Jones and Green defend that the United States Federal Government should withdraw from NATO. I remind you that the debate resolution for that year read: “Resolved: That the U.S. Federal Government should enact one or more of the following: Withdrawal of its WTO complaint against the EU’s restrictions on GM Foods; Increase economic or conflict prevention aid to Greece &/or Turkey; Withdrawal from NATO; Remove barriers to EU/NATO participation in Peacekeeping and Reconstruction of Iraq; Remove TNWs from Europe; Harmonize DNA intellectual property law with EU; Rescission of 2002 Farm Bill Subsidies.” Thus, the Louisville debaters do make this concession to normal debate practice. The resolution offers a number of policy areas from which debaters may choose to argue. In the following passage taken from Jones’ 1AC against Wake Forest, Jones identifies the consequences of continued U.S. participation in NATO and argues that these consequences require a withdrawal of the U.S. from NATO:

The USFG should withdraw from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization because the racism embedded in our institutional norms and procedures is exported to other lands. Huey P. Newton drew connections and parallels between police forces occupying the black community and military forces stationed abroad in countries of color such as Iraq,

Haiti, and Afghanistan. NATO began bombing in Kosovo in 1999 and set off the ethnic cleansing of three hundred thousand Roma people. The Romani people represent Europe's largest ethnic minority, a group of people also held captive in slavery during the 1300's. The US is the most powerful country in the world, economically, politically, and militarily. America has the greatest of voting representation in the World Bank and IMF. These global economic institutions provide loans to countries provided that they cut social spending for people and use that money to promote capitalism. America has the power to veto any United Nations decision because of our seat on the UN security council. In 94 Pres. Clinton was able to block intervention into the Rwandan genocide that ultimately displaced or killed 75% of the African country's population.

Iran in 1953

And Iraq in 2003

Are just two examples of the military power our country possesses to invade another state and overthrow its government.<sup>107</sup>

In this section of the speech the Louisville team advocates a change in U.S. foreign policy in keeping with the resolution. Although clearly critical of the U.S. as a good faith actor in the international context, they still argue in support of U.S. action. The narrative she constructs around the international example of the Romani people offers her an opportunity to discuss the manner in which institutional racism functions across various lines of difference. For example, earlier in this speech, Jones discusses the effects of institutional racism on African-Americans. She draws on statistics that provide striking evidence of the social and economic consequences of being young, black, poor and uneducated in the United States. She argues that these statistics are but one clear indication that institutional racism still plagues our society. Thus, Jones uses

this section of the speech not necessarily to argue in favor of U.S. action, but instead to draw a connection between blacks in the U.S. and the Romani people in Eastern Europe. That connection being the institutional racism that still effects each population of peoples. Yet, even more specifically, Louisville argues that the institutional racism embedded within U.S. society becomes “exported” to other nations by the very nature of our interaction in the international community. In other words, Jones argues that the U.S. engages in institutionally racist practices within the international community and she lists a number of contemporary examples of this in U.S. foreign policy history.

Although the Louisville team provides a clear justification for their policy statement, i.e., their support for a full withdrawal of the U.S. from NATO, this advocacy is not really the central tenet of their argument. U.S. withdrawal from NATO is simply a metaphor for Louisville’s critique of the normative practices and procedures of the debate community. Louisville’s strategy is to engage the methods of debate practice. Thus, they argue that the resolution should serve as a metaphor, as one alternative to the strict interpretation of the resolution that leads to a hyper focus on policy considerations. The metaphorical interpretation changes the framework for the debate. The debate is taken out of the cost-benefit analysis framework where teams argue over the relative merits of a policy as if it were actually going to be enacted in legislation after the debate. The Louisville debaters argue that a metaphorical interpretation of the resolution allows debaters to shift their focus to issues which they have the agency to change. In the following excerpt, Jones explains the metaphor:

But you see, I’m really just trying to change the halls of Congress, that meets on the Capitol Hill of debate tournament tab rooms where pieces of legislation or ballots signed by judges enact the policies of our community. My words right here, right now can’t



change the State, but they can change the state of debate. The University of Louisville enacts a full withdrawal from the traditional norms and procedures of this debate activity. Because this institution, like every other institution in society, has also grown from the roots of racism. Seemingly neutral practices and policies have exclusionary effects on different groups for different reasons. These practices have a long and perpetuating history.<sup>108</sup>

Signifyin' on institutional symbols of American democracy, Jones' draws attention to the parallels in power structures between the federal government and the decision-making arms of the debate community. The "halls of Congress" represent the halls of debate tournaments. "Capitol Hill" where the laws of this country are enacted is a metaphor for debate tournament tabrooms where wins and losses are catalogued. Tournament ballots metaphorically represent the signing of the judges ballot at the conclusion of debates. In fact, debaters often argue that the "impacts" they identify or the solvency for their plan happens "once the judge signs the ballot," as if assigning a winner or loser actually results in the passage of a policy. Jones argues that it is the ballot that is the most significant tool in influencing the practices and procedures of the community. In other words, the competitive nature of debate guarantees that teams and coaches remain responsive to trends amongst the judging pool. Ultimately, debate competition is a run to capture or win the judges ballot.

That the ballot "enacts" the "policies" of the debate "community," makes the space of competition a critical arena from which to attempt community change. Up until this point, the policy debate community had dealt with issues of diversity and inclusion outside of tournament competition. Directors, coaches, assistants, and debaters may have engaged in outreach and recruitment practices designed to diversify the debate community, but discussions and support

for such actions were not generated from debate tournament competition. Those discussions occurred in collaborative versus competitive settings where stakeholders were encouraged to dialogue without concern for winners or losers. For example, OSI (the original non-profit arm of the UDL) sponsored *Ideafests* to bring stakeholders in the debate community together to discuss the national expansion of the UDL. Thus, Green's following argument during tournament competition directly violates the traditional practice of discussing issues of diversity and inclusion in the community, outside of competitive debate rounds:

Racism is one of the leading exports of the United States Federal Government and it exploits it on to other countries. It doesn't acknowledge its problems at home and the debate community replicates those values by playing in this fantasy world that we cannot change. By sitting silent, by not acknowledging, or addressing the problems within this community. It is easy for us to say that there are problems racism and sexism but the problem comes when we recognize those systemic issues and do nothing to change our methods of how we challenge those problems.<sup>109</sup>

Green is holding the debate community accountable for its failure in significantly increasing diversity and inclusion. They hold teams accountable for their methodological choices in debate participation forcing other teams and judges to consider whether or not the traditional or normative ways of engaging in competition result in an activity and environment hostile to those debate bodies marked by difference.

Let me remind you of the use of the term "export" in the previous quotation. Green argues that the US federal government "exports" American racism to other nations. Significantly, they argue that the debate community does the same. The Louisville debaters make a very controversial argument, one that if true, deeply wounds the debate community. They argue that

the racism in the debate community, just like U.S. institutional racism, is exported to the UDL.

Note this excerpt from Jones:

And, I gave an example of the Urban Debate Leagues, how people don't recognize how they export these type of oppressions onto Urban Debate Leagues, when they assume that they are ignorant and have nothing to contribute to this activity. So they teach them how to debate, never realize that they know how to debate in the first place. This is the example, these is the ways in which we have to change the social structures and the power relations that affect our world.”<sup>110</sup>

As I stated earlier in this chapter, it is largely the development of the UDL and its representations within the debate community that led to the creation of the Louisville Project. Remember that the UDL is often held as the communal exemplar that demonstrates the policy debate community's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Thus, to argue that the debate community perpetuates institutional racism even while acting against it is a confrontational stance for the Project members.

Jones discusses the UDL further with this personal statement about her own experiences with debate outreach and the procedures of normalization associated with debate achievement:

Now he gave the example of what they were doing to improve this activity. By talking about his UDL example. Let me tell you about how I learned about debate. Kate Charles came to my school and she said you need to read your 1AC fast, run a states counterplan, run a federalism disadvantage and topicality. Never once did she ask me what I wanted to talk about. And we think this is a problem. Paulo Friere talks about how this banking concept of education, where we feed a student what their supposed to say, when we feed these UDL students how to debate, what their supposed to know, that conveys absolute

ignorance upon them. It makes – uhmm, he talked about in his book, how this is the number one way oppression is perpetuated. When we look at people as if they have nothing to contribute. Kate Charles looked at me as if I had nothing to contribute to this activity. She acted like I had nothing to say about how to debate. And that conveyed that concept of absolute ignorance on me. And we just need to challenge these things. Paulo Friere talks about it as narration sickness. And, I can give another example, Casey Wolmer went into a UDL camp one time and ran twelve off case in front of these kids, and Anita Lama, a debater from West Georgia was telling me about that and about how that scared her from the activity.<sup>111</sup>

It is clear from Jones' description that the social performance of difference between UDL populations and successful college policy debater results in the devaluation of UDL students. In other words, UDL outreach efforts can often be alienating for students of color because of the assumptions about their intelligence and abilities. Outreach participants may approach this student population with pre-conceived notions about the students that result in attempts to confine and control students into “acceptable” practices and behaviors. Those students who are able to master the behavioral norms and perform themselves in keeping with communal standards of the debate community are more likely to find support and acceptance.

*Genre Violation Four: Policymaker as Impersonal and the Rhetoric of Personal Experience.*

Debate is a competitive game.<sup>112</sup> It requires that its participants take on the positions of state actors (at least when they are affirming the resolution). Debate resolutions normally call for federal action in some area of domestic or foreign policy. Affirmative teams must support the resolution, while the negative negates it. The debate then becomes a “laboratory” within which debaters may test policies.<sup>113</sup> Argumentation scholar Gordon Mitchell notes that “Although they

may research and track public argument as it unfolds outside the confines of the laboratory for research purposes, in this approach students witness argumentation beyond the walls of the academy as spectators, with little or no apparent recourse to directly participate or alter the course of events.”<sup>114</sup> Although debaters spend a great deal of time discussing and researching government action and articulating arguments relevant to such action, what happens in debate rounds has limited or no real impact on contemporary governmental policy making. And participation does not result in the majority of the debate community engaging in activism around the issues they research.

Mitchell observes that the stance of the policymaker in debate comes with a “sense of detachment associated with the spectator posture.”<sup>115</sup> In other words, its participants are able to engage in debates where they are able to distance themselves from the events that are the subjects of debates. Debaters can throw around terms like torture, terrorism, genocide and nuclear war without blinking. Debate simulations can only serve to distance the debaters from real world participation in the political contexts they debate about. As William Shanahan remarks:

...the topic established a relationship through interpellation that inhered irrespective of what the particular political affinities of the debaters were. The relationship was both political and ethical, and needed to be debated as such. When we blithely call for United States Federal Government policymaking, we are not immune to the colonialist legacy that establishes our place on this continent. We cannot wish away the horrific atrocities perpetrated everyday in our name simply by refusing to acknowledge these implications” (emphasis in original).<sup>116</sup>

The “objective” stance of the policymaker is an impersonal or imperialist persona. The policymaker relies upon “acceptable” forms of evidence, engaging in logical discussion, producing rational thoughts. As Shanahan, and the Louisville debaters’ note, such a stance is integrally linked to the normative, historical and contemporary practices of power that produce and maintain varying networks of oppression. In other words, the discursive practices of policy-oriented debate are developed within, through and from systems of power and privilege. Thus, these practices are critically implicated in the maintenance of hegemony. So, rather than seeing themselves as government or state actors, Jones and Green choose to perform *themselves* in debate, violating the more “objective” stance of the “policymaker” and require their opponents to do the same.

Jones and Green argue that debaters should ground their agency in what they are able to do as “individuals.” Note the following statement from Green in the 2NC against Emory’s Allen and Greenstein (ranked in the “sweet sixteen”): “And then, another main difference is that our advocacy is grounded in our agency as individuals. Their agency is grounded in what the US federal government, what the state should do.”<sup>117</sup> Citing Mitchell, Green argues further:

We talk about, dead prez, talks about how the system ain’t gone change, unless we make it change. We’re talkin’ about what we as individuals should do. That’s why Gordon Mitchell talked about how when we lose our argumentative agency. When we give our agency to someone else, we begin speaking of what the United States Federal Government should do, rather than what we do, that cause us to be spectators. Its one of the most debilitating failures of contemporary education.<sup>118</sup>

As part of their commitment to the development of agency, each of the Louisville debaters engages in a recognition of their privilege, in an attempt to make their social locations visible

and relevant to their rhetorical stance. They argue that in order for debaters to exercise their agency toward lasting social change, they must understand their participation in various systems of power. In the 2AC against Wake Forest, Green notes: “Privilege and power are two things that prevent my mic from being heard. In order for me to challenge the two, I must recognize my role in its cycle.”<sup>119</sup> In this section of the speech, Green makes clear that any attempt to critique privilege and power must be accompanied by a self-reflection on one’s individual privilege. Particularly, it is critical in rhetorical situations where race is a central concern of the discourse community. Note that Green argues that it is “privilege and power...that prevent” her “mic from being heard.” The use of the term “mic” here signifies a microphone, or a means of being heard in spaces that otherwise might drown out the voice. In other words, it signifies a rhetorical space or the space of the public sphere as being critically impacted by power differentials amongst its variously positioned speakers. Thus, as debate serves as not only a rhetorical space, but a space designed to simulate the ideals of an equitable public sphere, the Louisville debaters seek to make those power differentials visible as a part of the rhetorical deliberations themselves.

Even though Green and Jones represent various subjugated populations at the intersections of race, class and gender, they require from themselves a statement of their privilege as critical to understanding their criticisms of the debate community and the responsibility that they have in engaging in such criticism. In the 1AC against Wake Forest Jones notes:

And I am the one to make it out of the trap

And I am the one who is proud to be black

And white, and woman and extremely successful.

I am the one for who life is less stressful.<sup>120</sup>

Jones defines her identity. She notes that she is female, black, and white. The identity characteristics that Jones chooses to identify are ones that are easily noticeable by her opponents and the judges. Her body's visibility depends on the incongruous reality of her presence in a majority white and male space. Yet, remember that educational spaces in general tend to eschew the body, to make it absent from intellectual space. As we've noted previously, the differently colored and gendered body often exceeds attempts to make it invisible resulting in various strategies to control or contain the excess. Rather than ignoring her body, Jones makes it critically visible and integrally relevant to the discourse of the debate round. She removes the mask of an intellectualism free of the body, countering the debate community's ignorance of the relevance of the body to competition and judgment.

Despite the difficulties associated with her identity classification in a society dominated by white male privilege, Jones notes that she is one of the lucky one's who have been able to achieve success despite systemic barriers. Returning to Floyd, her statement of privilege gets us a little further:

You see,

I had to stop and self-reflect and think about where I am compared to some of the African-Americans I went to school with.

You see,

I feel like I'm privileged to be in college.

I'm privileged to be an African-American debater in this debate tournament.<sup>121</sup>

Floyd's statement indicates the manner in which the identity performance of success and achievement can differently mark the black body. In other words, Floyd and Jones are able to temper the excess of their black female bodies by overlaying them with the accoutrements of the



American dream. They can perform their bodies as educated and thus counter, at least to some degree, the racial stereotypes of blackness. They acknowledge the manner in which their educational status functions as a shield or protection from racial subjugation. Such a protection can constitute one's potential agency in situations where racial subjugation is occurring. Note the following example from first Jones and then Floyd:

I'm just doing my job speaking these words.

