Mainstream citizenship education in the U.S. is based on a narrow conception of citizenship that is rooted in ancient imperialistic Rome (Hingley, 2005, Richard 2010). This civilization created a nation-state of homogenized citizens, which by institutionalizing “otherness” (Isaac, 2006) sealed a bond between race and humanity (Mignolo, 2006) that continues to exclude Indigenous and Black communities from citizenship and humanity (Sium, 2013). This inherent injustice (Mignolo, 2006) prevails at the expense of human freedom. Previous research suggests a need for a more inclusive and contextualized conception of citizenship (Anderson, 1994; Banks, 2008). This study will explore the possibility that communities that have been systematically denied, conceive and practice citizenship differently. This study proposes that such community based praxis has the potential to expand present understandings of citizenship and citizenship practices. Informed by a Black Studies perspective, this interdisciplinary qualitative study will investigate three research questions: How does an Indigenous Knowledge Community critically conceive and practice citizenship? How is citizenship knowledge preserved, produced and transmitted in out-of-school community spaces? How does the Indigenous Knowledge Community challenge social spatial demonization by the dominant society? The ceremony of this work is to engage youth in uniting citizenship and Indigenous Knowledge Community citizenship knowledge in a definition autonomous from the authorial referent of the biological terms of race (Wynter, 1984).
The purpose is to conduct an investigation of a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community using a methodology that is consistent with the culture of this community. Woods (1998) recognizes indigenous African American forms of consciousness embedded in local/global and geographic knowledge. I will construct a Blues Methodology to collect and analyze oral, visual and cultural data. This research seeks to expand the definition of citizenship and citizenship practices, foster student belonging, encourage intergenerational communication, connect classroom learning to lived experiences and promote community engagement with educational policy.
INDIGENOUS CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION, A COMMUNITY PRAXIS:
A NEW CEREMONY FOR
YOUTH CITIZENS

by
Melissa Speight Vaughn

A Prospectus

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The concept of citizenship informing citizenship education is highly contested (Anderson, 1994; Banks, 2008). In Western societies, citizenship is traditionally defined as the relationship between an individual and the democratic nation-state that confers the benefits of membership, bestows national identity and instills moral values in exchange for civic participation and patriotism (Harnish, 2006; Lister, 1997). Citizenship is granted to individuals based on blood, land or marriage (Castronovo, 2001). Good citizenship is realized when individuals sacrifice their freedoms for the “common good” (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). These essential elements of traditional citizenship are rooted in the ancient cultural values and imperialistic ideals of one community of people (Harnish, 2006), but generically define all individuals within the boundaries of the nation-state.

Citizenship is not a neutral concept. Indeed this concept took root in ancient Rome, a specific social, cultural, historical, political and spatial context to serve political and spatial goals (Isaac, 2004). For example, in 500 A.D., the Roman elite had the imperialistic goal of expanding their territory into an empire (Dietz, 2012). Through a series of territorial wars, they effectively colonized much of the European world at that time (Richard, 2010). The Romans hegemonized civic space by institutionalizing “otherness” (Isaac, 2006). Thus, the idea of citizenship became a means of establishing
social, political, economic, intellectual, and geographical boundaries. The process of
Romanization or spreading of Roman culture, eradicated indigenous peoples, their
civilizations and their senses of belonging (Vallat, 2001). Creation of such a singular
hegemonic concept of citizenship would eventually seal the bond between race and
humanity. Since then, traditional citizenship has come to be thought of only in racial
terms; otherwise stated, citizenship can now only be thought of in White, Christian and
bourgeois terms (Mignolo, 2006). If citizenship was the means by which ancient Romans
established a boundary between the Divine and the Demonic, in their perception, God’s
Grace was only sufficient for the Roman knowledge, Roman culture and Roman
civilization. Existing beyond the boundary of this conception of God’s Grace were non-
humans, barbarians, or those “unworthy of life” (Wynter 2005, 363).

Mignolo (2012) argues citizenship is part of the colonality “machine that
produces injustice” for those outside the boundaries of the nation. He defined colonality
as the logic that produces injustice in the past, present and future. Coloniality disrupts
indigenous senses of time and place (Alcoff, 2007) by severing individuals’ connection to
their community history and geographical knowledge. In real and imagined ways,
citizenship, as an element of colonality, has structurally excluded indigenous
communities and Black communities, their knowledge and their land from the national
citizenry and the national consciousness (Sium, 2013). While this exclusion is a global
problem, I focus specifically on the United States because its citizenship curriculum not
only maintains the traditional definition of citizenship; it recreates the national history at
the expense of human freedom.
Case in point, We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution (1995) a civic education curriculum for grades 9-12, states:

From its beginnings, America has been what the poet Walt Whitman called a “nation of nations,” peopled by millions of immigrants of different races, religions, languages, and ethnic backgrounds … that common bond is provided by the ideal of American citizenship and a commitment to the Constitution and its ideals and principles. (193)

This U.S. conception of citizenship idealizes the European immigrant experience and denies the African American historical reality of enslavement and the colonial expansion that absorbed traditional homelands of Native Americans and Mexico’s people as well. This inaccuracy erases the “historico-existential community” of Red, Black and White populations that founded the United States of America (Wynter 1992, 9). Indigenous Red and Black communities continually endure histories of “segregation, violence, and environmental racism … [which are] often concealed” through “processes of normalization” (McKittrick & Woods 2007, 3). These social processes of exclusion obscured the daily struggles of indigenous communities and silenced their narratives. The African American Blues tradition illustrates that these narratives of Indigenous Community Knowledge are powerful enough to expose the undemocratic practices of a self-proclaimed democratic nation-state.

Sium (2013) described the European settlement of the Americas as a process of “Killing Indians and Making Niggers” (11). He asserted that clearing the land for European settlement and industry required extermination of Native Indigenous people and enslavement of labor/slavability of Africans. Native American and African cultures are Indigenous cultures in so far as their belief and value systems, ways of being and
senses of belonging are embodied in their way of knowing the world. Their knowledge systems prioritize relationships.

Indigenous Knowledge systems recognize the interconnectedness of all creation including human life, nature, time, spirit and place (Friesen, 2002; Wildcat, 2001; Alcoff, 2007) and maintain consistency between ontology and rituals/ceremonies (Martin, 2008; Wilson, 2008). Indigenous knowledge systems recognize the efficient use of natural resources as a balanced spiritual, philosophical approach to being in the world (Akan, 1992). Indigenous knowledge traditions preserve and transmit culturalized history and expression to successive generations of youth through storytelling, rituals and cultural practices (Battiste, 2002). Youth are socialized to be mindful of the well-being of the entire community (Tedla, 1995). An Indigenous Knowledge Community is not restricted geographically to a single place. Rather it is a global community of individuals who share multiple forms of interconnected relationships of family and community belonging (Ouellette, 2010).

In this proposed research, I use the term Indigenous Knowledge Communities (IKC) to refer to groups of people connected to land and spirit by culturally based indigenous ways of knowing. While these communities are omitted from the dominant society’s conception of citizenship, social processes of coloniality obscure rich traditions of culture, community building and activism within IKCs. This study will explore the extent to which these indigenous knowledge practices continue to exist in opposition to the hegemonic negation of their being.