For I am the one that's blessed to be heard.<sup>122</sup>

I can't turn my back on my people, I'm fighting for blacks not only in this debate community, but in society. In this debate community I'm trying to make this elite community accessible to all.<sup>123</sup>

For Jones and Floyd, such privilege comes with responsibility. Their educational status gives them entrance into discourse communities from which other blacks, without such status, may be excluded. Thus, according to these debaters, they must use the entrance into these spaces toward bettering the social, economic, and political situations of other blacks. Such a stance is critical, as Green observes: "When we choose to stay silent about our privileges that we hold, we keep it in its maintenance and allow for hegemony by continuing to justify its existence."<sup>124</sup>

It is not only their own statements of privilege that the Louisville debaters call for they also argue that every debater should engage in that process. In the debate against Emory's Allen and Greenstein, Green asks the following rhetorical questions during her 1NC: "What is your purpose for debating? And, if you do have a purpose, how do you achieve that purpose within this debate arena?"<sup>125</sup> In the Emory debate, the opposing team does make a statement of privilege. However, Green argues:

You recognizing and confronting your privilege but then you still perpetuate the system by catering to these power relations, not doing anything to challenge the hegemony, not doing anything to break the social connection between social power and knowledge by basically doing what you do. And, I don't see how that's putting in praxis, or actually - actually confronting your privilege to make that education true liberation for personal social liberation and social liberation.<sup>126</sup>

The Louisville debaters argue that a sincere recognition of privilege will come along with a change in methods of participation that maintain oppression and ensure a lack of diversity.

### Conclusions

The Louisville Project represents an example of social movement protest rhetoric in a localized discourse community. Tapping into sub-cultural themes and practices prevalent in African-American culture the debaters involved in the project work to dismantle the very foundations of knowledge making practices. While the Louisville Project may not be a recognizable national social movement, it is a significant example of grassroots activism amongst youths of color using hip hop, that is occurring all around the world. The Louisville debaters often engage in confrontational rhetoric designed to attack normativity through a playing with style and the body. As such, its tactical engagement with racial domination often breeds conflict and anger. As such, the Project has had limited utility in fostering systemic change in racial representation and achievement in debate competition. Simultaneously, it has been integral at beginning a conversation about race, privilege, and power that might otherwise have never occurred. What Louisville has started, others have begun to pick up. The Louisville Project was prominently featured in the 2004 and 2005 College Station Television's documentary on the National Debate Tournament (similar to the championship tournament in any sport). Two

of the high school Urban Debate League's, both Kansas City and Seattle, have begun to teach their students the Louisville method and encourage its use in tournament competition. Both UDL's have received media attention for their efforts at broadening the scope of academic debate and making it accessible to students who otherwise might be disinterested. Thus, while there has not been a revolutionary change in the debate community, meaning the top competitive squads have not given up their privilege, or acknowledged that the game is unfair, or switched to the Louisville Method, the Project has chained out across the community, becoming a part of the discursive landscape.

The Louisville method of engaging dominance and subjugation was an important event in the development of contemporary debate practices and will continue to be so. Yet, as the Louisville Project gained in prominence within the debate community, many began to ask how they might be able to engage with Louisville's effort to increase not only meaningful black participation in debate, but meaningful participation for all minority populations. Particularly for debate program directors and coaches, the Louisville Project and its methodology seem difficult to translate to other programs housed in different cultural and geographic contexts. As an argument against the usefulness and viability of the Louisville method, this is fairly lightweight. The Project and its methodology may not be translatable to every context. Its purpose is not to take over debate competition as we know it, crowding out all other styles whether dominant or alternative. Such a stance would make the project no better than the dominant discourses and practices it critiques. Instead, the project calls for teams around the country to seriously consider the manner in which their normal participation in debate maintains it as a majority white, male, and upper class space at the heights of competition. Such a serious and reflexive consideration may lead teams to change the nature of their participation, whether it be through methods exactly

like or similar to the Louisville Project, or new means of participating all together. At this moment, under the weight of dominant practices within the community, we may all find it difficult to see or imagine what new means of engaging in public argumentation we might create by committing ourselves and the debate activity to investigating and using alternative knowledge systems and paradigms.

Considering the often angry opposition they faced within the community, it is not surprising that there were great emotional costs attached to Louisville's methods. Not only did the project use sub-cultural styles, including hip hop, it violated the normative practices of the community and did so while forcing others to confront their privilege. Such a strategy resulted in a personalizing of the activity for all the participants. Since Jones and Green's successful run in the 2003-2004 tournament season, the Louisville debate team has not repeated such achievements on the national circuit. The Project has gone through various changes as the team renegotiates its strategy for engaging the issue of race and racism in college debate. Currently, the team members are beginning a criticism of the mutual preference judging system at tournaments. Mutual preference judging (MPJ) is a method of pairing debaters with judges. Before the tournament begins, each team is provided with a list of judges available at the tournament. Teams may then rank their choices. The tournament then attempts to find the highest ranked judge that each team in a given debate has preferred. That judge is then tasked with judging that debate round. Many blame the system of MPJ for the lack of diverse representation in the judging pool, which has implications on the decision-making norms of the debate community. The argument remains in its infancy and I would expect to see it expand over the next tournament season. While the Project may be undergoing changes, it has produced a form of

debate that has spread beyond the confines of their debate team. It is this chaining out that may be the most demonstrative of its effectiveness.

## Chapter Four

### Negotiating Contemporary Black Social Protest:

#### The Community Responds

*I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says, "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action"...*

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963)

As debate theorist and Director of Forensics at Illinois State University, Joseph Zompetti notes, the Louisville style of debating has resulted in "frustrations, anxiety, resistance, and backlash."<sup>1</sup> Allan Loudon, former Director of Debate at Wake Forest University, refers to the current conflict as a "schism."<sup>2</sup> Jeff Parcher, former debate coach at Georgetown University, argues that this "schism" makes the future of debate "pessimistic."<sup>3</sup> Parcher notes further that while "alliances" in debate have always existed, they have reached a new level of "intensity" one that he has never seen before in the debate community. William Shanahan, Director of Debate at Fort Hays University, observes, "The recent rash of reactionary, exclusionary violence helps explain the consequent venom that certain debaters, judges, coaches, and programs discursively spew forth, often indiscriminately, inside and out of debate rounds."<sup>4</sup> Roger Solt, former Director of Debate at the University of Kentucky, comments that debate has always faced argumentative divisions, but he argues that the current "split in debate between critical and policy approaches has gone beyond culture war to full-blown clash of civilizations."<sup>5</sup>

The Louisville Project has resulted in angry verbal confrontations, broken friendships, and group segregations within the policy debate community. Accusations like “Klan member” and “Uncle Toms” on one side and “anti-intellectuals,” playing the race card, and irrationality on the other seem to indicate that the controversy surrounding the Louisville Project and other projects like it has reached a boiling point. That the Project has produced such strong reactions in the debate community demonstrates its significance.<sup>6</sup> In this chapter, I am interested in the rhetorical stance taken by community members in response to the Louisville debaters’ practice of direct action. When a majority white community is targeted by its insiders for a critique of its commitment to diversity and inclusion, particularly if those insiders are also representative of a minority group, it can be a critical disruption to the established communal norms.

As we discussed in chapter three, the Louisville Project can be defined as a militant form of protest rhetoric that engages in confrontational tactics in its effort to engage the exclusionary practices of the policy debate community. It is the tactic of confrontation that seems to discomfort the debate community. Haiman argues that social protest that violates the proscribed decorum standards often face communal backlash.<sup>7</sup> Cathcart posits that “It is the act of confrontation that causes the establishment to reveal itself for what it is. The establishment, when confronted, must respond not to the particular enactment but to the challenge to its legitimacy. If it responds with full fury and might to crush the confronters, it violates the mystery and reveals the secret that it maintains power, not through moral righteousness, but through its power to kill, actually or symbolically, those who challenge it.”<sup>8</sup> Cathcart’s essay demonstrates the necessity of studying the dominant response to confrontational racial resistance movements in contemporary America. Specifically, when a social protest movement faces anger and backlash as a response to their calls for social and institutional change, social movement researchers must interrogate the

nature of such dominant resistance. But, as rhetorical theorist John Murphy demonstrates in his analysis of Kennedy and the Freedom Riders, the establishment need not directly confront to respond.<sup>9</sup> This is the lesson that establishments have learned post the Civil Rights Movement.

Both Murphy and Zarefsky argue that rhetorical scholarship has focused more on the acts of resistance engaged in by varying social movements, while ignoring or providing limited analysis of the response to such protest efforts.<sup>10</sup> Murphy notes that rhetorical social movement scholarship has focused on “social change” rather than on “social maintenance.”<sup>11</sup> “Anti-movement” scholarship has tended to focus on the study of conservative resistance rhetoric. Such rhetoric is characterized by strategies that appeal to the tradition and order of the dominant community.<sup>12</sup> Rhetorical theorist Barbara Warnick argues that study of social movements must include an interrogation of counter-movements as radical or revolutionary movements seem to incite such a response.<sup>13</sup> Warnick’s 1982 study details the characteristics of conservative social movement: 1) such movements “seek to prevent a proposed change,” 2) they also engage in a “moralistic stance” where “ideology overrides practical concerns,” 3) this “moralistic stance” involves a “suspicion of rational argumentation,” 4) they engage in “appeals to fear of loss of status and of loss of personal identity,” 5) there will also be a “refusal to compromise” which “precludes cooperative action.”<sup>14</sup> Warnick’s discussion has been quite useful for developing a set of standards by which to determine if a social movement can be identified as a conservative resistance movement.

However, in his 1985 article, Medhurst outlines some critical problems with then current conservative resistance studies. First, Medhurst argues that the characteristics Warnick identifies are actually fairly consistent with most resistance movement and thus are not specific to conservative resistance. Medhurst argues, “to assert that the rhetoric of conservative resistance is



invariably characterized by moralism, reiteration of ideology, and resistance to compromise is to confuse one species with an entire genre.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, conservative or counter-movements may not be definable by a singular set of characteristics. Instead, Medhurst argues that rhetoricians should engage in contextual theorization of counter-movements.

Although, the establishment response from the debate community is the most vocal oppositional response, I would not identify it as a conservative movement. In other words, it cannot be characterized as an organized collective action that would be identifiable as a social movement. Instead, I am interested in the anti-movement response, what Zarefsky might identify as a “rhetorical movement,” and specifically, what Warnick calls an “anti-movement.” As Medhurst notes, “counter-movements” are not the same as social movements.<sup>16</sup> Movement scholars cannot simply map social movement theory onto a study of counter-movements. As Medhurst argues further, counter campaigns begin with “mobilization” rather than “planning and identification.”<sup>17</sup>

The debate community is a unique space from which to engage in a study of establishment response to direct action social protest. While, the debate community does have institutional organizations that create policy for the community as a whole, the actual maintenance of the establishment as a whole is part of a diffuse relation of power between those in the power structure and its participants. Debate competitors and judges are critical to maintaining the principles of the establishment as it is their everyday practices within debate round competition that creates or maintains the traditional norms of the community. In other words, the organizational structures in the debate community might be critical to maintaining a functional space for debate competition to occur, but it is the community as a whole, particularly successful participants and the judges that judge them that are the key to maintaining communal

norms. Thus, as I refer to the establishment in this chapter, I am not limiting my definition to a defined organizational structure. Instead, I focus on the “rhetorical” establishment. The “rhetorical” establishment represents a critical turn toward interpreting power not as being held by power brokers at the top of social hierarchies. Instead, the establishment is made up of multiply situated social actors that engage in practices that both maintain and resist the established order. Thus, the establishment is always in flux, moving, changing, turning, folding and retracting. While it may be in flux, the establishment must also constantly reassert itself. I’ve been speaking of “the establishment” as if it were a noun, a defined group of people, those with power, the decision-makers. Yet, in identifying the establishment as necessarily a rhetorical construct, one that represents the necessity of social engagement in the development and maintenance of the establishment, I intend a further move away from the social scientific analysis of social movement and protest, to one that is expressly rhetorical.<sup>18</sup>

In this chapter, I analyze the debate community’s response to the Louisville Project using two bodies of texts. I analyze the responses to the policy debate listserv, eDebate, and the academic debate literature on the Project in the journal for debate scholarship, *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate*. eDebate is an internet listserv that services the policy debate community. It is an online hub for policy debate teams, including coaches, debaters, and judges that functions to provide a central repository for messages to the community at large. Posts include invitations to upcoming tournaments, results from competitions, requests for research citations, thoughts for community wide consideration and more. eDebate has a broad readership, but not everyone posts to it or engages in the numerous debates that occur on the listserv. Studying eDebate is a limited field of interpretation of the community wide engagement with the Louisville Project. Yet, eDebate is a significant space for the negotiation of conflicts within the

community. The listserv is open to the entire policy debate community (it can also be accessed by the public from the CEDA Nationals homepage). Thus, it offers an opportunity to engage posts from debaters, debate assistants, coaches, judges, directors, and those who have left the community, but still remain connected to it. As such it is one of the most representative and democratic of spaces available for policy debate communication. Scholars in the debate community, including Zompetti and Warner, have noted that the discussion on eDebate, is a significant phenomenon, demonstrating the Project's effect on the debate community. I focus on longer posts that engage in lengthier explanations and participate in sustained conversation patterns, which allow me to reconstruct digital conversations where writers are directly responding to one another's posts. Some responses are ten pages or longer when printed, small print and single-spaced.

*Contemporary Argumentation and Debate: The Journal of the Cross Examination Debate Association (CAD)* is a peer-reviewed academic journal devoted to the study of academic debate. It is published annually by the Cross Examination Debate Association, which began in 1980. The CEDA website notes that the journal is “dedicated to publishing quality scholarship related to the theory and practice of academic debate, public argumentation and debate, diversity issues, and other areas of interest to the academic debate community.”<sup>19</sup> In the fall of 2004, *CAD* published a series of articles in a forum titled “Debating Dogma and Division.”<sup>20</sup> Edited by Allen Loudon, Associate Professor and then director of the Wake Forest Debate team, the forum was designed to respond to the controversy and conflict that has clearly begun to affect the debate community. Loudon notes that the forum provides an opportunity to “formalize some of the conversation that pervades tournament hallways.” This forum, and the other articles in the journal appear post Jones and Green's spectacular performance at the 2004 CEDA Nationals and the NDT. In

addition, numerous authors in the forum mention the Louisville Project, specifically or indirectly.<sup>21</sup> As few other teams are mentioned, and no other team is discussed in detail, the group of articles provides a significant text for investigating the discursive conflict surrounding the Louisville debaters and their Project.

As other researchers engage this project, they may wonder why I chose not to include texts from competitive debate rounds in this chapter. I would remind those readers that this project is less a study about policy debate per se, and more about the analysis of a localized example of black social protest and establishment response. While it was useful to engage Louisville's public discourse through rhetoric produced in debate rounds, what is significant about the project is not the in-round response it generated, but the community wide conversation it started. If the project had just generated a competitive response then this would be a study of debate and argumentation. The debate community's response is more broad and complex than what occurred in tournament rounds. In fact, the competitive response is less interesting and less demonstrative of the extent of the conflict. Also, a study of competitive rounds is time prohibitive.<sup>22</sup> Most traditional debaters speak at a speed that generates a great deal of text for a single debate. And given that all debate competitors at a national tournament participate in a minimum of eight, one hour and forty-five minute, debates, one can imagine the volume of verbiage produced at a tournament.

This project adds to social movement scholarship that is interested in the response to direct action social protest by a social majority. I argue that the traditionalists in the debate community engage in rhetorical strategies designed to reinstitute order and protect dominant traditions, while simultaneously arguing their support for diversity and inclusion. While I argue that the traditionalists engage in conservative rhetorical strategies, it is not my intent to argue that

those who disagree with the Louisville Project are ideologically conservative. Instead, I define the traditionalists in the policy debate community as those who criticize Louisville's rejection of traditional rhetorical, argumentative, and research practices. In the next section of the chapter, I analyze the representative texts arguing that the debate community engages in conservative or anti-movement rhetoric, while simultaneously engaging in a rhetoric of benevolence that shields the establishment from any direct response to Louisville's criticism of the larger community.

#### Goals vs. Methods: The Benevolence of the Rhetorical Establishment

The policy debate community's response to the project is complex. The community does not engage in a simple rejection of the Louisville debater's critique of traditional debate practice. In fact, in general, the policy debate community tends to agree with the goal of the Project, which is to increase meaningful black participation in policy debate. Yet, the community does disagree with Louisville's method for attempting to reach that goal. For example, Jeron Jackson, in an edebate post argues, "I think your purpose is wonderful, but the way you do it has some faults."<sup>23</sup> Note the following post from Josh Hoe, "As I have said hundreds of times I agree with many of the things Ede has and will say. I, in no way, want to discredit the majority of the Louisville approach to debate. I disagree with portions of it which I find to embrace certain tendencies of other historical revolutions toward group think, scapegoating, and anti-intellectualism. I do not think the 'criticisms' of what I have had to say take into account that I agree with much of the Louisville project."<sup>24</sup> As the quote from Dr. King indicates at the beginning of this chapter, when a majority group agrees with the goal of a minority group attempting to challenge current constructions of power, but disagrees with the methods of direct action by which they engage in that challenge, we must question the nature of their commitment to the goal itself. As Haiman argues, "...when one finds those who profess neutrality or

friendship toward the goals of the dissenters also expressing doubt about the methods they employ, it is time to attempt a serious assessment of the situation.”<sup>25</sup>

John Murphy argues that contemporary rhetorical scholarship needs to move beyond the dialectical positioning of an aggressive “agitator” and “an antagonistic Establishment.”<sup>26</sup> As Murphy demonstrates in his analysis of the Kennedy administration and the Freedom Rides of the Civil Rights Movement, the establishment response is responsive to the complexity of social situations. In other words, the establishment may not directly confront the protesters or position themselves in opposition to their interests. Instead, the establishment may engage in rhetorical strategies that allow them to maintain normative order, while appearing to be supportive of the goals of the protestors. As Murphy argues, such a strategy is critically successful for establishment rhetors. Thus, I argue in this chapter, that the debate establishment does not directly confront the Louisville Project, although some of the discourse is confrontational. The establishment does not react with aggressive force, for to do so would only serve to strengthen the support base for the protesters. Instead, the establishment engages in a rhetoric of benevolence, while simultaneously attempting to maintain order.

Few of the examples cited above indicate a direct rejection of Louisville’s goal of increasing “meaningful black participation” or of the criticisms of exclusion and lack of diversity in the debate community. In fact, most of the examples indicate a level of active support for the goals of the project. However, it is the method of Louisville’s engagement, the stylistic choices they make, and the normative community styles they critique that tends to be the crux of the criticism they face. In other words, the goal that Louisville espouses of increasing black participation is ideologically consistent with the broader community. Yet, Louisville pushes beyond a definition of “meaningful” participation as defined quantitatively. “Meaningful”

participation, they argue, may require changes in normative social and competitive practices in the debate community that would fundamentally disrupt its established order. Thus, the establishment response is one of benevolence. The establishment has been directly supportive of diversifying policy debate. The development of the Urban Debate League has been critical to maintaining that commitment. It is a communal goal to reach out to those traditionally excluded from debate, and create opportunities for successful participation. Yet, in general the community does not support the idea that the competitive practice of policy debate itself needs to change in order to achieve the goal of diversification. As Scott and Smith note:

The tone assumes that all men seek and should increasingly have more of the available wealth, or education, or security, or culture, or opportunities. The values of those who 'have' are celebrated as the goals which all should aspire, and effective social policy becomes a series of acts to extend opportunity to share in those values. If those who have can provide for others more of their own perquisites – more of the right to vote, or to find employment, or to go to college, or to consume goods – then progress is assured.”<sup>27</sup>

This tone characterizes the contemporary rhetoric of diversity and inclusion within policy debate discourse. The policy debate community is committed to its diversification. Yet, it is important to define what kind of diversity the community seeks to achieve. As demonstrated by its outreach efforts, the debate community seems clearly committed to the integration of minority groups into the current structure of the activity. In other words, diversity and inclusion are dependent upon the willingness of the “other” to “share” the values, practices, and traditions of the community as a “prerequisite” for membership. They should “aspire” to the goals and signifiers of success already in place within the community they are being invited to join. That benevolence comes with a price. The community wants to bring those people into the fold who do not resist the

assimilation process into the social and competitive structure. The price of admission is often assimilation. Stated more directly, only those “others” that are willing to participate in the current power structures of the activity are generally accepted by it. Their participation is encouraged in so much as they stand as exemplars of “other-ed” bodies who have garnered success in the community.

The exemplars provide justification for the benevolent standpoint, for they demonstrate to the community that opportunity and access alone can solve their diversity problem. Yet teams, like Louisville have begun to question and critique this process of assimilation, questioning whether or not they can dismantle the exclusionary practices of debate from within. Many have chosen to do so by violating the “civility and decorum” of traditional practices of debate competition. In the analysis section of this chapter, I identify three significant rhetorical themes in the critique of the Louisville Project. These three thematic arguments include critiques of Louisville’s confrontational rhetorical strategy, use of victimization rhetoric, and the personalizing of debate participation.

### Confrontations and Coalitions

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Louisville debaters engage in direct action social protest that is often characterized by confrontational rhetoric. Louisville’s rhetoric seems clearly designed to disrupt traditional debate practices within traditional debate spaces, as well as, to unnerve those privileged by those practices and spaces. Louisville’s strategy of confrontation results in discomfort amongst many debate community members. Josh Hoe, one of the more out-spoken critics of the Louisville Project, argues:

They have changed the debate community....Perhaps not as much as they wanted....But I suspect that is because of the methods they chose/choose/have chosen. Calling people



who have worked for a decade to increase minority participation Plantation owners is more than a little harsh. Calling African American CEDA national champions "Uncle Tom" is more than a bit unfair and cruel. Calling people who honestly seek to improve and network with your project "Klan members" is not exactly the best way to get people to love your approach. Telling people of different sexual orientation that their oppression is not as important/meaningful as yours is not a good political strategy. Ignoring other races, genders, creeds, colors, and orientations that are also under-represented in debate or worse - actively undermining their calls to activism - might create some hostility to your project and undermine natural areas where you could get support.<sup>28</sup>

It is clear from Hoe's eDebate post that he does not necessarily disagree with the goals of the Louisville Project, instead he is critical of the confrontational character of its presentation. Note the parallelism in the quotation. In most of the sentences Hoe articulates a positive characteristic of the broader debate community versus a negative characterization of the Project. In Hoe's eDebate post above, he characterizes those who have been negatively characterized by the Project's confrontational rhetoric, as (1) individuals actively committed to increasing racial and ethnic diversity, (2) other minorities that have found success in traditional debate, (3) and other minorities that face discrimination and exclusion in policy debate. These three groups of people are a significant characterization of the opposition to the Project.

The first group, that Hoe qualifies as having "worked for a decade," can be read as those debate directors, coaches and former debaters that have been integral to efforts at diversifying the high school and/or college policy debate community. Warner, in a post to eDebate does refer to the power brokers of the UDL as "plantation owners."<sup>29</sup> The metaphorical use of the plantation to describe the more liberal elements within the debate community rhetorically

confronts a group with which Louisville might have attempted to build coalitions. That even this liberal group of individuals and debate programs who have remained committed and active in the acceptance of difference within the debate community face attack from Louisville marks the project as radical and thus, irrational and unreasonable. For the more centrist and conservative elements within the community, the harsh nature of Louisville's confrontational rhetoric toward the moderates and the liberals provided the impetus for a strategic dismissal of the Project. In other words, the more conservative and/or traditional teams simply engage in justifications of why traditional debate practice is good and why Louisville's debate style harms policy debate. This strategy has proven to be consistently successful and returns year after year as a criticism of the Project. I suggest that the Project can be taken less seriously because liberal and moderate ambivalence provide an effective cover. It is not my intent to indicate that the liberal and moderate elements within the community are opposed as a whole to the Louisville Project. Instead, the moderate to liberal tendency seems to be to disagree with Louisville's method, while agreeing with its goals.

The second and third groups that Hoe mentions, nationally successful African Americans and other minority groups that face similar exclusions within the debate community, indicate a strategic reversal of Louisville's criticism of traditional debate. In other words, Hoe turns the tables on the project arguing that its rhetoric is exclusionary toward other subordinated populations. Note, that he refers to the use of "Uncle Tom" to describe other African-Americans as "unfair and cruel" because of their choice to engage in traditional debate practices and stylistic choices. Hoe goes further, arguing that Louisville constructs African American oppression as more "important/meaningful" than that which is faced by other ethnic, sexual and gender minorities. For Hoe, the Louisville Project "actively undermines" the "activism" efforts of others

fighting for visibility and recognition. It is these kinds of rhetorical practices that result in “hostility” and undermines efforts to build coalitions. That the Project fails to build coalitions with the other identity based activist efforts in the community becomes an effective tool in negating the project.

Hoe is not the only community member to characterize the project in this manner. Neil Blackmon argues “I mentioned that I think at times the arguments that Louisville make involve a dangerous deployment, in that at times when approached with ‘equitable’ yet ‘distinctive’ stories of exclusion and oppression they didn’t, in my own experiences, choose to engage or necessarily attend to perspectives I had felt were important.”<sup>30</sup> Parcher agrees with the criticism of identity politics evident within Louisville’s rhetorical strategy. He argues that other students of color are harmed by the projects coercive requirement that people locate themselves socially and discuss their personal identities:

A student left a debate and had to be comforted away from quitting the activity during the tournament. She felt insulted by the debate in which she had just participated. She was offended by people making judgments about her personal experience who did not know her...She felt uncomfortable and slimy about having to discuss her multi-cultural background as if it were some kind (of) tool to win a debate or a badge of honor to be worn as a passport to credibility.<sup>31</sup>

Parcher notes this particular student’s reaction because it helps to destabilize the significance of the Project’s criticism. If minorities do not have unified agreement over the exclusionary nature of the activity or the best manner in which to address it, then any criticism offered by a section of that minority population is less persuasive to the majority audience. In Parcher’s characterization, the female, “multi-cultural” student is directly harmed by another subordinated

group. Such students become sacrificial lambs in an effort to change the broader system. For Parcher, one's identity should not be a consideration in a competitive debate because it forces one to use one's identity inappropriately in a competitive framework.

Loribeth Blair argues further, that it is the space of competition, the confrontational and dialectical nature of debate competition that hurts attempts to build coalitions between the Louisville Project and others in the debate community:

I personally think that debate should be more diverse, there need(s) to be more of all minorities. Has anyone even mentioned Hispanics and people whose first language isn't English. I just think it makes coalition building problematic when you put these arguments into a competitive framework where someone has to lose and someone has to win. The point is that if meaningful black participation is increased then everyone wins. What we need to do is have a discussion about the strategies and tactics that need to be employed to make this happen. I honestly think that there would be more support for your project if people didn't have to place themselves in a role that is oppositional to you (i.e. as they are forced to in the debate round). I honestly believe that if you asked publicly for support for your project people in the debate community would respond. Tell us how to increase meaningful black participation in debate, instead of telling us that we should lose because you have and we haven't."<sup>32</sup>

Zompetti agrees that the debate round is an inappropriate space from which to engage in the discussion:

I still feel strongly that arguing these things in debate rounds does more harm than good. I think you're correct to say that the community won't change voluntarily. I do think that discussions and structural changes from the AFA or the NDT committee or CEDA can

help.”<sup>33</sup> Zompetti argues further: “I also think that the problems of style and form (i.e., speed and traditional forms of evidence) is a superficial part of the problem. Those are easily coopted and incorporated into the exclusive, elite nature of debate. In other words, Louisville and a few others can talk slow, play some music, argue against traditional forms of evidence, and they’ll win rounds and get some speaker points, but does THAT actually change the community? My fear is that it doesn’t. Here’s why: instead of folks (generally) being reflexive and thinking of productive ways of changing the community around them, they spend their time thinking of strategies to \*beat\* Louisville in debates. That just reinforces privilege and distances the debaters/ coaches from the message that Louisville is making.”<sup>34</sup>

Zompetti’s fears are fairly reasonable. The Louisville Project has not convinced the debate community to change its normative practice. Given the adversarial nature of tournament competition, opposing teams seem most concerned with developing viable strategies to beat Louisville inside the tournament round. Such a competitive atmosphere may not allow a resolution of conflict between the Louisville team and other community members. Yet, it seems that attempts to engage the structural barriers that maintain the lack of community diversity seems to not have substantially increased racial and ethnic inclusion. That the Louisville team shifts the discussion on racial inclusion into actual debate competition forces the broader debate community to significantly increase its discussion of the problem. In other words, the Project may not directly result in sweeping changes in the policy debate community, it did create a rhetorical controversy that forced the issue of racial exclusion and privilege onto the community’s agenda. Thus, I argue that the tournament round is a critical plateau from which to

force a reflexive conversation about the normative practices of debate that might operate to maintain racial exclusion and privilege.