Hegemony is power and domination maintained through social structures, social processes and spatial practices which locate Indigenous Knowledge Communities in
marginalized spaces of visible invisibility (McKittrick 2006, xiii). Hegemony works through structures of education, church and media to establish and maintain social processes of economic racism, environmental racism and segregation. Hegemony also includes the ascription of identity by a dominant group on a non-dominant group. Endemic to hegemony is the “struggle in which the powerful win the consent of those who are oppressed, with the oppressed unknowingly participating in their own oppression” (King 2005, 368). Those who are oppressed are engaged in struggle as well. Their struggle for freedom in place provides a meaningful perspective to view how their placement factors into the making of place locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

Because the exclusion of certain racial groups from the bonds of citizenship is justified on the basis of the negation of their humanity, citizenship as an instrument of coloniality joins race and humanity together (Mignolo 2006, 318). Wynter (1992) postulated that race as a biological referent of “Man” is an artifact of the episteme of our current cultural model; that is race is a social construction, not a naturally occurring phenomenon. Humanity, on the other hand, includes all humankind; redefined as a “purely organic species” based on culturally specific modes of being (Wynter 2003, 330), all equal and equally different (Mignolo 2006, 314). This redefinition of what it means to be human removes limits of knowledge, behavior and “Truth”1 and allows us to experience ourselves as “purely flesh-and-blood beings” in our cultural-historical context (Ambroise 2006, 232). In that sense, redefinition of human (what it means to be human/the experience of being human) is free from the representation of Man as White,

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1 Sylvia Wynter (1994) argues that representing “Man” based on biogenetic features has cognitive and intellectual consequences.
male and bourgeoisie. However, redefinition/realignment/re-presenting human requires ceremony.

Ceremony is a sacred event for the purpose of unity. Wilson (2008) suggested ceremonies strengthen relationships and bridge “distance between the cosmos and us” (137). Ceremony is a process of joining parts together in a series of rituals with community participation. Unity occurs on multiple levels resulting in a higher level of consciousness, heightened sense of awareness and deeper insight into the world (Wilson, 2008). For example, a burial ceremony joins the living and the dead. The community witnesses the deceased joining the collective of ancestors and becoming one with the earth, while the living transition into new relationship with the memory and history of their loved one. In marriage ceremonies, separate individuals are wedded to become one. After the ceremony, the couple reenters the community as a unit, bringing two families and lineages into relationship and edifying the community as a whole.

The ceremony of this research (re)joins Indigenous Knowledge Community to citizenship. Such a union rewrites the knowledge of citizenship, thus allowing new modes of being human and a more ecumenical definition of citizenship. While a hegemonic lens would suggest this research joins seemingly disparate parts; Wynter (1984) envisions different perspectives coming into intimate relationship with each other so that each can “escape its own form of solipsism” and become conscious of commonalities and regularities (48). This pursuit is believed to be in the best interest of youth citizens and human freedom.

Examining how excluded communities conceive and practice citizenship is the focus of this proposed research. As the above example shows, the image of the ideal
citizen promoted in citizenship education does not accurately reflect the populations of people residing within the borders of the nation-state nor does this approach to citizenship education accurately recount history, which negatively impacts all students (Epstein, 2009). This study will investigate the extent to which Indigenous Knowledge Community citizenship and citizenship practices offers students expanded understanding of participation in community, society and nation-state. Moreover, inclusion of an Indigenous Knowledge Community definition in citizenship education is expected to foster student belonging, increase academic engagement, connect lived experiences to classroom learning and promote civic engagement with educational policy.

Problem Statement and Rationale

The curriculum of citizenship education in the U.S. presents an ideal citizen as an ahistorical, acultural independent individual passively obeying the laws of the nation-state (Alcoff, 2007). This ideal invalidates the existential existence of some students and their communities of origin. More importantly, the exclusion of indigenous populations from citizenship education curricula fosters neither critical thinking skills nor the academic engagement of all students. Indeed, the contradiction between curricula and students’ lived experiences negatively impacts their educational attainment on multiple levels (Epstein, 2010).

All communities practice some form of cultural transmission that includes preparing the next generation for group membership and participation. Communities historically and routinely excluded from citizenship in the nation-state could necessarily
conceive and practice citizenship on their own terms. These communities can serve as sites for the investigation of an Indigenous Knowledge Community conception, practice and transmission of citizenship knowledge. Arriving at a community centered definition of citizenship from the perspective of a demonized community has potential to transform citizenship education.

This research examines citizenship practices in an Indigenous Knowledge Community through the interaction between community teachers and youth in out-of-school contexts. The focus is on identifying processes of production, preservation and transmission of citizenship knowledge in a specific community that is demonized by hegemonic social and spatial processes. This research will be guided by the following three Research Questions:

1. How does an Indigenous Knowledge Community critically define and practice citizenship?

2. How is citizenship knowledge produced, preserved and transmitted in out-of-school community spaces?

3. How does the Indigenous Knowledge Community challenge social processes and social spatial demonization by dominant society?

Investigating how Indigenous Knowledge Communities conceive, practice and transmit citizenship knowledge is intended to expand the curricular conception of citizenship. The goal is to provide a more ecumenical conception of citizenship and to widen the spectrum of civic engagement opportunities for youth and their communities within citizenship
curricula. The inclusion of an Indigenous Knowledge Community’s conception and practices of citizenship in citizenship education curricula is intended to foster academic engagement and achievement for all students.

**Significance**

This interdisciplinary, qualitative study of ecumenical concepts and practices of citizenship education is significant because citizenship occupies such a tenuous space. Citizenship involves a sense of belonging within a community. Citizenship also exists at the intersection of the Indigenous Knowledge Community and the dominant society. An Indigenous Knowledge Community’s conception of citizenship brings concepts of spatial location and social policy into conversation. The notion of Indigenous Knowledge Community citizenship reveals a collective philosophy, ethical behavior, and vision of equity. Understanding how Indigenous Knowledge Communities define, practice and transmit citizenship knowledge critically evaluates the effectiveness of citizenship projects in democratic nation-states (Woods, 1998; Banks, 2008). Moreover, an Indigenous Knowledge Community’s conception of citizenship informs a more inclusive definition of citizenship that extends beyond the individual and can impact curricula (Harnish, 2006).

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how an Indigenous Knowledge Community that has experienced social and spatial demonization conceptualizes, practices, and transmits citizenship knowledge in out-of-school contexts. Secondarily, this study seeks to contribute to citizenship curricula a conception of citizenship that
recognizes the individual’s first society. This research aims to expand the possibilities of citizenship practices and demonstrate how previously excluded communities can be included in citizenship education curricula.
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTURAL FRAMEWORK

Scholars agree that knowledge is not objective (King, 2006), by extension, neither is research, in which personal, political and intellectual issues intersect (Alford, 1998). The interplay between personal experiences, political position and intellectual pursuits influences all aspects of research such as questions to be investigated, ethics, data, data collection methods, data analysis and participants (Holliday, 2007). While the proposed study is no different, I seek to maintain what Koro-Ljungberg, et al (2009) referred to as epistemological awareness and methodological transparency. My assumptions about reality and knowledge which underpin this investigation are explicitly stated in this discussion of my Conceptual Framework. This section is organized into three parts. First is a discussion of the relationship between philosophical elements of the research,

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2 The organization of this section was inspired by Asgedet Stephanos’ chapter entitled “African women and revolutionary change: A Freirian and feminist perspective”

3 Epistemological awareness is explicitly stating epistemological underpinnings of research and maintaining consistency between epistemology and guiding theories of explanation. Methodological transparency is clearly stating all aspects of methodological decisions made throughout the data collection and analysis process.
followed by a description of concepts and theories. This section concludes with the methodology I constructed to conduct this research.