### Rhetoric of Victimization

Zompetti argues that the Louisville project engages in “guilt appeals” and victimage rhetoric. Jeron Jackson agrees, he argues that the Louisville team engages in rhetoric which constructs the Louisville debaters, and people of color specifically, as without agency:

One of the last few things I wanted to discuss was the reliance on victimhood and generalizations in your project. In hooks’ essay ‘Refusing to be a Victim: Accountability and Responsibility’ in ‘Killing Rage: Ending Racism’ she kritiks “shared victimization” politics and the claiming of “victimhood in an absolutist way.” I feel like y’all do this a lot in your project. You talk about the plight of blacks and the racism they experience; y’all talk about how this needs to change because then people who have as bad a situation as y’all had can enter debate and live a better life; you read personal narratives (which I think are cool when used correctly); you talks about how ‘traditional’ debate excludes blacks cuz they can’t talk as fast or have as many files as privileged whites “people who look like us and have backgrounds like us have limited input.” I agree with most of your kritiks about debate but y’all always frame it in terms of victims and oppressors. There is very little “black self-determination” promoted. The only kind you advocate comes from the location of victim and has to operate within the limits of victim. (i.e. I can’t talks equally as fast or have equal numbers of files as a privileged white debater simply because of the way i look and my background). Y’all don’t affirm “the image of black folks as equals, as self-determining”; they cannot operate equally in debate as whites; the modes by which they can act are already predetermined and basically set in stone.”<sup>35</sup>

Based on our engagement with the Louisville Project in chapter three, Jackson's claims about victimization and lack of black self-determination seem to indicate a misunderstanding of the Projects rhetoric. Yet, Jackson's strategy demonstrates the means by which black social protest may be effectively combated. It is not a coincidence that Jackson cites noted black feminist cultural theorist bell hooks. A use of such evidence allows Jackson to make his argument without relying on his own subject position as a white male to provide credibility to the argument. In other words, he depends on bell hooks' credibility both as scholar, but also as a black woman.

Zompetti argues "...many so-called 'victim's deploy these arguments in actual debate rounds. I have no problem with discussions of exclusivity and under-representation, but let me be clear. Such arguments should not be the focus of debate competition."<sup>36</sup> Zompetti argues further that the use of one's "victim" status in debate rounds gives the marginalized person an unfair advantage in the debate round.<sup>37</sup> He calls it "stacking-the-deck" and playing the "ultimate trump card." I might call it leveling the playing field, where race, gender, class, and team status function as privileges that are often insurmountable for certain racial minorities in the debate community. Jack Rogers, the Director of Forensics at the University of Texas at Tyler, published the only empirical survey of bias in judging and argues that there is an undeniable bias against women and minorities in debate judging.<sup>38</sup> Specifically, Rogers noted that clear bias existed in the evaluation of individual identity and the correlation between logic and emotion. In other words, certain debate participants are coded as more logical and less emotional which influences the judges perception of the individual debater. And, more importantly those codes signify along race and gender lines. Such privilege is cumulative and it is difficult to believe that such an accumulation of privilege can be overwhelmed by "strategically" using ones "victim status" in such a space.

## Personalizing Debate

John Willemin expresses his concerns about the personalization of debate: “This raises a larger issue, which is whether or not what debaters and teams do outside of debates should affect whether or not they win debate rounds. Are we supposed to get our hands stamped when we judge UDL tournaments so we can walk into rounds and say “SEE???”<sup>39</sup> Solt argues that the personalization of debate and the “scorn” for those who work with the UDL may force people out of debate: “Those forced to debate against these highly personal kritiks are likely to be cast in the role of the villain, as active or at least complicit agents of racism, for example. And even those who have invested years of effort in the pursuit of racial inclusiveness in debate, for example, through work with urban debate leagues, are likely to find their exertions scorned. This is to say the least, unpleasant, and at some point, I fear, it will begin to drive people from the activity.”<sup>40</sup> Parcher argues that the personalization of debate has resulted in a “loss of civility” in debaters, judges and coaches interaction with one another.<sup>41</sup> Once again, it is Louisville’s violations of the standards of order and “decorum” that is criticized. Yet, more significant is Solt’s argument that such violations may result in debaters being driven from the activity. This argument seems to be of critical concern for many within the rhetorical establishment. There is a fear that the debate tradition that has been such an important part of many of the community member’s lives will be irrevocably changed into something that they neither recognize nor would want to participate in. Such a fear of loss can only result in attempts to block such efforts at change and to shore up the traditional establishment.

Josh Hoe notes that the project is antithetical to a liberal arts education:

Caveat...I know many performative/personal teams do extensive research. However, one of the arguments advanced is that debate should be about things personally



important....Taken to its logical conclusions research is deemphasized and the person becomes expert in a world like this. In addition, it becomes possible for that research that is done to be based only in one subject (for instance race). I think this kind of education is antithetical to a liberal arts education and that is what most of our departments are supporting.”<sup>42</sup>

Hoe argues further that he is “suspicious” of the attempt to shift away from “traditional” debate practice:

In fact, I am innately suspicious of this move to supplant "traditional" forms of debate because it seems often to replace "researched and Academic" ideas with naked persuasive techniques. I am not referring to excluding "non-traditional" forms of evidence - I fully accept that as a worthy endeavor (sic). I am referring to moving away from the whole "clash" enterprise which is what seems to be happening. I believe racism became "legitimate" in the eyes of many whites way back in the day precisely because people did not require the highest standards in research and because academics dropped the ball. The red scare happened for many of the same reasons. Naked persuasion is often the handmaiden of right wing power and growth...Father Caughlin and McCarthy were not winning converts from their well researched arguments or facts...they won converts because they utilized NAKED PERSUASION. I also think there is a danger of anti-intellectualism and the rejection of research and evidenced.<sup>43</sup>

However, the Louisville debaters do not reject the use of research or evidence. Instead, they argue that debate norms privilege certain kinds of evidence, certain types of expertise and belittles others. They argue further that the sharp focus on evidentiary support has led to the development of extreme speed and line by line debating. The Louisville students engage in

research, yet they seem to privilege authors with first hand experience of the issue discussed, what they call organic intellectuals. Hoe seems specifically concerned with whether or not the Louisville strategy creates enough opportunity for clashing positions between opponents which is the cornerstone of the debate. Louisville's strategy tends to move the focus on the debate away from the specifics of the topic resolution and more toward the practice of debate itself. Hoe believes that this destroys clash in debates. Clash only occurs when debaters engage in research of the possible opposition arguments. Thus, if Louisville debates lack clash it may very well be because more traditional teams refuse to engage in oppositional research to answer Louisville's position. Instead, most teams simply argue the benefits of current normative debate practice. Thus, Louisville has been unable to convince the community at large to delve deeply into critical race scholarship in order to respond to the Project's position.

Steve Woods argues that the Project is not only anti-educational but may also "chill discourse and drive individuals out of the activity:"

The elimination of the line between the game and the real obliterates the possibility of evaluation along any other means than subjective and personal...In such a condition debate becomes ideological evangelism. It removes the option of conditional endorsement for the purposes of investigation and testing. The critical turn requires that one abandon contestant status but always assume a publicly accountable identity subject to the scrutiny of others. Such a climate is anti-educational in that it prevents the ability to approach issues from an educational standpoint that allows for experimentation and representation of ideas that are not internalizations of the person advancing them. Debate is no longer a free speech or experimental speech space. Instead, it becomes a moral judgment ground likely to chill discourse and silence exploration of a variety of voices.<sup>44</sup>

Zompetti gives the community the choice of either a “focus on individual notions of psychological distress or the larger group’s problem of resource-based scarcity and exploitation” if it tolerates a focus on the personal and experiential in debate.<sup>45</sup> Zompetti’s characterization of the Louisville teams discussion of their personal experiences with racism and exclusion within the debate community is extremely problematic. Zompetti is not the only debate scholar that describes the use of personal experience and identity as individualistic. Debate theorist Roger Solt argues that this turn toward the personal, particularly around issues of race and gender, in debate is evidence of the rise of “expressive individualism” which he argues is associated with therapeutic culture.”<sup>46</sup>

Yet, the project can hardly be characterized as such. As I argued in chapter three, the project’s rhetoric is birthed out of and built upon cultural practices within African American culture. It is dependent on an articulation of group social identity and group experiences. The Louisville debaters are not engaging in a “therapeutic” negotiation of individual psychosis. Instead, they respond to an underground or maybe just ignored discourse amongst African-American debaters across both high school and college policy debate. Not every debater has the same experience, but the Louisville students have noted enough of a similarity across black experiences in debate to justify their criticism. Their argument is not based on a diatribe about their individual experiences of marginalization, but the group experience of marginalization faced by the many individuals who are identifiable as different or other within the policy debate community. Zompetti’s mischaracterization goes even further when he characterizes the Projects use of personal experience as a focus on “my experience, my narrative, my feelings, how I learn, how I can engage the community.”<sup>47</sup> Yet, Louisville’s rhetoric, particularly Jones and Green, seems to engage in a rhetoric of “we” rather than a rhetoric of me. Zompetti’s rhetorical decision

to characterize the experience of racism and exclusion as an “individual psychosis” is not only dismissive, it is ultimately disrespectful and an example of the type of argumentative strategy designed to discredit minority thinkers who disturb the stability of dominant discourses. To describe the Louisville project using the rhetoric of therapy and psychosis functions to infantilize and de-rationalize marginalized voices. It represents a historical practice of characterizing those who critique dominant discourses from their subject position on the margins as hysterical, irrational, and mentally unstable.

### Conclusions

The question for many in the debate community is whether or not the Louisville Project was effective at increasing diversity in the debate activity. That this can't be statistically proven means that arguably the community can say it does not. This is the problem of using persuasiveness as the standard by which to establish a movement's success. The Louisville debaters broke a barrier in the debate community. Others will follow, maybe not the exact project, but its tactics will be available as a part of the competitive lexicon.<sup>48</sup>

The anger produced by the project is less a justification for its rejection and more an argument for turning the critical gaze of debate intellectualism on debate itself. For students of color to vocally and aggressively engage the debate community and find it's most vocal response to be one of frustration and anger seems to demonstrate the need for the critiques the Louisville debaters offer. Racial change will not occur without everyone involved experiencing a deep, internal discomfort. Confronting privilege and committing one's self to real social and systemic change will require a sacrifice. Progress hurts. Thus, when I encountered this conflict in the debate community, it was the express feeling of discomfort experienced by the majority white debate community that drew my attention. Discomfort is productive. It destabilizes the dominant

ideological discourses of the debate community, throwing the status quo off kilter. In the current context of a general educational commitment to diversity and inclusion, it may take more confrontational tactics to bring to light the ways in which racial oppression is re-inscribed through contemporary efforts to end it. Until the development of the Project, the debate community had been self-congratulatory of its efforts to effectively deal with the lack of diversity in the community. Specifically, the development of the UDL has been critical to this benevolent image of debate outreach.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Race, Education, and Performance:**

#### **Some Concluding Thoughts**

The “acting black” thesis is definitive of a social context in which black culture becomes a symptom of the social ills attached to black communities. The social influence of this thesis, despite the academic criticisms of it, is indicative of the development of a critical discourse, in which culture and the social practices bred out of that culture become the place of blame for the lack of progress amongst poor blacks. If cultural practice can be blamed for black students poor academic performance then societal responsibility for the social ills associated with educational failure is greatly reduced. The pervasiveness of this ideology means that the narrative may have lasting and long-term effect on political and social commitment to helping poor populations of color. What could be the worst-case scenario? These populations can be easily written off, not based on a biological difference that precludes their success, but a cultural difference based in choice. It is this idea of choice that drives the narrative. For if one chooses cultural behaviors at odds with those of the normative majority then the social censure and political and economic disenfranchisement one faces can be blamed on the individual rather than the social body as a whole.

For rhetorical theorists interested in the study of contemporary black social protest, this study attempts to theorize the negotiation between representation and performance in the argumentative strategies of black protesters. I have sought to engage the relationship between media representation of black youths and the manner in which black youths engage such

mediated imagery through style and performance. Specifically, the project targets such performance in the context of attempts by youth to influence their immediate condition through direct action protest. As I argue in Chapter One, the use of subcultural style offers an opportunity for black youths to engage the social and political discourses that characterize them as “other.” Thus, I am interested in the use of subcultural style and performance as a mechanism or tool through which black youths may engage in social protest.

The study of black social movement and protest reached its heights during the 1970’s and 1980’s in rhetorical scholarship. Work by noted rhetorical theorists have engaged black social protest specifically.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the end of national, organized black social protest has lessened the interest of rhetorical scholars in the study of black social movement theory. This study attempts to demonstrate the importance of analyzing contemporary black social protest. Bowers, Ochs, and Jensen in the introduction to the second edition of *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, note that localized, grassroots social protest are more the order of the day in contemporary America. That these grassroots protest often receive limited media attention does not make them any less a rhetorical event worthy of our academic consideration. In fact, as Bowers *et al.*, argue, these local resistance movements are the critical building blocks for the development of more national based movements. As I engage race, representation and performance through the Louisville Project, I do so by reading this example of social protest through a more broadly defined contextual lens. While I engage the immediate context of the rhetorical texts I analyze, I attempt to engage this local example of black social protest within the broader social narratives surrounding the success and failure of black youths within the American educational system.

Given the changes in contemporary American society since the end of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, it behooves rhetorical scholars interested in the study of black

social protest to attend to local examples of movements where race becomes a significant topoi for social resistance rhetoric. The achievements of black social protest between the 50's and 70's is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the activism of that time period made our current advances in racial justice and equality possible, yet it also stands as the quintessential example of social protest. Strategies of these movements have encouraged other protesters from anti-war, women's environmental and indigenous movements. Yet, racism has changed over time and the methods by which individuals and groups must attempt to resist has changed as well. The visibility of the black body in contemporary American culture, along with the advances that some blacks have made in education, medicine, business, law, etc. has driven some of the more overt expressions of racism underground.<sup>2</sup> And yet, racism remains alive and well, more subtle and thus more difficult to combat.

In chapter two, "The UDL," I use the news media representation of the UDL to engage these questions of how black culture becomes symptomatic not just of difference, but a negative difference which can be corrected by more normative performances of identity. In that chapter, I argue that in the news representation of the UDL, the students are scapegoated based on social stereotypes associated with poor blacks, before being redeemed by debate participation. In other words, it is the student's choice of debate participation and the simultaneous rejection of black cultural practices that would make their educational success achievable. Even more significant is the narrative that these students overcome the problems associated with poor black culture, marking them as special, i.e., different from the young, poor, black masses they represent.

These news representations of UDL students, populated with statements from participants, teachers, coaches, instructors, directors, funders and supporters represent a bringing together of discourse through the UDL and its participants are defined. Understanding these



representations and their associations with intersecting ideologies of race, gender, class, and sexuality offers an engaging space from which to negotiate the relationship between the social representation of black youth and dominant performative expectations. Hopefully, I have at least demonstrated that given the politics attached to such representations, UDLer's are to some extent bound within this discursive system and must find means of acting within that space. The choice is not as simple as assimilation or separation, for these students, instead these students are aligned across a continuum. However, given the social stereotypes circulating around these students, it is no wonder that they must carefully choose performative strategies to help them negotiate their subjectification.

Chapter three, "The Louisville Project," attempts to engage in an analysis of a few former UDL students whose performative choices became significantly troublesome to the traditional order of the college policy debate community. In that chapter, I contextualize the Louisville Project as a response to some of the characterizations offered of the UDL and its students, as well as, the limitations of the program itself to effectively increase racial and ethnic minority participation in college policy debate. The Louisville Project is a significant case study because the Project participants challenge the performative and stylistic norms of the majority white and economically privileged debate community through performance based resistance characterized by the use of black cultural practices. In other words, the Louisville Project offers a challenge to those who hypothesize that black culture itself is symptomatic of the ills associated with black culture. They challenge such an assumption by engaging in black rhetorical practices as a basis of argument from which to critically analyze the stylistic practices of the activity and the maintenance of white privilege within the debate community. This chapter offers us two things in seeking out the relationship between racial representation and performance (1) it offers an

opportunity to study how black social actors engage in specific performative practices in negotiating the discursive narratives attached to their racialized social bodies and (2) it offers the opportunity to study social actors who make a rhetorical choice to engage in a direct performative resistance to the social norms deemed necessary to attain achievement and success in a context bound community. Thus, chapter three looks at these direct acts of performative resistance as characteristic of a more militant social protest designed to confront. Given the commitment of the general debate community to the UDL, which can be described as an integrationist response to the calls to increase diversity and inclusion in policy debate. The Louisville Project's confrontational tactic of direct action and performative resistance is a significant change in the rhetorical character of the debate about race, ethnicity, and inclusion in the college policy debate community.

In Chapter Four, "The Community's Response," I attempt to identify the main themes used by the establishment and their adherents to destabilize the Louisville Project. The Louisville debaters offer an opportunity to study the use of black cultural performative aesthetics as a rhetorical strategy for combating the normalized white male, class privilege inherent within the academic debate community. Simultaneously, the manner in which traditionally white spaces respond to the infiltration of hip hop, black bodies, and racialized rhetorical practices is interesting as well. Thus, this project is equally as interested in the broader debate generated within the debate community about the nature of race, racism and white privilege. This chapter interrogates the debate community's response to the Louisville Project as an example of anti-movement establishment discourse. I argue that the establishment attempts to reinstitute order not by rejecting the goals of the Louisville Project, but the methods. The method receives a great deal of critical attention as the establishment argues that the rhetorical method is confrontational

and violates the strictures of decorum, the debaters rely on a rhetoric of victimization, and the project results in the personalization of debate competition reducing commitment to logic and rationality in argumentation. This establishment response offers a significant example of how those privileged within a social community engage in efforts to maintain the structure of privilege. This chapter also offers an opportunity to analyze covert, racialized argument given the politically correct context of contemporary American society.

What I have attempted to demonstrate through the three case studies in this work is the complex character of racial politics. In other words, I have argued that race plays a critical role in how individuals both perform and read racial bodies. As social actors we are not free from the implications of our bodies, they are always already bound within fields of intelligibility aligned along relations of force within the social system. The physical speaks for us, marking the social body across intersecting lines of race, gender, class, and sexuality. These markings are not to be read here as static or calcified. Instead, they are modulating scriptings read through the negotiation between representation and performance. Thus, though the body is scripted for intelligibility, the scripted body still has agency through performance. It is this negotiation between representations of bodies and performance of the body that this project hopes to engage. Representations of the body are signified through a system of social intelligibility through which differently situated bodies can be read and evaluated. Yet, each social actor also finds agency through an engagement with social performance. Performance can repeat an iteration of socially acceptable behavior or resist the norm through a performance that is counter to it or made unintelligible within the social context of the norm. It is this force relationship between representation and performance that has been the central theme of this project.

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*As a writer and a scholar I have always believed that we should make clear our investments in the various subject matters that we choose to engage. To borrow some language from qualitative methodology, I am a “participant observer.” I must identify myself as a member of the community that I am studying. I am not only an ex-policy debater, but I am also an ex-UDL participant. Although I was trained in traditional policy debate, I often found its formats, procedures, and practices restrictive. As a black female invested in creating and maintaining spaces of resistance for urban students of color I am a “stakeholder” in the policy debate organization and in the subversion of racial domination within that space. It is these experiences that I find centrally important in my critical analysis of race and racism in the debate community. I am also academically trained, and that training along with the critical perspectives offered by in-group experience may offer an analysis and interpretation that will hopefully complicate our understanding of interracial public communication.*

*My story, from the Black inner-city of Atlanta to the highest levels of academic instruction, is critically intertwined with this study. While my story is not central, it adds a further level of support or evidence of the impact or injury that contemporary race relations can have on those marked by difference. Sometimes, “objective” evidence seems too far removed from the material experience of oppression.<sup>3</sup> Storytelling makes things real for us, it asks for an investment from us. It is a spiritual conduit that speaks to the souls of humanity. Thus, it is necessary that I tell part of my story here. The manner in which my personal experience may influence this particular project will hopefully demonstrate the usefulness of identity, positionality, and experience in critically interrogating racial discourse.*

*First, I was a participant in the first generation of Atlanta urban debate students. I began debating as a first-year at D. M. Therrell High School, the first urban, majority Black high school in Georgia to begin actively competing on the policy debate circuit. I achieved a great deal of competitive success in Georgia and was recruited on to the Emory debate team, titled the Barkley Forum, by Melissa Wade.*

*Second, I debated each year I was at Emory (although I often attempted to quit, I was ultimately talked back into it by Melissa). As a junior I became nationally successful on the CEDA policy debate circuit, and although at this point the merger between CEDA and NDT had occurred (college policy debate had been segregated into two separate leagues prior to 1996), I chose to continue traveling to traditionally CEDA tournaments. Let's just say that my first experience at an NDT tournament, which I termed a "blood bath," drove me away from debate competition for more than four months. I was shocked by the skill levels of even the less successful competitors. Competitors seemed arrogant beyond belief, verbal hostility was often the norm. By the end of the tournament, I felt physically battered, drained of the enthusiasm for debate that I had brought from high school. But, even more significant to me (considering I had just left high school where the population was 98% Black) was the overwhelming sea of whiteness that seemed to spread out before me. I saw only two or three other Blacks at the tournament, and they were all men. CEDA tournaments were marginally more diverse and competition seemed less hostile.*

*During my senior year at Emory, the debate topic was whether to change some aspect of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act in terms of race and/or gender. That year I researched and authored an affirmative that advocated changing Title VII language to race and/or gender rather than race or gender as the legislation is currently written. This minor change in language would*

*allow women of color who faced discrimination at the intersection of race and gender oppression to file legal claims based on that intersection. As the law is currently written, women of color must file complaints based on race or gender, not both. Using black feminist theory and criticism, I constructed a rhetorical performance in which my own black woman's subjectivity critically informed not only the choice in topic, but the manner in which I debated the issue in a predominantly white and male discursive community. Those who watched me debate in those days were impressed not only with the skill level that I had attained, but the power and passion of my voice as I argued for a recognition of the invisibility of those who are disenfranchised at the intersection of race, gender, and class. That year, I had a 90% win-loss ratio when I presented the intersectionality affirmative. By the time I left the activity in 1999 I was the most successful black female debater in the history of national level intercollegiate policy debate.*

*It was during my junior and senior year that the Open Society Institute began its funding of Urban Debate Leagues. Beginning with more than a dozen New York City public schools that serviced a majority black and/or latino/a population, OSI, in partnership with Emory University, began not only a service program, but a movement. As a first generation urban debater, before the UDL went national, I was a useful example for the budding program, of what UDL students could become with debate training. I had come from an urban high school, in a black ghetto of Atlanta. My high school was attempting to overcome its reputation as one of the worst high schools in Atlanta. I graduated in the top ten percent of my class. I was a regional mock trial champion, a city and state award winner in math and science, and extremely successful in debate at the state level. I received an early admission offer from Emory and I accepted. As a sophomore at Emory I was an Octafinalist at the CEDA National Debate Tournament (sort of like the championship tournament of any sport) and it was the first time in the history of the*

*tournament that a black woman had attained such an achievement (or at least that's what one of my coaches told me after the debate round was over). I (along with two other early UDLers that achieved similar successes) were proof positive that the program worked. My life became a world wind as I competed, negotiated national success, and made trips to New York and later Baltimore for exhibition debates, speaking engagements, and lectures. In essence, I became a poster-child for the UDL. I was smart, articulate, Black, female and from humble economic beginnings. I impressed not only teachers and administrators, but black and latino/a students from the ghettos of major cities as they watched me engage in rhetorical competition with white debaters with no fear, but with assertiveness and style. I worked at multiple summer debate institutes that housed UDL students and I was often a favorite lecturer, exhibition debater, and lab leader. I was, at the beginning, completely committed to my role as evidence of the program's benefits and I firmly believed that it would create long-lasting change. I had to believe that, for as I looked around at my peers in national level competition, I died a little every moment as I realized that I was often alone or a member of a very small minority.*

*It was only later, as I realized central problems with the implementation of UDLs that I began to question my commitment. The same students that I had convinced during lectures, exhibition debates, and panels that they could achieve my successes or even move beyond them, were returning to tell me the horror stories of their experiences at integrated competitions. They expressed to me the manner in which they were immediately discounted because of the way they looked, dressed, or spoke. As I watched these students try harder and harder to not only be accepted into the community, but successful within it, it became clearer and clearer to me that there were some fundamental differences in our experiences that had made the road to my success a great deal easier. Once I began the initial questioning, it was not long before I became*

*convinced that the UDL's success did not hinge on the commitment of students of color to the activity, it depended on whether or not the debate community could or would change in ways that would allow for meaningful participation of racial/ethnic others in policy competition. Although, I continue to be critical of the structure, administration, and representation of UDL's I have remained involved with particular UDL's that attempt to move beyond the simplistic model of traditional debate to alternative teaching and participation formats.<sup>4</sup>*

*My discontent with the UDL mirrored a growing discomfort with my debate participation. I had lost my idealism and a realistic view of the national college policy debate community resulted in a rejection of that community's ability to truly account for those groups and knowledges excluded from it. I decided to take a four year hiatus from the activity while working on the PhD. I was convinced that I would leave academic policy debate behind (other than minor consulting responsibilities for specific UDL programs). Yet, life is unpredictable and I am now the Director of Debate for a research one university. The break that I took from debate gave me enough distance from the activity that I could look at the community and my own experience analytically and begin to interrogate the structures and practices that seem to maintain race, class and gender based exclusions. So, rather than walk away from the community, I have chosen to engage it, to turn the academic skills that I have learned onto the debate community in an effort to breed progress. I finally realize that unless some of us are willing to study the problem, many talented youths will continue to be excluded not just from the community, but from the benefits that participation offers. So, I hope that this project will help to strengthen the academic conversation surrounding the UDL's and the inclusion and diversity efforts within the college policy debate community.*



## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

#### Chapter One

<sup>1</sup> Dennis L. Dworkin and Leslie G. Roman, *Views Beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*, Critical Social Thought (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 95, Erling E. Boe and Sujie Shin, "Is the United States Really Losing the International Horse Race in Academic Achievement?," *Phi Delta Kappan* 86, no. 9 (2005): p. 688. Boe and Shin analyze the statistical survey information on the educational status of the U.S. in comparison to other industrialized nations finding that the U.S. is not at risk of losing its educational prominence in the international community. Nonetheless, they note that news media coverage of this trend tends to focus on portraying a down-slide in U.S. standing increasing the fear factor for many Americans. They fear that the U.S. will face a future decline in its economic prosperity. There is a sense within the American consciousness that we are losing our position in the world as the most educated and industrious nation on Earth. We fear losing our edge.

<sup>2</sup> Cosby delivered this speech at an NAACP celebration of the anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. The speech was delivered on May 17, 2004 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Cosby was receiving an achievement award and his remarks occurred during his acceptance address. A copy of the speech can be accessed on [Americanrhetoric.com](http://Americanrhetoric.com).

<sup>3</sup> For a more thorough discussion of Bill Cosby's rhetoric about black youths, see Michael Eric Dyson, *Is Bill Cosby Right?: Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2005). For further discussion of the black middle class and the representation of

black youths in the hip hop generation, see Todd Boyd, *The New H.N.I.C.: The Death of Civil Rights and the Reign of Hip Hop* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Uhlenberg and Kathleen M. Brown, "Racial Gap in Teachers' Perceptions of the Achievement Gap," *Education and Urban Society* 34, no. 4 (2002). For a critique of the public use of the term "black/ white achievement gap," see Carla O'Connor, Erin McNamara Horvat, and Amanda E. Lewis, "Introduction: Framing the Field: Past and Future Research on the Historic Underachievement of Black Students," in *Beyond Acting White: Reframing the Debate on Black Student Achievement*, ed. Erin McNamara Horvat and Carla O'Connor (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), p. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> See Kathryn Hoffman, Charmaine Llagas, and Thomas O. Snyder, "Status and Trends in the Education of Blacks," (Washington: National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). This NCES report is a statistical analysis of the achievement gap based on a variety of indicators chosen by the researchers. They note that black students are more likely than white students to have discipline problems, engage in violent and criminal activities on school property, have parents with lower socio-economic and educational status, are more likely to drop out, and less likely to receive a four year college degree.

<sup>6</sup> For further discussion of the effects of teacher expectation on black students, see Ronald F. Ferguson, "Teachers Perceptions and Expectations and the Black-White Test Score Gap," *Urban Education* 38, no. 4 (2003). For an analysis that compares black and white teacher perceptions of the achievement gap, see Uhlenberg and Brown, "Racial Gap in Teachers' Perceptions of the Achievement Gap." For a discussion of the impact of parental involvement and class status of the parent on racial and ethnic minority student achievement, see Laura Desimone, "Linking Parent Involvement with Student Achievement: Do Race and Income Matter?," *Journal of Educational*

*Research* 93, no. 1 (1999). For a discussion of the effects of cultural difference on the black achievement gap see Yvette Jackson, "Unlocking the Potential of African American Students: Keys to Reversing Underachievement," *Theory Into Practice* 44, no. 3 (2005), Paul E. Bellair and Thomas L. McNulty, "Beyond the Bell Curve: Community Disadvantage and the Explanation of Black-White Differences in Adolescent Violence," *Criminology* 43, no. 4 (2005), Marvin Lynn, "Race, Culture, and the Education of African Americans," *Educational Theory* 56, no. 1 (2006), Angel L. Harris, "I (Don't) Hate School: Revisiting Oppositional Culture Theory of Blacks' Resistance to Schooling," *Social Forces* 85, no. 2 (2006). For a discussion of the structural barriers to minority achievement including inequities across majority black and majority white schools see Jaekyung Lee, "Multiple Facets of Inequity in Racial and Ethnic Achievement Gaps," *PJE. Peabody Journal of Education* 79, no. 2 (2004).

<sup>7</sup> For examples of suggestions for solving the gap within academic literature see, Jerome Taylor, "Achieving Excellence in Urban Schools: Pitfalls, Pratfalls, and Evolving Opportunities," *Negro Educational Review* 56, no. 4 (2005), Harris, "I (Don't) Hate School: Revisiting Oppositional Culture Theory of Blacks' Resistance to Schooling.", David J. Armor, "Brown and Black-White Achievement," *Academic Questions* 19, no. 2 (2006), Lynn, "Race, Culture, and the Education of African Americans.", Jackson, "Unlocking the Potential of African American Students: Keys to Reversing Underachievement.", David B. Campbell and Jacqueline Fleming, "Fear of Success, Racial Identity, and Academic Achievement in Black Male College Students," *Community Review* 18 (2000).

<sup>8</sup> Reginald Leon Green, "New Paradigms in School Relationships: Collaborating to Enhance Student Achievement," *Education* 121, no. 4 (2001).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: p. 737.

<sup>10</sup> David Gillborn, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Education Reform.," *Journal of Education Policy* 20, no. 4 (2005): p. 494. See also, Green, "New Paradigms in School Relationships: Collaborating to Enhance Student Achievement," p. 737.