**The Relationship between Theory, Epistemology and Methodology**

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) stimulated discussion about the relationship between research, imperialism and power in *Decolonizing Methodologies*. From an indigenous perspective, she argued that research is inextricably tied to colonialism as “a process that exploits indigenous peoples, their culture, their knowledge and their resources” (xi). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) agreed that historically qualitative research was an “objective way of representing the dark skinned Other” (1). The process of exploitation is embedded in the set of beliefs, assumptions, values and practices that determine problems, participants, methods, interpretations and power distribution throughout the research process. These authors caution that the philosophical systems that align with particular ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies are representative of particular worldviews (6) that are implicated in the “interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (3). I rely on indigenous understandings of these foundational terms (ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology) and indigenous representations of knowledge.5

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4 Italics are mine

5 Indigenous representations of knowledge include storytelling, song, language, crafts, artistic expressions and cultural practices which should be considered in research with indigenous populations (Holmes, 2000).
Ontology is the philosophical branch that involves the study of the nature of being. Ontology queries the nature of reality, specifically if only one reality exists, or if multiple realities exist or if totally different worlds exist. Ontological questions may not be explicitly answered prior to research, but a set of beliefs regarding what reality is and how that reality is justified determines the researcher’s approach to research. Ontologies informed by colonialism support a singular reality, which cannot coexist with other realities or other ways of knowing the world (Wilson, 2008).

Beliefs about what constitutes reality bleed into how we can know that reality (epistemology). For this reason, Crotty (2005) argued that ontological and epistemological questions arise simultaneously in research and are conceptually conflated in research literature (10). While delineation is challenging, epistemology fundamentally focuses issues on knowledge, specifically what we know, how we think about it and who can know.

Methodology is the theory of how to study reality. Methodology guides the approach one takes to knowledge in research. In research, methodology answers questions such as: What is considered data? What represents reality in the research process and what tools are used to gather that data and analyze it? Methodology is usually conflated with methods in research inquiry. Clough and Nutbrown (2002) explain that methodological theory is always at work in the research process making decisions about research methods, data, data collection and data analysis. Ontology determines what is reality, epistemology is how we know it, methodology is how we know more about it and axiology are the ethics and morals that guide the search for information.
Axiology as a separate concern in qualitative research is typically omitted from research texts (Crotty, 2005). As another branch of philosophy, axiology queries the value and morality of research (Wilson, 2008). Axiology has merit in indigenous research frameworks because the value placed on research findings is determined by the researcher’s ethics (entering the field), use of knowledge gained and morality of the study (Kershaw, 1989; Wilson, 2008). Axiology questions can be addressed within theories.

Theory is a way of explaining what has happened, what is happening and predicts what will happen. Theories are political stances toward reality or how knowledge has been obtained or represented. Theories can be personal or formal. I choose the term “personal” to describe theories from my cultural and community upbringing that explain the world and the way things work (LeCompte, Priessle & Tesch, 1993). Organized bodies of concepts, generalizations and principles that explain how the world works are formal theories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Stinson, 2009). Theories advance particular worldviews, adhere to ontological and epistemological perspectives and preference methodological procedures and methods (Stinson, 2009).

The philosophical components of ontology, epistemology, methodology, theory and axiology are interconnected in this research as they should be. Carew (1988) stated that separation is European and connection is indigenous. Figure 1. Philosophical Circle is included to explicate visually the connections among the philosophical elements. This visual representation was recreated from Wilson’s (2008) medicine wheel demonstration of his Indigenous Research Paradigm. I opted not to confine my visual adaptation within a wheel because this diagram is a part of my whole conceptual framework. The next
section will explain the concepts, philosophies and theories that compose the proposed research.

**Figure 1: Philosophical Circle**

![Philosophical Circle Diagram]

- **Theory**
- **Ontology**
- **Axiology**
- **Epistemology**
- **Methodology**
Concepts, Philosophies and Theories

In this section, I introduce the concept of Blues Rhizome to describe not only the relationship among the concepts, philosophies and theories that inform this research, but also to situate this investigation of citizenship knowledge within the Indigenous Knowledge Community that is the focus of this study.

Delueze and Guattari (1987) offered the rhizome as a natural representation of “multiple connections that can exist between organizations of power … and social struggles” (7). The rhizome is an acentric, nonhierarchial network of roots and offshoots knotted, folded, and looped together with various entries and exits (deFreitas, 2012). Rhizomes represent interdisciplinary connections within and among collectives that can morph into other forms. Similarly, Blues localizes geographic knowledge, defies disciplinary boundaries and maintains “historical continuity” (Woods 2007, 51). A rhizomatic representation of the concepts, philosophies and theories informing this inquiry suggests that multiple senses of belonging can coexist as autonomous parts without exclusion. This more ecumenical conception of citizenship knowledge and practices within an Indigenous Knowledge Community defies coding and gives voice to culturalized histories and geographic narratives that do not replicate the dominant society’s concept of citizenship.

Figure 2: A Blues Rhizome visually represents the personal, socio-political and theoretical elements of citizenship knowledge within an Indigenous Knowledge Community as a rhizome. This visual is called a Blues Rhizome because it symbolizes a continuously expanding subterranaean feature intimately related to its soil, but not
exclusive to it. Rhizomes have a demonic characteristic in their unpredictably, differently organized configuration (McKittrick 2006, xxv). Similarly, Woods (1998) described Blues as an “ever-expanding” indigenous knowledge system embedded with social theory, social practice and geographic knowledge. Moreover, an Indigenous Knowledge Community conception, practice and transmission of citizenship knowledge is also demonic in that it is outside the “pre-prescribed” notion of citizenship (McKittrick 2006, xxv).

Figure 2 also represents my journey to this research, which consists of a series of connections among these conceptual, philosophical and theoretical components. The interconnections, nodes and loops of my journey will be explained through the telling of stories followed by a discussion of concepts, philosopies and theories that interconnect in this research. Appendix A1 contains a glossary of terms to facilitate the reader’s understanding.
Generative Story 1

The concept of citizenship has intrigued me for quite some time. In my community of origin, I recall watching the news reporting of “The Atlanta Child Murders”\(^6\) with my mother from 1979 until 1981 and following the same story in the newspaper with my father, but hearing a different story told in community spaces; a

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\(^6\) CBS Evening News reported the story and developments nightly.
telling to which my parents agreed! The news reported that victims of the Atlanta Child Murders were most likely abducted by someone they knew in their immediate neighborhood. The community story was that White folks were involved and no one would be surprised if it all came out years after these Black babies were forgotten. As the number of abducted steadily increased past 20, community members marked their word that a Black man would go down for this, even if he didn’t do it. My heightened sense of contradiction between the news reports and my community knowledge led me to question this inconsistency. My mother’s response shaped my understanding of reality and knowledge. She said, “To be Black is to be Political.” This was not the first time she made the assertion, and it would not be the last.

My mother explained that Blackness is like a powerful root that is so expansive it is part of the earth itself, therefore, it cannot be destroyed. The root is so much a part of the soil that it’s everywhere and some people view it as a threat, so they make it their mission to destroy it. She advised that anyone looking like the root or resembling it in any way is perceived as part of the problem, regardless of their awareness or lack of awareness. She added, “Black people see differently, they have a vision of the heart of the matter, because to be Black is to be political.” These teachings were mutually supported by the cultural knowledge of the community where I grew up in Durham, North Carolina. This knowledge informed our community ethics of behavior and our engagement with politics and various apparatuses of the government. Teachings at home and in community spaces maintained internal consistency because I believe they came from the same root configuration my mother referenced. However, this community
constructed knowledge was based on the spiritual, cultural and communal experiences of my parents and their predecessors. Their experiences were very different from mine, that of my siblings, and our classmates. In community spaces of fields, cleared yards and gardens, we reconstructed the knowledge of our collective experiences intergenerationally by adding another dimension to the knowledge that already existed. From that time, those experiences operated just below the surface of my consciousness, implicitly guiding my understandings of the politics and sacred geographies of Blackness and community citizenship until these constructs were explicitly brought back into my purview during a pilot study.

Working as a graduate research student in an after-school program, I was interested in connecting students to the community’s history through oral interviews. My gift to the school for making space for my project was a written record of the history of the community. My research revealed this community was the residence of some of the children abducted in the Atlanta Child Murders! This community was also the residence of Wayne Williams, the alleged serial murderer! The media portrayed the community as deeply impoverished economically and morally, but oral interviews with long-time residents revealed not only a counter story to the Atlanta Child Murders portrayed in the media but a fiber of collective knowledge that hearkened to my youth also emerged.

These stories I collected and my recollections relate to my personal understanding of reality, knowledge, community and politics. These stories also connect to my deep-seated concerns about citizenship education. I realized that these stories are actually
citizenship stories. According to Mignolo’s (2006) definition, citizenship is a sense of belonging. These stories demonstrated a sense of belonging within my cultural community. They show how knowledge exists outside of school spaces and dominant discourses are challenged and negotiated at the community level. These stories also demonstrate a different dimension of citizenship knowledge. This critical knowledge has the potential to expand the present conception of citizenship promoted in citizenship education. It could offer students a wider range of opportunities to practice citizenship and engage with society. Unfortunately, this knowledge scarcely enters educational arenas.

This research is at the intersection of my personal, political, intellectual and social interests. I held the lofty desire to weave all of my issues into my research project. I perused critical paradigms that left me unfulfilled until a summer Reading Group introduced me to alternative frameworks that theorized my experience and provided insights on the relationship between space/place and knowledge, epistemological agency, politics of knowledge and cultural materialities.

The Reading Group

In May 2009, I enrolled in a Reading course specifically designed to locate alternative methodological and pedagogical approaches for emergent scholars. The mixed race, mixed gender, mixed research interest group was comprised of doctoral students preparing to enter the field of research. Our advisor introduced us to the discipline of Black Studies. We sensed the impact Black Studies could have on our individual projects, but none the less struggled to make sense of the wide body of knowledge. Black Studies
was a grassroots movement, an epistemological perspective, a methodology, a theory and a discipline. Some scholars struggled with the *holy grail* aspect of Black Studies purporting to be the answer to all unanswered questions. Some agreed with critics of Black Studies’ lack of disciplinary structure arguing that a movement cannot form into a valid discipline (Kershaw, 1989). However for me, the discipline of Black Studies opened the door to my conceptual, philosophical and theoretical home. Through Black Studies, I understand my experience and found grounding for my research.

Black Studies connected me to an intellectual moment that shifted consciousness. Intellectually challenging global systems that produce and support an historically “absent present” Black existence profoundly impacted academia (McKittrick, 2006). As academic space was made for Black Studies departments on college and university campuses, space was made for Black agency in the general consciousness (Brown, 2007). On the surface, Black Studies has a constructivist ontology. Multiple realities are acknowledged because what was purportedly as the truth excluded Black people from humanity. However, Black Studies’ critical interdisciplinary framework acknowledges the continuity of knowledge and connections across disciplines.

Epistemologically, Black Studies located knowledge in Black people, Black histories and Black experiences. Black people are valid knowers and creators of knowledge, epistemologically grounding them as agents of change. This shift empowers Black agents to wholistically solve community problems, to critically contribute to social change and to advance human freedom ( Karenga, 2002). But while Black Studies provided ontological and epistemological grounding, I still needed theories that provided
context and logic for my hypothesis that Indigenous Knowledge Communities conceive and practice citizenship differently. Entre Sylvia Wynter-

Sylvia Wynter’s grand analysis of systems of thought provided me with context, logic, theory and concepts not only to ground my research, but also to make sense of my citizenship experiences. Next, I flashback to another generative story from which this research interest emanated then discuss Wynter’s theories of Alterity, Alter ego and Indigenization.

**Generative Story 2**

During graduate school, I was excited to work with an activist group mobilized to preserve a community burial ground. The burial ground was the only remnant of the community dispersed by urbanization in the form of an international runway addition to the local airport. The burial ground was the final resting place for generations of community members and their enslaved and emancipated predecessors. The land was under the ownership of a local waste management company who desired to develop the land the burial ground was on. The company petitioned the county’s commission board to intern the bodies to a local cemetery. The activist group formed in protest of the action.

I planned to join the group’s protest prior to the Commission Board’s meeting on May 8, 2008. I asked my 14 year old daughter if she wished to accompany me on the research adventure. I briefly apprised her of the protest against the internment of the bodies. Her reaction is still with me now. She exclaimed, “They can’t do that! That’s a burial ground, a final resting place! The slaves didn’t have peace when they were living;
they should have peace in death!” My child’s reaction was profoundly intuitive, spiritual, ethical, cultural and communal; evident of values I did not have the full opportunity to impart to her. Her reaction made me want to know more about the knowledge existing in Black communities.

**Alterity**

Sylvia Wynter’s theoretical conceptualization of Alterity gives me insight on the particular position of Indigenous Knowledge Communities in the socio-political landscape of the U.S.. According to Wynter (1992) the “historico-existential community” that formed the United States of America consisted of Native Americans (Red), Africans (Black) and Europeans (White). Each group was integral in the making of America, yet as the result of a “historical(ly) specific process” Red and Black exist outside the boundary of citizenship. Prescriptive rules of our order define everyone in relation to the dominant perspective, that being White bourgeois ethno-class “Man” (Gagne, 2007). All nonwhite “others” are in the liminal category outside the bond of Whiteness which determines citizenship and humanity. However, “Black Americans occupy a specific role in the nation-state” (Wynter 1992,16). From the dominant perspective, Black Americans exist on the nether edge of the outside within the liminal category. This position provides a unique vantage point from which to grasp and challenge the prescriptive rules of knowledge of our present episteme. Alterity is a position of perspective advantage, which I privilege in this proposed research.

Alterity is the location/space/place of agency to “produce special knowledge” to challenge the status quo (Bogues, 2006). According to Bogues, Wynter meditates on the
peculiar position of alterity and at times likens alterity to Fanon’s damnes to denote “liminal to the 2nd and 3rd degree… the most permanent liminal subject” (Maldonado-Torres, 2006) that has special knowledge to challenge the prescription of predominant conceptions of citizenship. Wynter’s analysis helps me understand the genesis of citizenship in the United States as a formal structure that excludes Black people from the category of humanity.

Wynter’s theoretical conceptualization of Alterity also suggests degrees of citizenship. Figure 3: Black Alterity and Citizenship visually represents the location of people within the United States democracy. The location represents degrees of citizenship and value of knowledge from particular spaces.
Subaltern communities occupy “geographies of exclusion” outside and beyond the “limits of citizenship” (McKittrick & Woods 2007, 4). Socio-political processes of racial, economic and educational segregation locate Black geographies in the farthest forgotten spaces of neglect and violence. These racially constructed outer boundaries “naturalize
black agony, distress and death” which justify violating basic human rights (2). These same politics of place can eradicate these communities from the natural landscape and remove them from historical memory through land dispossession and other mechanisms of control (Woods, 1998).

Applying Wynter’s conception, Black and indigenous peoples occupy the entire region outside of the dominant society’s conception of citizenship knowledge and practice. These groups occupy a region of visible invisibility based on the social, economic, moral and political need of dominant society. The Blues tradition of social explanation recognizes the researcher and participants are in the liminal position of Alterity; or otherwise, free from the confines of American/European inspired definitions of identity, community and citizenship (King, 2006; Wynter, 1992). The Blues, a genre of indigenous African music, is autochthonous, meaning it is native to the land and experience where it was produced. Also endemic to Blues is an ethic of community building, knowledge creation and citizenship practices. Communities of citizens existing in the liminal category can contribute citizenship knowledge and practices that can significantly impact citizenship education. But what does indigeniety offer to the conceptual understanding of citizenship?