<sup>11</sup> Ludwig A. Pongratz, "Voluntary Self-Control: Education Reform as a Governmental Strategy," *Educational Philosophy & Theory* 38, no. 4 (2006): p. 473.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.: p. 474-76.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.: p. 477.

<sup>14</sup> Lois McNay, "Gender, Habitus and the Field: Pierre Bourdieu and the Limits of Reflexivity," *Theory, Culture & Society* 16, no. 1 (1999): p. 99.

<sup>15</sup> Terry Lovell, "Resisting with Authority: Historical Specificity, Agency and the Performative Self," *Theory, Culture & Society* 20, no. 1 (2003): p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> McNay, "Gender, Habitus and the Field: Pierre Bourdieu and the Limits of Reflexivity," p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> Annegret Staiger, "Recreating Blackness-as-Failure through Educational Reform? A Case Study of a California Partnership Academy," *Equity & Excellence in Education* 38, no. 1 (2005): p. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Jeff Stickney, "Deconstructing Discourses About New Paradigms of Teaching: A Foucaultian and Wittgensteinian Perspective," *Educational Philosophy & Theory* 38, no. 3 (2006): p. 328. Such a movement is based on curriculum reform and increasingly stringent accountability standards. Thus, while Stickney speaks to the specific context of Canadian educational systems, his analysis is quite relevant to the American context. For further discussion of the paradigm shifts inherent in education reform discourse, see Green, "New Paradigms in School Relationships: Collaborating to Enhance Student Achievement," p. 737-38.

<sup>19</sup> Stickney, "Deconstructing Discourses About New Paradigms of Teaching: A Foucaultian and Wittgensteinian Perspective," p. 329.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.: p. 331.

<sup>21</sup> Gillborn, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Education Reform.," p. 494.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Linda J. Graham, "(Re)Visioning the Centre: Education Reform and the Ideal Citizen of the Future," *Educational Philosophy & Theory* 39, no. 2 (2007).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.: p. 198.

<sup>25</sup> Gillborn, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Education Reform.," p. 493.

<sup>26</sup> Julia E. Koppich, "A Tale of Two Approaches: The Aft, the Nea, and Nclb," *Peabody Journal of Education* 80, no. 2 (2005).

<sup>27</sup> Staiger, "Recreating Blackness-as-Failure through Educational Reform? A Case Study of a California Partnership Academy."

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.: p. 41-42.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.: p. 41.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.: p. 36.

<sup>31</sup> Dennis L. Dworkin and Leslie G. Roman, *Views Beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*, Critical Social Thought (New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 95.

<sup>32</sup> Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers, 2nd ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

<sup>33</sup> Gillborn, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Education Reform.," p. 494.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Jerome Taylor, "Achieving Excellence in Urban Schools: Pitfalls, Pratfalls, and Evolving Opportunities," *Negro Educational Review* 56, no. 4 (2005): p. 259.

<sup>36</sup> Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu, "Black Students' School Success: Coping with the Burden of 'Acting White'," *Urban Review* 18, no. 3 (1986).

<sup>37</sup> Prudence L. Carter, *Keepin' It Real: School Success Beyond Black and White*, Transgressing Boundaries (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 5.

<sup>38</sup> Tony Sewell, *Black Masculinities and Schooling: How Black Boys Survive Modern Schooling* (Staffordshire: Trentham Books Limited, 2000), p. 110.

<sup>39</sup> Carter, *Keepin' It Real: School Success Beyond Black and White*, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> For readings that use and support the "acting white" hypothesis, see Joseph G. Conti and Brad Stetson, *Challenging the Civil Rights Establishment: Profiles of a New Black Vanguard* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1993), p. 38, John U. Ogbu, "The Consequences of the American Caste System," in *The School Achievement of Minority Children: New Perspectives*, ed. Ulric Neisser (Hillsdale: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1986), John U. Ogbu, *Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb : A Study of Academic Disengagement*, Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Studies in Education (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2003). For studies critical of the hypothesis, see Dyson, *Is Bill Cosby Right?: Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind*, Karolyn Tyson, William Darity, and Domini R. Castellino, "It's Not "A Black Thing": Understanding the Burden of Acting White and Other Dilemmas of High Achievement," *American Sociological Review* 70 (2005).

<sup>41</sup> See John U. Ogbu, *Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb : A Study of Academic Disengagement*, Sociocultural, Political, and Historical Studies in Education (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2003).

<sup>42</sup> Carla R. Monroe, "Understanding the Discipline Gap through a Cultural Lens: Implications for the Education of African American Students," *Intercultural Education* 16, no. 4 (2005): p. 319.

<sup>43</sup> O'Connor, Horvat, and Lewis, "Introduction: Framing the Field: Past and Future Research on the Historic Underachievement of Black Students," p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Carter, *Keepin' It Real: School Success Beyond Black and White*, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> Monroe, "Understanding the Discipline Gap through a Cultural Lens: Implications for the Education of African American Students." See also, Tyson, Darity, and Castellino, "It's Not "A Black Thing": Understanding the Burden of Acting White and Other Dilemmas of High Achievement."

<sup>47</sup> Theresa Perry, Claude Steele, and Asa G. Hilliard, *Young, Gifted, and Black: Promoting High Achievement among African-American Students* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003). See also, Tyson, Darity, and Castellino, "It's Not "A Black Thing": Understanding the Burden of Acting White and Other Dilemmas of High Achievement," p. 582, O'Connor, Horvat, and Lewis, "Introduction: Framing the Field: Past and Future Research on the Historic Underachievement of Black Students," p. 4-5.

<sup>48</sup> O'Connor, Horvat, and Lewis, "Introduction: Framing the Field: Past and Future Research on the Historic Underachievement of Black Students," p. 11.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Beverly Daniel Tatum, *"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?": And Other Conversations About Race* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), p. 64.

<sup>51</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 195.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195-97.

<sup>53</sup> Tamas Pataki, "Introduction," in *Racism in Mind*, ed. Michael P. Levine and Tamas Pataki (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 7.

<sup>54</sup> Lawrence Blum, "What Do Accounts Of "Racism" Do?," in *Racism in Mind*, ed. Michael P. Levine and Tamas Pataki (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), p. 59.

<sup>55</sup> John T. Warren, *Performing Purity: Whiteness, Pedagogy, and the Reconstitution of Power*, ed. Thomas K. Nakayama, vol. 6, *Critical Intercultural Communication Studies* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), p. 42-43.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>59</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), Franz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," in *Visual Culture: The Reader*, ed. Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publications, 1999).

<sup>60</sup> I use the term "flesh" here from Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An America Grammar Book," in *The Black Feminist Reader*, ed. Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd, 2000). I take the term "surface" from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).



<sup>61</sup> Warren, *Performing Purity: Whiteness, Pedagogy, and the Reconstitution of Power*, p. 47.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>63</sup> Melanie Joy McNaughton, "Hard Cases: Prison Tattooing as Visual Argument,"

*Argumentation and Advocacy* 43 (2007): 133.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*: 134.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy*

(London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 162.

<sup>67</sup> See Raymond Williams, *The Sociology of Culture*, University of Chicago Press ed. (Chicago:

University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 30. See also, Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge:*

*Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon (New

York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 118.

<sup>68</sup> Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984*, p. 118.

<sup>69</sup> Nicholas Garnham, "Political Economy and Cultural Studies," in *The Cultural Studies Reader*,

ed. Simon During (London: Routledge, 1993).

<sup>70</sup> Angela G. Ray, "The Permeable Public: Rituals of Citizenship in Antebellum Men's Debating

Clubs.," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 41, no. 1 (2004).

## Chapter Two

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of articulation, see Nathan Stormer, "Articulation: A Working Paper on

Rhetoric and Taxis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 3 (2004): p. 257. Articulation is a

“performative concept.” Stormer notes that “To articulate is to produce bodies, language, and the

space of their relative disposition through shared acts.”

<sup>2</sup> For further discussion of the ambivalence of American cultural negotiation of black ness, see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), Stephen Nathan Haymes, *Race, Culture, and the City: A Pedagogy for Black Urban Struggle* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Once Wade made the decision to reach out to inner-city schools in Atlanta, she came into contact with Dr. Larry E. Moss. Dr. Moss was a school administrator and the Law and Government Magnet Program Director at Therrell High School. Dr. Moss started a debate team that reached state and national success by the time of his retirement from the Atlanta Public School System at the beginning of the century. Dr. Moss became a critical force in the development of the Urban Debate League model and the training of debate institute faculty and high school teachers involved in the program. Currently, Dr. Moss is an Assistant Professor and visiting lecturer in Communication.

<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that the initial Atlanta model did not include tournament competitions sponsored by the UDL. As the program developed into its current form, the UDL included coaching support, evidence production, and segregated tournament competition. In other words, the UDL held its own tournaments initially open only to UDL schools. In contrast, the original Atlanta model did not include sponsored tournament competition, thus UDL students integrated immediately into the broader Georgia high school debate circuit. However, as UDL member schools grow more comfortable with their participation they often begin to venture out beyond UDL tournaments.

<sup>5</sup> The Barkley Forum website featuring the Atlanta Urban Debate League refers to the UDL as a movement. The reference can be found on the Barkley Forum homepage at

[http://www.emory.edu/BF/comm/com\\_udl.html](http://www.emory.edu/BF/comm/com_udl.html). Melissa cited in a newspaper calling the UDL a movement.

<sup>6</sup> The National Association of Urban Debate Leagues (NAUDL) reports this figure on its internet website at [www.naudl.org](http://www.naudl.org).

<sup>7</sup> W. Semlak and D. Shields, "The Effect of Debate Training on Student Participation in the Bicentennial Youth Debates," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 13 (1977): p. 154, Kent Colbert and Thompson Biggers, "Why Should We Support Debate?," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 21 (1985).

<sup>8</sup> Colbert and Biggers, "Why Should We Support Debate?."

<sup>9</sup> David Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," *Teacher Magazine* 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Edward Lee, "Memoir of a Former Urban Debate League Participant," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 19 (1998), Melissa Maxcy Wade, "The Case for Urban Debate Leagues," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 19 (1998), Ede Warner and Jon Brusckke, "'Gone on Debating:' Competitive Academic Debate as a Tool of Empowerment," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 22 (2001), W. Baker, "Reflections on the New York Urban Debate League and Ideafest Ii," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 19 (1998).

<sup>11</sup> Gary Fine, *Gifted Tongues: High School Debate and Adolescent Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>12</sup> Nick McRee and Renee Cote, "Does College Debate Inherit a Lack of Diversity from High School Debate?," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 23 (2002).

<sup>13</sup> Fine, *Gifted Tongues: High School Debate and Adolescent Culture*.

<sup>14</sup> Jr. Gilliam, Franklin D. and Shanto Iyengar, "Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 3 (2000).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. For further discussion of the representation of racial others and criminality, see Carolyn Martindale, "Changes in Newspaper Images of Black Americans," *Newspaper Research Journal* 11, no. 1 (1990), Robert M. Entman, "Blacks in the News: Television, Modern Racism and Cultural Change," *Journalism Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (1992).

<sup>17</sup> Gilliam and Iyengar, "Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public."

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.: p. 562.

<sup>19</sup> Travis L. Dixon and Cristina L. Azocar, "The Representation of Juvenile Offenders by Race on Los Angeles Area Television News," *Howard Journal of Communications* 17, no. 2 (2006): p. 144. See also, Martindale, "Changes in Newspaper Images of Black Americans."

<sup>20</sup> Martindale, "Changes in Newspaper Images of Black Americans," p. 45.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*, Studies in Communication, Media, and Public Opinion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 134.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Parisi, "The *New York Times* Looks at One Block in Harlem: Narratives of Race in Journalism," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 15 (1998), Peter Parisi, "A Sort of Compassion: The Washington Post Explains the 'Crisis in Urban America'," *Howard Journal of Communications* 9, no. 3 (1998).

- <sup>23</sup> Parisi, "The *New York Times* Looks at One Block in Harlem: Narratives of Race in Journalism," p. 236.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.: p. 239.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid, Parisi, "A Sort of Compassion: The Washington Post Explains the "Crisis in Urban America"."
- <sup>26</sup> Martindale, "Changes in Newspaper Images of Black Americans," p. 41.
- <sup>27</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), p. 7.
- <sup>28</sup> John Downing and Charles Husband, *Representing Race: Racisms, Ethnicities and Media* (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 2005), p. 36.
- <sup>29</sup> Marian Meyers, "Crack Mothers in the News: A Narrative of Paternalistic Racism," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 28, no. 3 (2004).
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.: p. 210.
- <sup>31</sup> James Jasinski, *Sourcebook on Rhetoric: Key Concepts in Contemporary Rhetorical Studies* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2001), p. 504.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 406.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Parisi, "The *New York Times* Looks at One Block in Harlem: Narratives of Race in Journalism."
- <sup>37</sup> Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, p. 406-08.

<sup>38</sup> David T. Canon, *Race, Redistricting, and Representation: The Unintended Consequences of Black Majority Districts*, American Politics and Political Economy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*, p. 102.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 154.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> For a discussion of the visual rhetoric of poverty, see Cara A. Finnegan, *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and Fsa Photographs* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2003).

<sup>44</sup> Myrna Margulies Breitbart and Ellen J. Pader, "Establishing Ground: Representing Gender and Race in a Mixed Housing Development," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 2, no. 1 (1995): p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> I use supplementarity here in the Derridian sense. Jaques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974/1976), p. 145. Derrida defines the concept of supplementarity: "But the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of*; if it fills, it is as if one fills a void. If it represents and makes an image, it is by the anterior default of a presence."

<sup>46</sup> Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*, Studies in Communication, Media, and Public Opinion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

<sup>47</sup> Stacy A. Teicher, "Students from Inner Cities Find Power at the Podium," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 19, 2004, Doug Gross, "Argument, Stereotypes Attacked by Urban Debate

League Members," *Associated Press State & Local Wire*, June 25, 2005, Raven L. Hill, "Taking Time out to Argue; U Texas Summer Camp Is Aimed at Students in Urban High Schools,"

*Austin American-Statesman (Texas)*, July 25 2005, Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard."

<sup>48</sup> Teicher, "Students from Inner Cities Find Power at the Podium."

<sup>49</sup> Gross, "Argument, Stereotypes Attacked by Urban Debate League Members."

<sup>50</sup> Linda J. Graham, "(Re)Visioning the Centre: Education Reform and the Ideal Citizen of the Future," *Educational Philosophy & Theory* 39, no. 2 (2007): p. 207.

<sup>51</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," p. 24.

<sup>52</sup> Tali Mendelberg, *The Race Card : Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 130.

<sup>53</sup> David J. Schneider, *The Psychology of Stereotyping*, Distinguished Contributions in Psychology (New York: Guilford Press, 2004).

<sup>54</sup> Cicero A. Estrella, "Open to Debate: Forensics Program Helps Disadvantaged Students Gain Critical-Thinking Skills," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 15, 2002.

<sup>55</sup> Gross, "Argument, Stereotypes Attacked by Urban Debate League Members."

<sup>56</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard."