**Indigenous Knowledge Community**

Indigenous knowledge involves every aspect of life: linguistic communication, oral tradition, sacred practices, ecological knowledge, belief/value system, creation stories, metaphors, philosophy, technologies, local history, symbolism, musical expression, intuition, dreams, prayers, visions and messages from the dead (Dei, 2000). It
is based on the knowledge traditions of communities that through centuries of unbroken residence, develop an in depth understanding of their particular place in their particular world (Battiste, 2002). A partial list of people considered indigenous are Africans, and Africans in the Diaspora, Natives throughout the Americas, Aborigines in Australia and the Philippines, Maori peoples in New Zealand and Garifuna in Central America. Indigenous people have similar negative hegemonic identities and realities of colonialism.

Mignolo (2006) contends that colonization of knowledge created, developed and maintained a racial hierarchical structure that privileged whiteness and demonized indigenous cultures. While colonized indigenous peoples amassed fortunes for Europeans, they were bequeathed with the rewards of disproportionately high incarceration rates, high levels of substance abuse, and high drop out rates (McKittrick & Woods, 2007). Communities of indigenous people occupy a contradictory territory, while they are in view within classrooms they are out of view in citizenship education textbooks.

**Blues Epistemology**

Clyde Woods (1998) maintains that Black Americans are indigenous people throughout the Diaspora. In part, to these individuals, indigenous knowledge reflects the dynamic way in which they have come to understand themselves in relationship to their natural environment and how they organize that folk knowledge of flora and fauna, cultural beliefs and history to enhance their lives. Embedded within these forms of knowledge is the value system of the local community. Blues epistemology, is an
example of indigenous knowledge and social theory and practice. Locally based, Blues epistemology is geographic knowledge, symbiosis between nature, economy and culture, dynamic socio linguistic traditions, and “structures of feeling” (Harvey 2001, 211). Indigenous knowledge structures the cultural framework of a people or community.

Wynter’s (1984) discussion of the process of “indigenization” more generally provides a relevant context for the African American Blues tradition. According to Bogues (2006), for Wynter, folk arts recreated an equitable community and society, which was “cultural guerila to the Market economy” (330). Explaining Wynter further, Bogues continues”

In the interstices of history, we see, in glimpses, evidences of a powerful and pervasive cultural process which has largely determined the unconscious springs of our beings; a process we shall identify and explore as the process of indigenization a process whose agent and product was Jamaican folklore, folksong, folktales, folkdance.

In other words, resistance to dominance created these spaces for the indigenization to take place. Similar to the Jamaican folklore that Wynter references, the Blues is a space that relocates its subjects. Therefore, persons dominant society labels as rebels, the Blues renames as “revered, divine, worth and fearless” (Woods 2007, 71).

The constant flux between epistemology and theories deepens the material meaning of citizenship that can be gained from this research. The impact of a Black Studies perspective on citizenship has the potential to expose ways in which Black subjects understand and practice citizenship in their everyday lives. Black histories, culturalized in space and place, locate everyday practices of activism, social commentary
and civic engagement in the local landscape of policy, worldviews, institutions and circumstances that influence historical events (Riseman & Wineburg, 2008, Woods 1998, Wynter 1992). These histories reveal a particular perspective of struggle (Wynter, 1989) against dominant “epistemologies of ignorance” that include substantive cognitive practices that obscure social realities” (Alcoff 2007, 82) of incarceration, lawlessness, oppressions, invasion and natural disaster (Goodwin & Swartz, 2006).

A Black Studies theoretical perspective of citizenship unearths “hidden geographies” of citizenship knowledge within forms of community civic practices designed to resist colonial epistemological power (Alcoff 2007, 86). Knowledge and action are interrelated in a Black Studies perspective. Therefore, when Black Studies meets citizenship studies, the terrain of citizenship knowledge can be investigated wholistically because disciplinary boundaries between citizenship, education, epistemology, geography and sociology become “obsolete” creating a conceptual space to forge a “new language” that does not fragment knowledge, inquiry, methods and methodology into already prescribed disciplinary molds to re-write these molds that serve to maintain the colonial hierarchical system of knowledge (Gagne, 2007; Meacham, 1998).

The Blues are integral to understanding Black people’s citizenship stories. “It is an intellectual tradition that embeds local geographic knowledge, philosophical insights, social interrogations, and self-definition in dynamic socio-linguistic traditions” (Woods 2007, 52). The Blues tradition enabled impoverished Black Americans to document historical events and visualize democratic freedom. While the Blues represented
specialized local knowledge, the Blues tradition served to unite communities across counties, states, regions and nations (53). Woods specified the importance of the indigenous knowledge in social construction, “cross-generation experience of African American history teaches the lesson that democracy can only be secured through reliance on the experience and thoughts of the masses and through strict adherence to participatory forms of governance” (49).

I hypothesize that Black indigenous community knowledge is multifaceted, multilayered and dynamic. Analysis of the multiplicity inherent in this knowledge can only be realized as a “new language” educational researchers need to examine separate domains of citizenship as mutually constructed (Meacham, 1998). Citizenship knowledge in a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community is both traditional and contemporary, it is also past and present simultaneously; it occupies what McKittrick (2006) terms as a Black geographical space that has the capacity to impact the curricula of citizenship education and civic engagement.

An Indigenous Knowledge Community conception of citizenship benefits all students. All students develop critical thinking skills to challenge the national historical narrative and the contemporary definition of citizenship. Students are liberated to accept counter stories, linguistic variance and cultural contributions (Epstein, 2010). Clyde Woods (2002) urged scholars to excavate “the construction and reproduction of indigenous knowledge systems within the boundaries of the U.S.” (66). This dynamic knowledge was coded, hidden and transmitted intergenerationally. This knowledge and worldview enabled Indigenous Knowledge Communities to create and maintain a holistic
view of what it means to be a citizen instead of adopting the narrow fractured ideology of Western man. Through the process of merging local history, nature, economy, diasporic/global culture and traditions, a dynamic layered knowledge of citizenship could be created. The purpose of this proposed research is to expose that knowledge because it is inextricably linked to liberation of all humans.

The constant flux of personal theory and formal theories ingrained in me that communities can be bound together by knowledge that is reinforced in community spaces through experience. I am equally impressed that in Indigenous Knowledge Communities, citizenship can operate like a code of ethics steeped in the historical Black experience and the social/spiritual/spatial aspects of the Black community. These constructs are evident in the two Generative Stories I have included. These constructs also inform the Blues Methodology that I will use to conduct this study in a culturally consistent way, which is explained in the next section. The dynamic interconnectedness of constructs provide space for me to investigate how Indigenous Knowledge Communities remain epistemologically independent to construct their own citizenship knowledge and practices, which can liberate all students from cognitive distortion and constraints of our present order.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This research proposes to investigate how citizenship is conceived and practiced in a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community. The purpose is to understand citizenship and the social processes that create social spatial demonization within the landscape. As noted previously, Woods (1998, 2002, 2007) conceptualizes socio spatial demonization as the spatial marginalization of liminal categories through social practices such as segregation, gentrification and land dispossession. These spaces are then socially maligned as racialized zones of moral corruption, economic depravity and lawlessness, otherwise demonized through hegemonic discourse. This research is part of “a larger project designed to recover and expand indigenous African American forms of consciousness, social investigation, community development and democratic governance” (Woods 2007, 49). This present research study will (a) reveal the community based conception and practices of citizenship in a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community; (b) identify out-of-school spaces and cultural practices where citizenship knowledge is produced and transmitted; (c) reveal how the community challenged social processes of socio spatial demonization and (d) show how this citizenship knowledge can be used to expand students’ understanding of participation in community and nation-state. This research has implications for citizenship education and
citizenship education curricula because it impacts how students are educated to be citizens and what information they are taught regarding citizenship.

This research is guided by the following questions:

1. How does an Indigenous Knowledge Community critically conceptualize and practice citizenship?

2. How is citizenship knowledge produced, preserved and transmitted in out-of-school community spaces?

3. How does the Indigenous Knowledge Community challenge social processes of spatial demonization by dominant society?

This study will enlarge our understanding of citizenship and how it is practiced within a specific Indigenous Knowledge Community, as well as reveal “the blues ethos of social-spatial justice” (Woods 2007, 54).

*Blues Methodology*

I construct a Blues Methodology in this study to link group consciousness to place by investigating indigenous knowledge traditions. A Blues Methodology examines consciousness in a single locality as a larger project of investigating African American knowledge traditions and forms of social protest as part of the Black Studies intellectual perspective (McKittick & Woods, 2007). The Gullah Geechee people of Sapelo Island, Georgia is the Indigenous Knowledge Community at the center of this investigation. Locality denotes physical, political, administrative or cultural boundaries that determine a community. A key feature of a Blues Methodology is “bounding phenomena into a
coherent spatial frame” (Woods 2007, 68). The phenomena under investigation in this study is indigenous citizenship knowledge production and practices.

As previously discussed, Clyde Woods submitted a compelling analysis of the Black indigenous community’s ethic of knowledge creation and social critique. This indigenous knowledge survived in Black communities in the midst of the most oppressive and aggressively active “native model” agenda (Wynter, 1992). Blues is a knowledge system capable of “global governance” (McKittrick & Woods 2007, 49) and “racial social justice” (King 2008, 1094). Woods’ conception provides a methodological springboard for this present work.7

This proposed research projects Wynter and Woods’ social analyses into a methodology uniquely capable of collecting rich, descriptive data in the naturalistic environment. This formulation of the Blues Methodology not only locates knowledge in the lived experiences of working class Black people; it also places primacy on oral and visual data. The Blues are a rich cultural legacy that spans the globe while also descriptively linking lived experiences to historical events. The Blues are the singular experience of the collective community; within the aesthetic of Blues lay wisdom, protest, criticism, reality, optimism, storytelling, as well as, visions of equality (Woods 1998, 2007; Cone, 1972; Jones, 1964). The Blues tradition of explanation recognizes the researcher and participants are in the Alterity position; or otherwise, free from the

7 I employ Linda Tillman’s (2002) culturally sensitive research approach for additional support in the formulation of this methodological framework. Tillman suggests culturally sensitive research approaches must culturally congruent research methods, culturally specific knowledge, cultural resistance to theoretical domination, culturally sensitive data interpretation and culturally informed theory and practice.
confines of American/European inspired definitions of identity, community, and citizenship (Wynter, 1992; King, 2010). The Blues references a cultural community foundation for knowledge and definition. Using the Blues tradition as explanation, I investigate how a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community conceptualizes and practices citizenship when they have been most vehemently demonized through social and media processes (McKittrick, 2006).

Tenets of the Blues Methodology important for this study:

Tenets from Woods’ analysis link Blues to this particular research investigating an Indigenous Knowledge Community’s concept and practice of citizenship. Specific tenets highlighted for this research are embedded within the Blues tradition. They do not occur as discrete concepts, but interrelatedly compose an essence of Blues. I enter the community fully cognizant of the negative effects of distance between the researcher and community participants. I classify myself as an “indigenist worker” conducting research within the tradition of Indigenous Knowledge Communities (Bogues 2006, 330).

Therefore, I will engage with the community negating the subject-object divide Odora Hoppers (2009) states is “endemic to scientific practice (174). I am not alienated from who I am, so I enter this research wholly human, wholly divine, fully Black and fully feminine. I chose to focus on tenets that define the social research process of traveling Blues artists, female artists in particular, as ethics of entering a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community. Blues artists, as social scientists, functioned in the way Odora-Hoppers suggests all scientists should. Blues people were knowledgeable and governed by the wisdom that community members were the owners of the knowledge and
experience they represented in song. What’s more, the community members validated the research. Within the tradition of Blues, the “scientific community” had the burden to prove their research findings in civic debate and public discussion which is synonymous with the performance. Odora-Hoppers (174) demanded that scientific results be “valid outside the laboratory,” and researchers “recover the basis of their citizenship” by “demystifying” themselves. She used Galtung (1967) to support her admonishment for researchers to become “one among the rest of humankind, with goals built into her daily life making herself accountable to others by making open what her preferred future is – not pretending to be like a famous, recently deceased European statesman” (64-71).

Blues women were warrior pioneers. As the first recorded Blues singers, Blues women made Black working class social consciousness public in their recordings. Historically, Black women have always occupied “demonic grounds” or the most extreme territory on the outskirts of Alterity. Thus, they were powerfully equipped to critique coloniality and community, which was a fete their male counterparts were unable to perform. Blues women navigated dangerous lyrical, visual and material territories within the colonial regime, as well as, in Black communities. The character of the ‘Blues woman’ as a strong, fearless, sharp tongued, sexual activist cosmopolitan citizen of her day has been duplicated and fictionalized throughout history. However, Blues women were warriors, pioneers and also researchers.

Blues women as organic intellectuals engaged in social research to uncover the local Black history and daily experience of the community, which was translated into song and performance. The art of the Blues lies in its ability to vocalize the reality of pain
while also maintaining a hopeful vision of the future (Cone, 1972). Tenets of community participation, preservation, consciousness, continuity and interdisciplinarity provide the structure for understanding citizenship and capturing indigenous knowledge. These tenets will be discussed as a function of the research process of traveling Blues artists and as a methodological apparatus for entry and research in Indigenous Knowledge Communities.

Familiar with the experience of oppression, female Blues artists, in particular, traveled from town to town. Traveling was a dominant theme particularly with female and male Blues artists (Garon, 1996). Traveling symbolized freedom and protest (Cone, 1972). Similarly, Blues have traveled and transcended spatial and disciplinary boundaries. Scholars locate the birth of Blues on the continent of Africa (Cone, 1972; Jones, 1964; Barlow, 1989; Kublik 1999), as an oral tradition of recording history. While Blues were transported in the spirit of captured Africans on the Middle Passage, they not only retained their original purpose, they morphed into a different expression on American shores. Cone (1972) maintained that Blues were a continuity of spirituals. Disciplinary boundaries may have acted as blinders, preventing scholars from appreciating the Blue root of spirituals, work songs and Blues. Blues and primitive spirituals were sites of interdisciplinary social commentary and protest. Blues go beyond the particularity of space and place, while simultaneously linking African descended people by their experience of oppression. James Cone (1972) interpreted the Blues as an expression of “the feeling and thinking of an African people, and the kinds of mental adjustments they had to make in order to survive in an alien land” (98), noting that transcendence was a function of survival. Blues were about survival on one’s own terms,
which is equitable to protest (Cone, 1972). The interdisciplinary nature of the Blues requires the researcher to investigate the community wholistically and dismantle boundaries imposed and maintained by coloniality.

The spatial transcendence of Blues allows me to research contemporary community issues within the context of local social protests and global oppressions. Woods (1998) contends Blues is indigenous knowledge of local geography. However, I seek to extend Woods’ localized conception into the Black Diaspora because Blues spread into a global phenomenon. Blues in a Diaspora context, is cognizant of the influence of Black people throughout the Diaspora, as well as, migrations of people intra-regionally and internationally that contributed to knowledge creation and Black history in a local space. Black Americans have a Diasporic consciousness of being indigenous here (in the U.S.) and there (Africa), as well as a consciousness of inclusion and exclusion. African descendants knew inclusion within their own communities while being segregated and excluded from the “native model.” The global phenomenon of Black exclusion is most evident in local geographic contexts. Moreover, geographic narratives of exclusion make visible hidden shifts of knowledge and expose social processes of spatial demonization (McKittrick & Woods, 2007). Social spatial demonization is the product of social processes of geographic marginalization and exclusion of Black spaces (Woods, 2007). A question embedded within the research questions guiding this study is how does indigenous knowledge survive under consistent hegemonic attack? Clyde Woods’ socio-spatial analysis deems this question a necessary investigation of the social
processes of citizenship within the Indigenous Knowledge Community as well as social processes acting against the community.