<sup>57</sup> Colleen O'Connor, "The Color of America: How Traveling with a Fast-Talking Kansas City Debate Team Led a Smoky Hill Grad to New Truths About Race," *Denver Post*, October 29 2006.

<sup>58</sup> For a discussion of stereotypes of poverty, see Anthony L. Hall and James Midgley, *Social Policy for Development* (London: SAGE, 2004), p. 51, James T. Patterson and James T.

Patterson, *America's Struggle against Poverty in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.:

Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 114, Stephen Steinberg, *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity,*

*and Class in America*, 1st ed. (New York: Atheneum, 1981), p. 111. For a discussion of contemporary racial stereotyping in America, see Entman and Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*, p. 78, Lawrence A. Blum, *I'm Not a Racist, but--: The Moral Quandary of Race* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 71-72, Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*, p. 168. For sexual stereotyping, see John Valentine, *The Clan of the Black Man: A History of the Black Race* (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2003), p. 275.

<sup>59</sup> Entman and Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*, p. 96.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> David Lublin, *The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 74, Canon, *Race, Redistricting, and Representation: The Unintended Consequences of Black Majority Districts*, p. 24.

<sup>62</sup> For a thorough discussion of the implication of the Moynihan report on contemporary stereotypes surrounding the black family, see S. Craig Watkins, *Hip Hop Matters : Politics, Pop Culture, and the Struggle for the Soul of a Movement* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>64</sup> Heather Hollingsworth, "Debaters from Inner City Squad Triumph over Wealthy Competition," *Associated Press State & Local Wire*, October 10, 2006.

<sup>65</sup> Teicher, "Students from Inner Cities Find Power at the Podium," p. 11.

<sup>66</sup> Dahleen Glanton, "Urban Schools Argue in Favor of Debate Teams," *Chicago Tribune*, November 28, 2005.



<sup>67</sup> Roxanne Donovan and Michelle Williams, "Living at the Intersection: The Effects of Racism and Sexism," in *Violence in the Lives of Black Women: Battered, Black, and Blue*, ed. Carolyn Marie West (Binghamton: Haworth Press, Inc., 2002), p. 99.

<sup>68</sup> For a historical discussion of the development of the image of the bad black mother, see Vivyan Campbell Adair, *From Good Ma to Welfare Queen: A Genealogy of the Poor Woman in American Literature, Photography and Culture* (New York: Garland Pub., 2000).

<sup>69</sup> For further discussion of the development of the welfare queen stereotype, see Ange-Marie Hancock, *The Politics of Disgust: The Public Identity of the Welfare Queen* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), p. 68, Canon, *Race, Redistricting, and Representation: The Unintended Consequences of Black Majority Districts*, p. 457.

<sup>70</sup> WCCO-TV, "Debate Program," in *Local News* (Video Monitoring Services of America, L.P., November 21, 2005).

<sup>71</sup> Breitbart and Pader, "Establishing Ground: Representing Gender and Race in a Mixed Housing Development," p. 7. See also, Adair, *From Good Ma to Welfare Queen: A Genealogy of the Poor Woman in American Literature, Photography and Culture*, p. 101.

<sup>72</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," p. 27.

<sup>73</sup> Hollingsworth, "Debaters from Inner City Squad Triumph over Wealthy Competition."

<sup>74</sup> Breitbart and Pader, "Establishing Ground: Representing Gender and Race in a Mixed Housing Development," p. 9.

<sup>75</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," p. 27.

<sup>76</sup> Eleanor Palo Stoller and Rose Campbell Gibson, *Worlds of Difference: Inequality in the Aging Experience*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press, 2000), p. 252.

<sup>77</sup> Tara Bahrapour, "Resolved: That High School Debate Is Back," *New York Times* 150, no. 51545 (2000).

<sup>78</sup> Parisi, "The *New York Times* Looks at One Block in Harlem: Narratives of Race in Journalism," p. 243.

<sup>79</sup> Glanton, "Urban Schools Argue in Favor of Debate Teams."

<sup>80</sup> Bahrapour, "Resolved: That High School Debate Is Back."

<sup>81</sup> Keith Ervin, "Student Debates Prompt Cheers: With a Foundation's Help. The Programs Making a Comeback in Seattle Public Schools," *Seattle Times*, March 26 2001.

<sup>82</sup> Carolina Gonzalez, "Students Making a Point: Debate Teams Eye Tourney," *Daily News* April 4, 2000, p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> For further discussion of schools and discipline through a Foucauldian analysis, see Graham, "(Re)Visioning the Centre: Education Reform and the Ideal Citizen of the Future," p. 203-04.

<sup>84</sup> Quote from Manning Marable, *Black Liberation in Conservative America* (Boston: South End Press, 1997), p. 76. See also, Loretta J. Brunious, *Constructing Social Reality: Self-Portraits of Black Children Living in Poverty*, Children of Poverty (New York: Routledge, 2002), Jack M. Richman and Mark W. Fraser, *The Context of Youth Violence: Resilience, Risk, and Protection* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001).

<sup>85</sup> Russell Kick, *Everything You Know Is Wrong: The Disinformation Guide to Secrets and Lies* (New York: The Disinformation Co., 2002).

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> Glanton, "Urban Schools Argue in Favor of Debate Teams."

<sup>89</sup> Henry A. Giroux, *Fugitive Cultures: Race, Violence, and Youth* (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 30.

<sup>90</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," p. 26.

<sup>91</sup> WBZ-TV, "Family Matters," in *News 4 New England* (Boston: Video Monitoring Services of America, December 17, 1999).

<sup>92</sup> Glanton, "Urban Schools Argue in Favor of Debate Teams."

<sup>93</sup> D. Marvin Jones, *Race, Sex, and Suspicion : The Myth of the Black Male* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2005), p. 180.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ronald L. Jackson, *Scripting the Black Masculine Body: Identity, Discourse, and Racial Politics in Popular Media*, Suny Series, the Negotiation of Identity (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), p. 112.

<sup>96</sup> Ruenzel, "Making Themselves Heard," p. 25.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Eric Hoover, "Resolved: Change Happens," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 49, no. 46 (2003): p. 28.

<sup>100</sup> Haymes, *Race, Culture, and the City: A Pedagogy for Black Urban Struggle*, p. 46.

<sup>101</sup> See Diana Elizabeth Kendall, *Framing Class : Media Representations of Wealth and Poverty in America* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), p. 126. Kendall mentions a similar phenomena in her study of poverty representation in news stories.

<sup>102</sup> Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, *Black Students and School Failure : Policies, Practices, and Prescriptions* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

<sup>103</sup> Graham, "(Re)Visioning the Centre: Education Reform and the Ideal Citizen of the Future," p. 212.

### Chapter Three

<sup>1</sup> Pamela Stepp, "Can We Make Intercollegiate Debate More Diverse?," *Argumentation & Advocacy* 33, no. 4 (1997).

<sup>2</sup> Pamela L. Stepp and Beth Gardner, "Ten Years of Demographics: Who Debates in America," *Argumentation & Advocacy* 38, no. 2 (2001): p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Ede Warner, "Go Homers, Makeovers or Takeovers? A Privilege Analysis of Debate as a Gaming Simulation," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 24 (2003), Nick McRee and Renee Cote, "Does College Debate Inherit a Lack of Diversity from High School Debate?," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 23 (2002), Jon Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004).

<sup>4</sup> Warner, "Go Homers, Makeovers or Takeovers? A Privilege Analysis of Debate as a Gaming Simulation.", Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions.", McRee and Cote, "Does College Debate Inherit a Lack of Diversity from High School Debate?."

<sup>5</sup> Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions," p. 86. Brushke also notes that the statistical data on racial representation is dated, but argues that it is clear if one looks around at national debate tournaments that there is a significant lack of racial and ethnic diversity.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Warner, "Go Homers, Makeovers or Takeovers? A Privilege Analysis of Debate as a Gaming Simulation."

<sup>8</sup> Stepp and Gardner, "Ten Years of Demographics: Who Debates in America," p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Warner's participation in the development of the UDL was critical. At the time of the UDL's formal development, Dr. Warner was one of two African-American directors of a major University's debate team. He also was significantly successful in national level competition as a college student. Specifically, Warner was nationally successful in the highly competitive National Debate Tournament circuit (this is pre the combining of NDT and CEDA). Having one of the few successful African-American's in college debate who enjoyed credibility as a successful participant and well preferred judge, was a critical tool toward convincing urban students of color to give debate a chance through the UDL.

<sup>10</sup> Ede Warner and Jon Brusckke, "'Gone on Debating:' Competitive Academic Debate as a Tool of Empowerment," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 22 (2001): p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.: p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.: p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Ede Warner, "Plantations and Coalition-Building," NDT/CEDA, <http://www.nctceda.com/archives/200511/0213.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Refer back to the discussion on purity in Chapter One.

<sup>15</sup> Stepp, "Can We Make Intercollegiate Debate More Diverse?.", Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions."

<sup>16</sup> Stepp, "Can We Make Intercollegiate Debate More Diverse?.", Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions.", Warner and Brusckke, "'Gone on Debating:' Competitive Academic Debate as a Tool of Empowerment."

<sup>17</sup> Brusckke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions," p. 86.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Some of those African-Americans who have achieved national success include, but are not limited to, Stephen Bailey, Rashad Evans, Edward Lee, Shanara Reid, Clay Rhodes, James Roland, Elizabeth Jones, and Tonia Green.

<sup>20</sup> Bruschke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions," p. 87.

<sup>21</sup> William Shanahan, "Twilight of the Topical Idols: Kritik-Ing in the Age of Imperialism," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 69.

<sup>22</sup> Stepp, "Can We Make Intercollegiate Debate More Diverse?," p. 185-89.

<sup>23</sup> Warner, "Go Homers, Makeovers or Takeovers? A Privilege Analysis of Debate as a Gaming Simulation," p. 66.

<sup>24</sup> Shanahan, "Twilight of the Topical Idols: Kritik-Ing in the Age of Imperialism," p. 71.

<sup>25</sup> See C. Thomas Preston, "Debating About Debate: A Symbolic Convergence Theory Meta-Analysis of Educational Reform Movements in Intercollegiate Debate," *The Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta* 91 (2006): p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> As reported on debateresults.com. A debate site cataloging tournament results run by Dr. Jon Bruschke, director of debate at California State University, Fullerton.

<sup>27</sup> Jones and Green made it to the elimination debates of three major tournaments, Kentucky, Wake Forest, and Northwestern.

<sup>28</sup> Bruschke, "Debate Factions and Affirmative Actions.", Preston, "Debating About Debate: A Symbolic Convergence Theory Meta-Analysis of Educational Reform Movements in Intercollegiate Debate.", Jeff Parcher, "Factions in Policy Debate: Some Observations," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004), Roger E. Solt, "Debate's Culture of Narcissism," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004), Joseph P. Zompetti,

"Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004).

<sup>29</sup> Preston, "Debating About Debate: A Symbolic Convergence Theory Meta-Analysis of Educational Reform Movements in Intercollegiate Debate," p. 20.

<sup>30</sup> John Waite Bowers, Donovan J. Ochs, and Richard J. Jensen, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1993).

<sup>31</sup> Malcolm O. Sillars, "Defining Social Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net," in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris III and Stephen H. Browne (State College: Strata Publishing, INC., 2001).

<sup>32</sup> Stephen E. Lucas, "Coming to Terms with Movement Studies," in *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris and Stephen H. Browne (State College: Strata Publishing, 2001), p. 153.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> "The Forum" published four essays, each with a different focus, but all intent on the questioning of race and/or privilege in public rhetoric: Walter R. Fisher, "Rhetoric of Alienation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54, no. 3 (1968), John H. Lawton, "'Alternative': Black-White Student Dialogue," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54, no. 3 (1968), James C. Bostain, "Try and or To," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54, no. 3 (1968), Jere Veilleux, "The Course in Interracial Communication: A Moral Response," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54, no. 3 (1968).

<sup>35</sup> Jere Veilleux, "The Course in Interracial Communication: A Moral Response," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54, no. 3 (1968).

<sup>36</sup> Sillars, "Defining Social Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net," p. 117.

<sup>37</sup> See Robert S. Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 43 (1978), Franklyn S. Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 (1967), Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," in *Reading of the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris (State College: Strata Publishing, INC, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," in *Reading of the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris (State College: Strata Publishing, INC, 2001), p. 32.

<sup>41</sup> Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, ed. Terence Hawkes (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 2. Hebdige analyzes "punk" subcultural style. Punk culture is an example of the development of white subcultural styles within a community racially dominated by Whites. In other words, "punks" needed to perform a subcultural style in order to signify difference, otherwise, they simply blended into socially acceptable whiteness. In contrast, the subcultural style performed by the members of the Louisville Project is only a secondary enactment of the visual difference marked by these students racial and ethnic otherness. However, even if the Project participants are already marked by race, class, and sometimes gender difference, their refusal to perform traditional debate identity makes their difference excessive and thus noteworthy. In other words, those black debaters who have been successful at the highest ranks



of national competition have had to assimilate, to varying degrees, to the “stylistic procedures” of the community. Although, their race or ethnicity might have created a visual difference, their identity performances remained consistent with the norms of traditional debate. Thus, the Louisville debaters have created a subcultural style that question this kind of participation strategy, noting that it often requires assimilation and limits more meaningful kinds of black participation.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>45</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. xix.

<sup>46</sup> Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>48</sup> Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and The "Racial" Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. xxxi.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive," in *Instructional Videos*, ed. Tiffany Y. Dillard (University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004).

<sup>52</sup> For further reading see Robin D. Barnes, "Race Consciousness: The Thematic Content of Racial Distinctiveness in Critical Race Scholarship.," *Harvard Law Review* 103, no. 8 (1990): p. 1869.

<sup>53</sup> Sherryl Kleinman, "Essaying the Personal: Making Sociological Stories Stick.," *Qualitative Sociology* 20, no. 4 (1997): p. 553.

<sup>54</sup> Daniel G. Solorzano and Tara J. Yosso, "Critical Race and Latcrit Theory and Method: Counter-Storytelling.," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 14, no. 4 (2001): p. 473.

<sup>55</sup> Tonia Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive," in *Instructional Videos*, ed. Tiffany Y. Dillard (University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004). The debate round that is the subject of this analysis occurs during the 2003-2004 academic school year. During that year, the national debate resolution required that affirmative teams justify the withdrawal of the United States Federal Government from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

<sup>56</sup> ———, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Rebuttal," in *Instructional Videos*, ed. Tiffany Y. Dillard (University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004).

<sup>57</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Elizabeth Jones, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octa-Finals Ceda Nationals: Second Negative Rebuttal* (Louisville, KY: 2004).

<sup>60</sup> Tonia Green, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Negative Constructive* (Louisville, KY: Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004).

<sup>61</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>62</sup> ———, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Negative Constructive*.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations.", Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements.", Kevin Michael DeLuca, "Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act up, and Queer Nation," *Argumentation & Advocacy* 36, no. 1 (1999).

<sup>65</sup> Kevin Michael DeLuca, "Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act up, and Queer Nation," *Argumentation & Advocacy* 36, no. 1 (1999): p. 20.