Investigating how an Indigenous Knowledge Community conceptualizes and practices citizenship is a Blues research question. Black histories of protest and activism not only demonstrate acts of citizenship, they chronicle Black histories of place. While these histories are forgotten in textbooks or retold as vessels emptied of political/civic engagement and indigenous knowledge, these narratives are retained within the community as counter knowledge to school curriculums. Epstein (2010) cites that counter knowledge and community histories are not validated in social studies classrooms. Therefore, understanding indigenous knowledge community citizenship and practices are embedded within a longer history of citizenship struggles contained in Black histories of place (Harding, 1983).

Traveling Blues artists connected to the history of place. Through prolonged engagement, the artists sought community knowledge through active participation. Participation in community required close connection with community members. Artists were not selective in their choice of informants. “Blues performers represented the pantheon of Black American personalities and practitioners who were condemned as rebels by the larger society while simultaneously being worshipped, celebrated, envied, and feared by the Black community” (Woods, 1998). Blues lacked a capacity to exclude; therefore, Blues lyrics span all facets and faces of Black communities. This inability to ignore, provides rich, deep data for the Blues artist to represent in song. For example, Bessie Smith sang *Black Mountain Blues* and *St. Louis Blues*. In each of these songs, she
not only connected with the experiences of people in place, her individual experiences merged with the collective experience. While Smith performed the Blues, in place, her vocalized calls, shouts, hollers and grunts connected individual lives with social movements and acts of activism (Woods, 1998). Within her performance, Smith chronicled original collective responses to actual historical events (Palmer, 1981) and created a new reality of “democracy, cooperative, and belonging” (Woods, 1998). This tenet of cultural preservation focuses on “oral text(s)” as a historical resource in indigenous knowledge communities, as well as, Black histories of place. Oral history is an “umbrella term” comprised of practice and product (Abrams, 2010). Cultural preservation deems it necessary to collect oral history narratives and conduct oral interviews and culturally appropriate group conversations.

The tenet of cultural preservation is interconnected with community participation, both elemental to the Blues. Woods (2002) locates knowledge “embedded in the consciousness of repressed groups, communities, and families, who are entangled in a growing web of inequality” (64). The call and response nature of Blues performances required the Blues artist to engage in naturalistic observation of the underside of the community. Likewise, these tenets require the researcher to engage with the community wholistically\(^8\). A wholistic perspective of historic social movements and activisms contextualize Black histories of place and couch contemporary issues in a continuum of

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\(^8\) Typically “wholism” is a misspelling that refers to “holism” (Clarke, 1997). Wholism is intentionally used in this paper to denote the community in its entirety. Wholistic means individual in the context of community, Black history and connection with space and place, knowledge and cultural practices. Wholistic community engagement is investigated all aspects of the community experience.
citizenship practices. A wholistic investigation of an Indigenous Knowledge Community requires a perspective on data collection and analysis.

A Blues Methodology involves collecting rich, descriptive data from various oral, visual and performative sources observable in the naturalistic environment, as demonstrated in Table 1. Data sources for this research will include: (a) oral data (oral history narratives, community walk interview, group interview, follow-up interviews), (b) observations and visual data (the researcher’s reflexive journal, photographs collected during interviews, video of community walk interview, video of group interview), (c) cultural data (existing literature and documentation on community folklore, traditions, rituals, language, customs, etc.), (d) public records (demographics, land deeds, maps, news media), (e) language (linguistic variation of the community), and (f) music lyrics (researcher generated Blues lyrics, participant generated music lyrics and performances). Data sources and collection activities are designed to construct a socio-cultural geographic narrative of the Gullah Geechee people on Sapelo Island.

A Blues Methodology requires my active participation in the research environment, which entails disclosure of the research focus and participation in community events. Active engagement necessitates participation as a member of the community with the vision of a researcher, traversing between the dynamic of insider and outsider. However, intimacy with community forms of knowledge and practices is a necessity.

Authenticity is an important element of this research agenda. I define authenticity as thorough consistency between intentions, actions and outcome. An honorary member
of the community and academia will grant me entry into the site of investigation. Based on his rapport and representing his ethics, I will maintain authenticity and build a relationship with the community by demonstrating respect, reverence, humility and usefulness. I will build rapport by first establishing a presence in the community, respecting the Black experience in that geographical location, learning cultural arts and reverencing community values and oral histories. I will engage community members in establishing the principle that this research aims also to be useful to the community. At the end of the project, the community will be given a product of cultural preservation as a gift from this research.

**Research Site and Participants**

This research will be conducted in a Black Indigenous Knowledge Community located on Sapelo Island off the Georgia coast. This site was purposely selected based on the Black Indigenous Knowledge Community of Gullah Geechee people residing on the island. These land owners have unbroken multigenerational residence in the same geographical place (Bailey, 2000). This research will be conducted in out-of-school contexts such as cultural celebrations, religious gatherings, craft workshops and oyster bakes.

Participants will be selected based on criteria that they are members of the Sapelo Island Community. Community members and youth participants will be asked to participate in this research by the process of snowballing. Participants are expected to be familiar with community history, values and practices. The participants will be recommended by a community historian who will be invited to assist with this study. I
am seeking ten community members to participate in this research project. These community members will represent multiple generations of indigenous knowledge. Participants will include one community historian, three elder community members (both genders), two mid generation parents and four youth participants.

**Data Sources and Data Collection**

The multiplicity of data sources are shown on Table 1: Data Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Blues tenet</th>
<th>Data sources (Blues tenet-wholism)</th>
<th>Collection method (Blues tenet-active engagement)</th>
<th>Analysis (Blues-ing)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How does an Indigenous Knowledge Community (IKC) <strong>critically define</strong> and practice citizenship?</td>
<td>Oral tradition, consciousness, social commentary, interdisciplinarity</td>
<td>Oral history narratives</td>
<td>Individual interviews</td>
<td>Cycle coding, collecting emergent themes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher generated Blues lyrics</td>
<td>Member Check In Conversations</td>
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<td>Participant generated Music lyrics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Call and response</td>
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<td>Oral history narratives</td>
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<td>Group Conversation</td>
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<td>Community walk Fieldnotes</td>
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<td>Reflexive Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does an IKC critically define and <strong>practice citizenship</strong>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does an IKC preserve, produce and</td>
<td>Cultural preservation, continuity</td>
<td>Oral history narratives Fieldnotes</td>
<td>Individual Interviews Written Fieldnotes</td>
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Access into the community will begin with negotiation. My advisor/cultural ambassador will introduce me to the community historian. We will conference regarding the reciprocity of my proposed research project for the community. Fieldnotes will be recorded in a Reflexive Journal throughout the research process, beginning with the conferencing. The fieldnotes will consist of notes on observations of community interactions and engagements I witness. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) contend that fieldnotes should not contain personal reactions, emotions or reflections; instead the focus should be fixed on framing knowledge and concerns (12). I will also take notes on naturally occurring conversations that occur on site (Chase 2005, 670).
Sandelowski & Barroso (2003) remind us of the importance of introspection in qualitative research.