<sup>66</sup> Richard J. Jensen and John C. Hammerback, "Working in "Quiet Places": The Community Organizing Rhetoric of Robert Parris Moses," *Howard Journal of Communications* 11, no. 1 (2000): p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>68</sup> DeLuca, "Unruly Arguments: The Body Rhetoric of Earth First!, Act up, and Queer Nation," p. 12.

<sup>69</sup> Steven Mailloux, "Re-Marking Slave Bodies: Rhetoric as Production and Reception," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 34, no. 2 (2002).

<sup>70</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>71</sup> Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An America Grammar Book," in *The Black Feminist Reader*, ed. Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd, 2000).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 60-61.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>74</sup> Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers, 2nd ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972).

<sup>75</sup> Elizabeth Grant, "Gangsta Rap, the War on Drugs and the Location of African-American Identity in Los Angeles, 1988-92," *EJAC* 21, no. 1 (2002): p. 5.

<sup>76</sup> Mark Anthony Neal, "The Message: Rap, Politics, and Resistance," in *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, ed. Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 307.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Angela Ards, "Organizing the Hip-Hop Generation," in *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, ed. Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 341.

<sup>79</sup> Bakari Kitwana, "The Challenge of Rap Music from Cultural Movement to Political Power," in *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, ed. Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 350.

<sup>80</sup> For further reading on activism in the hip hop generation, see Ards, "Organizing the Hip-Hop Generation.", Yvonne Bynoe, *Stand & Deliver: Political Activism, Leadership, and Hip Hop Culture* (Brooklyn: Soft Skull Press, 2004).

<sup>81</sup> Todd Boyd, *The New H.N.I.C.: The Death of Civil Rights and the Reign of Hip Hop* (New York: New York University Press, 2003).

<sup>82</sup> For a thoughtful and well-written manifesto on hip hop, youth culture, class, and globalization, see Robert Haworth, Marc Pruyn, and Herman Garcia, "Youth Culture, Hip Hop and Resistance

toward Capital and Globalization: Forging a 21st Century Revolutionary Cultural Movement," [http://www.nodo50.org/cubasigloXXI/congreso04?haworth\\_290204.pdf](http://www.nodo50.org/cubasigloXXI/congreso04?haworth_290204.pdf).

<sup>83</sup> I use de Certeau's language here. From Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

<sup>84</sup> Jon A. Yasin, "Rap in the African-American Music Tradition: Cultural Assertion and Continuity," in *Race and Ideology: Language, Symbolism, and Popular Culture*, ed. Arthur K. Spears (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999), p. 220.

<sup>85</sup> David Gillborn, "Education Policy as an Act of White Supremacy: Whiteness, Critical Race Theory and Education Reform.," *Journal of Education Policy* 20, no. 4 (2005), Ricky Lee Allen, "Whiteness and Critical Pedagogy," in *Critical Pedagogy and Race*, ed. Zeus Leonardo (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), John T. Warren, *Performing Purity: Whiteness, Pedagogy, and the Reconstitution of Power*, ed. Thomas K. Nakayama, vol. 6, *Critical Intercultural Communication Studies* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), Frances V Rains, "Is the Benign Really Harmless? Deconstructing Some "Benign" Manifestations of Operationalized White Privilege," in *White Reign: Deploying Whiteness in America*, ed. Joe L. Kincheloe, Shirley R. Steinberg, and Ronald E. Chennault (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

<sup>86</sup> Green, *University of Louisville vs. Cal State University, Fullerton, Quarter-Final Round CEDA Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive*.

<sup>87</sup> Geneva Smitherman, "The Chain Remain the Same: Communicative Practices in the Hip Hop Nation," *Journal of Black Studies* 28, no. 1 (1997): p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Yasin, "Rap in the African-American Music Tradition: Cultural Assertion and Continuity," p. 200.

<sup>89</sup> Elizabeth Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Rebuttal," in *Instructional Videos*, ed. Tiffany Y. Dillard (University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004).

<sup>90</sup> Ebony Floyd, "Idaho State Vs. University of Louisville: First Negative Constructive," in *Instructional Videos*, ed. Tiffany Y. Dillard (University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2006). Mahalia Jackson is an African-American woman whose deep, throaty voice became the sound of gospel music for many African Americans in the mid-1900's. She began her singing career in 1927 and ended it in 1971 with a concert in Germany and a television appearance on the *Flip Wilson Show*. In 1978 she was inducted, after her death, into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

<sup>91</sup> Joyce Marie Jackson, "The Changing Nature of Gospel Music: A Southern Case Study," *African American Review* 29, no. 2 (1995).

<sup>92</sup> Floyd, "Idaho State Vs. University of Louisville: First Negative Constructive."

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>95</sup> Tonia Green, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Negative Rebuttal* (Louisville, KY: University of Louisville Malcolm X Debate Program, 2004).

<sup>96</sup> For an in depth discussion of the message rap genre, see Jr. Allen, Ernest, "Making the Strong Survive: The Contours and Contradictions of Message Rap," in *Droppin' Science: Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture*, ed. William Eric Perkins (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996).

<sup>97</sup> William Eric Perkins, *Droppin' Science : Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture*, Critical Perspectives on the Past (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), p. 4.

<sup>98</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>99</sup> DPZ, *Turn Off the Radio: The Mixtape Volume 1* (Full Clip Records, 2002).

<sup>100</sup> Most people continue to “flow” with paper and pen. However, there is a new movement in debate toward flowing on a laptop. Those who engage in this practice make use of a template that mimics the structure of the written flow, and allows the user to type within that structure. Students then also type their responses into the template and often debate from the screen of their laptops.

<sup>101</sup> Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Rebuttal."

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Jones’ speech is the same for both these debates as she and Green are affirmative. The 1AC is usually fully pre-scripted and re-used when the team is affirmative against an opposing team. This process of re-use allows debaters to develop and in depth knowledge of a position that they must advocate for in any given tournament. Debaters may choose to modify or change their affirmative at any time.

<sup>105</sup> Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Elizabeth Jones, *University of Louisville Vs. Cal State University, Fullerton, Quarter-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive* (Louisville, KY: 2004).

<sup>108</sup> Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>109</sup> Green, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Negative Constructive*.

<sup>110</sup> Jones, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octa-Finals Ceda Nationals: Second Negative Rebuttal*.

<sup>111</sup> Elizabeth Jones, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octa-Finals Ceda Nationals: Second Negative Constructive* (Louisville, KY: 2004).

<sup>112</sup> See Alfred C. Snider, "Gamemaster: Is It You?," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 24 (2003).

<sup>113</sup> Gordon R. Mitchell, "Pedagogical Possibilities for Argumentative Agency in Academic Debate," *Argumentation & Advocacy* 35, no. 2 (1998).

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*: p. 43.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Shanahan, "Twilight of the Topical Idols: Kritik-Ing in the Age of Imperialism," p. 74.

<sup>117</sup> Jones, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octa-Finals Ceda Nationals: Second Negative Constructive*.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."



<sup>120</sup> Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>121</sup> Floyd, "Idaho State Vs. University of Louisville: First Negative Constructive."

<sup>122</sup> Jones, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octa-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>123</sup> Floyd, "Idaho State Vs. University of Louisville: First Negative Constructive."

<sup>124</sup> Green, "University of Louisville Vs. Wake Forest University, Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: Second Affirmative Constructive."

<sup>125</sup> ———, *Emory University Vs. University of Louisville, Double-Octo-Final Round Ceda Nationals: First Negative Constructive.*

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

#### Chapter Four

<sup>1</sup> Joseph P. Zompetti, "Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Allen Louden, "Debating Dogma and Division," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Jeff Parcher, "Factions in Policy Debate: Some Observations," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 89.

<sup>4</sup> William Shanahan, "Twilight of the Topical Idols: Kritik-Ing in the Age of Imperialism," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 66-7.

<sup>5</sup> Roger E. Solt, "Debate's Culture of Narcissism," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 25 (2004): p. 44. Other divisions in debate occurred over the use of the stock issues approach vs. the policymaking approach; hypothesis testing as a challenge to policymaking; gaming and tabula

rosa as slight challenges to policymaking and hypo-testing; the development of the utopian counterplan and critiques.

<sup>6</sup> The Louisville team is not the only team to critically engage debate practice and style as critical to debate competition through tournament round competition. Teams like Fort Hays and CSU Fullerton and Long Beach, and Towson (although they are relatively new to the scene). Yet, it is Louisville that has seemed to generate the most significant and direct response of the performance/ critical teams.

<sup>7</sup> Franklyn S. Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 (1967).

<sup>8</sup> Robert S. Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 43 (1978): p. 240.

<sup>9</sup> John M. Murphy, "Domesticating Dissent: The Kennedy's and the Freedom Rides," *Communication Monographs* 59, no. 1 (1992).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three "Establishment" Movements," *Communication Monographs* 44, no. 4 (1977).

<sup>11</sup> John M. Murphy, "Inventing Authority: Bill Clinton, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Orchestration of Rhetorical Traditions," *Quarterly Journal Of Speech* 83 (1997): p. 71.

<sup>12</sup> Martin J. Medhurst, "Resistance, Conservatism, and Theory Building: A Cautionary Note," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 49 (1985): p. 113.

<sup>13</sup> Barbara Warnick, "The Rhetoric of Conservative Resistance," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 42 (1977).

<sup>14</sup> ———, "Conservative Resistance Revisited - a Reply to Medhurst," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 46 (1982).

- <sup>15</sup> Medhurst, "Resistance, Conservatism, and Theory Building: A Cautionary Note," p. 112.
- <sup>16</sup> Medhurst, "Resistance, Conservatism, and Theory Building: A Cautionary Note," p. 111.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three "Establishment" Movements."
- <sup>19</sup> CAD is located at the CEDA homepage. Copies of the journal can be found at <http://www.cedadebate.org/page26/page26.html>.
- <sup>20</sup> Louden, "Debating Dogma and Division," p. 40.
- <sup>21</sup> Zompetti, "Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," p. 26, Parcher, "Factions in Policy Debate: Some Observations," p. 90-91, Solt, "Debate's Culture of Narcissism," p. 49.
- <sup>22</sup> I have found few examples where debaters have been quoted from debate rounds and no evidence of a transcription being used as a text of analysis.
- <sup>23</sup> Jeron Anthony Jackson, "So Tired of This," *eDebate Archives* (April 15, 2004), <http://www.ndtceda.com/archives/200404/0341.html>. Former GSU debater
- <sup>24</sup> Josh Hoe, "Re: The Evil "Traditional Debate" Machine - Not!," <http://www.ndtceda.com/archives/200404/0406.html>. Director of Debate at the University of Michigan.
- <sup>25</sup> Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations," p. 11.
- <sup>26</sup> Murphy, "Domesticating Dissent: The Kennedy's and the Freedom Rides," p. 62.
- <sup>27</sup> Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," in *Reading on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris (State College: Strata Publishing, INC, 2001), p. 27.

- <sup>28</sup> Josh Hoe, "Fwd: Re: Nigga's Go Home," *eDebate Archives* (November 9, 2005), <http://www.ndtceda.com/pipermail/edebate/2005-November/064386.html>.
- <sup>29</sup> Ede Warner, "Plantations and Coalition-Building," NDT/CEDA, <http://www.nctceda.com/archives/200511/0213.html>.
- <sup>30</sup> Neil Blackmon, "Privilege, Racism, Frustration," *eDebate Archives* (March 25, 2004), <http://www.ndtceda.com/pipermail/edebate/2004-March/055268.html>.
- <sup>31</sup> Parcher, "Factions in Policy Debate: Some Observations," p. 90.
- <sup>32</sup> LoriBeth Blair, "Re: The Racist, Exclusionary, Non-Coalition Building, No Clashing, and Generally Unfriendly Cat Speaks," *eDebate Archives* (April 19, 2004), <http://www.nftceda.com/200404/0574.html>. Former GSU debater
- <sup>33</sup> Joseph P. Zompetti, "Re: Speaking to Transgress," *eDebate Archives* (April 15, 2004), <http://www.indtceda.com/archives/200404/0432.html>. Former DoD at Mercer, now at Illinois State U.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Jeron Anthony Jackson, "Re: The Racist, Exclusionary, Non-Coalition Building, No Clashing, and Generally Unfriendly Cat Speaks," *eDebate Archives* (April 19, 2004), <http://www.ndtceda.com/archives/200404/0582.html>.
- <sup>36</sup> Zompetti, "Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," p. 31.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid.: 31.
- <sup>38</sup> J. E. Rogers, "A Community of Unequals: An Analysis of Dominant and Subdominant Culturally Linked Perceptions of Participation and Success within Intercollegiate Competitive Debate," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 18 (1997): p. 12.

<sup>39</sup> John Willemin, "Thoughts on the Louisville Project," *eDebate Archives* (April 14, 2004), <http://ndtceda.com/archives/200404/0322.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Solt, "Debate's Culture of Narcissism," p. 59.

<sup>41</sup> Parcher, "Factions in Policy Debate: Some Observations," p. 90.

<sup>42</sup> Hoe, "Re: The Evil "Traditional Debate" Machine - Not!."

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Steve Woods, "Changing the Game? Embracing the Advocacy Standard," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 24 (2003).

<sup>45</sup> Zompetti, "Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," p. 32.

<sup>46</sup> Solt, "Debate's Culture of Narcissism," p. 52-53.

<sup>47</sup> Zompetti, "Personalizing Debating: Diversity and Tolerance in the Debate Community," p. 33.

<sup>48</sup> Towson University in Baltimore has begun to engage in a strategy similar to the Louisville style. As of Winter 2008, Towson CL, Deven Cooper and Deyvon Love have qualified for the National Debate Tournament and will be debating about white supremacy and the race and class privileges that block minority access to the upper levels of national success.

## Chapter Five

<sup>1</sup> See John M. Murphy, "Domesticating Dissent: The Kennedy's and the Freedom Rides," *Communiation Monographs* 59, no. 1 (1992), Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 4, no. 1 (1971), Franklyn S. Haiman, "The Rhetoric of the Streets: Some Legal and Ethical Considerations," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 (1967), Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," in *Reading on the Rhetoric of Social Protest*, ed. Charles E. Morris (State College: Strata Publishing, INC, 2001), Robert Lee Scott and Wayne Brockriede, *The Rhetoric of Black Power* (New York: Harper &

Row, 1969), John Waite Bowers, Donovan J. Ochs, and Richard J. Jensen, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, 2nd ed. (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> I must qualify this argument by saying that not all overt acts of racism have been eliminated from our society, the James Byrd, Don Imus, and Jena 6 situation indicate that acts of overt racism have not gone completely away. Yet, there is a general resistance to such overt acts in the public sphere. Simultaneously, if one were to spend an hour trolling through Youtube, Facebook, or Myspace, one might find many public examples of racist rhetoric and actions.

<sup>3</sup> Carl Scott Gutiérrez-Jones, *Critical Race Narratives: A Study of Race, Rhetoric, and Injury*, Critical America (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> I have served as a guest lecturer and instructor for the NYUDL (New York City) under the direction of OSI and then later the Impact Coalition, the DCUDL in Washington, D.C., and the SUDL in Seattle, Washington. Currently, I serve as a consultant to the Seattle UDL as it attempts to include alternative debate practices, including the use of hip hop, in its student instruction.

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