Reflexivity is a hallmark of excellent qualitative research and it entails the ability and willingness of researchers to acknowledge and take account of the many ways they themselves influence research findings and thus what comes to be accepted as knowledge. Reflexivity implies the ability to reflect inward toward oneself as an inquirer; outward to the cultural, historical, linguistic, political, and other forces that shape everything about inquiry; and, in between researcher and participant to the social interaction they share. (222)

Reflexive journaling will occur throughout the research process also. Journal entries will be in the form of photographs. Following the method of photo elicitation, I use photographs to “mine deeper shafts “and reveal a “different part of human consciousness” (Harper 2002, 23). Due to the limitation of words, I seek to experience indigenous knowledge and citizenship practices symbolically. I chose to take photographs as a way of fostering that connection and representing my personal/researcher/scholarly process of becoming citizen. Photographs document my experience of community, civic practice, geographical place and cultural space to reflexively examine my subjectivities and maintain methodological consistently. This visual data source will include my visual representations of citizenship conceptions, citizenship practices, intergenerational transmissions and processes of social spatial demonization. The photographs will be discussed in Member Check In conversations and used to elicit conversation in community member interviews. Fieldnotes, reflexive photo journaling and Member Check In conversations will occur throughout the research process.
Member Check In conversations with the cultural ambassador and community historian will occur throughout the research process as well. Cultural ambassador is an identified member of academia and community historian is an identified member of the community. They agree to multiple informal style conversations of various lengths during the research process. Cultural ambassador possesses knowledge of Sapelo Island community history and Black Diasporic cultural knowledge. The cultural ambassador assists me in identifying practices and serves as sounding boards for research findings.

Ten community member interviews will be completed in this research study. Four interviews will be oral history narratives with community elders and community historian. Two (mid generation) community member parents will be interviewed and four youth participants will be interviewed. These interviews will be approximately a hour in duration and will be audio and video recorded. These interviews will be conducted to record oral histories narratives to construct Black history of place and geographic narrative and also note intergenerational corroborations of history. Preliminary analysis of these narratives will generate questions for follow up interviews.

Community members will complete one follow up interview to extend my understanding of data. Follow up interviews will be approximately 30 minutes in duration. During this interview, members will be presented with researcher generated music lyrics that demonstrate aspects of citizenship knowledge, practice, transmission and/or recreation. Participants will be asked to select music lyrics that represent indigenous community knowledge pertaining to citizenship. Their lyrics will be presented at the group interview, however, that will be preceded by the community walk.
During the community member interviews, a community member will be identified to participate in the Community Walk Interview with me and the Community Cultural Ambassador. This interview activity is used to locate community institutions spatially and map them. This interview will be audio and video recorded.

During the group interview, I will share findings regarding perspectives of citizenship and ask for extended conversations regarding documents and themes from interviews. This opportunity will serve to clarify, extend, and confirm (or disconfirm) what I understand to be participants’ perspectives on the major ideas of my research.

**Table 1: Timeline**

Timeline of Data Collection and Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>1. Entry into community</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 1-2</td>
<td>2. File informed consent form signed by community historian</td>
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<td>3. Conference with community historian</td>
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<td>4. Begin fieldnotes and reflexive journal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Field based analysis of fieldnotes identifying emergent themes</td>
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<td>6. Visual content analysis</td>
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<td>7. Member Check in conversations about emergent themes from notes and visuals</td>
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<td>8. Identify visuals to use in community interviews</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>1. Community historian identify community members to interview</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Snowball participants</td>
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<td>3. Secure informed consents of participants</td>
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| Interviewing Week 3 | 1. Continue recording field notes  
2. Community historian oral history narrative interview  
3. Transcribe interview  
4. Provisionally code the interview with codes from the research questions  
5. Formulate preliminary follow up interview protocol from provisional analysis  
6. Use historical and spatial content to inform subsequent community elder interviews  
7. Community elder interview #1  
8. Transcribe interview  
9. Provisionally code the interview with codes from the research questions  
10. Formulate preliminary follow up interview protocol from provisional analysis  
11. Add historical and spatial content to inform following interview  
12. Conduct next community elder interview  
13. Repeat step 8 – 12 until three community elders are interviewed  
14. Identify community elder to participate in Community Walk interview  
15. Member Check in Conversation  
16. Continued reflexive journaling  
17. Field based analysis of field notes and journal entries |
| Week 4-5 | 1. Analyze public record documents: demographics, land deeds, tax records, maps and newspaper articles  
2. Continue recording field notes and journaling  
3. Analyze using provisional codes from the research questions  
4. Content information used inform informal follow up interviews  
5. Member Check in Conversation |
|---|---|
| Week 6 | 1. Use geographic and cultural history content from community elder interviews to inform parent and youth interview protocols  
2. Individually conduct parent and youth interviews  
3. Provisionally analyze interview for codes and follow up questions  
4. Member Check in Conversation  
5. Continue recording of field notes, reflective journaling  
6. Field based analysis of field notes and journal entries |
| Week 7 | 1. Use historical, geographical and spatial content to inform community walk interview protocol  
2. Conduct audio and video recorded community walk interview  
3. Analyze Community Walk Interview using interactional analysis  
4. Use provisional codes and emergent themes to identify music lyrics that represent citizenship to be used in follow up interviews  
5. Discuss codes and emerging themes from field notes, journaling, interviews in Member Check in conversation |
| Week 8 | 1. Use follow up questions generated from initial interview and public documents to inform informal follow up interviews  
2. Conduct follow up interviews, request music lyrics for group interview  
3. Continue field notes and journaling |
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<th>Week 9</th>
<th><strong>Phase 2</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Narrative analysis of all interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Construct indigenous knowledge community definition of citizenship from codes, themes and narrative chunks</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Using data construct my understanding of how the community practices citizenship</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Using analysis, construct my understanding of how citizenship knowledge is transmitted to youth</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Using analysis, construct my understanding of how the community negotiates social processes of social spatial demonization</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Member Check in conversation, continued field notes and journal</td>
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<th>Week 10</th>
<th><strong>Group Interview</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Audio and video record group interview</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Share assumptions of citizenship knowledge, practice and transmission and social spatial negotiations using journal entries and narrative chunks</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Discuss participant generated music lyrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Transcribe interview</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Analyze using interactional analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Complete analysis of all data</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Member Check in conversation, continued field notes and journal</td>
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<th>Week 12</th>
<th><strong>Ceremony</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Collaborative production of book documenting citizenship knowledge, practice, transmission and social spatial negotiation with youth participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Presentation of research product in community space</td>
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**Data Analysis**
Below I discuss the details of how I intend to analyze the aforementioned data sources, which consist of (a) oral data (interviews), (b) observations/visual data (fieldnotes), (c) cultural records, (d) public documents and (e) music lyrics. Initially, I describe Phase I with the specific analysis for each and then Phase II, the use of narrative analysis as a means of generating an overall narrative regarding citizenship, cultural practices, and social spatial demonization.

Fieldnotes will contain “field based analysis” which Patton (2002) believes improves the quality of the data collected and the analysis of it (437). These notes will be analyzed as a data set. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995), advise coding by re reading notes line by line and questioning concepts and perspectives. This process will identify emergent themes, possible concepts and identify processes evident in the everyday lives of Sapelo indigenous islanders, in particular those that focus on citizenship knowledge, citizenship practices, citizenship knowledge transmission, citizenship knowledge recreation, community classrooms, spatialization, demonization. Emergent themes, concepts, processes and perspectives will be compared to those evident in interview analyses. However, I participate in this research reflexively, acknowledging my experiences are part of my research and representation of Black indigenous knowledge on Sapelo Island.

Visual data compiled in my reflexive journal will be analyzed throughout the research process. This data set will be coded for content and context. Content of visuals will be analyzed on content of images and context that attributes meanings to the images. I follow Pink’s (2006) directives to analyze image context reflexively to examine my subjectivities and intentions as well as how the context attributes meaning to the visual.
My photographic reflexive journal works in conjunction with member check in conversations to discuss research findings and maintain authenticity throughout the research process. Visual data and member check ins directly influence subsequent community interviews.

Oral data will be analyzed using narrative codes in cycles. Narrative codes are derived from key elements from my research questions and sharpened by emergent themes relevant to my participants. The first cycle occurs after each initial interview is conducted. The interviewing process is a sequential feeding flow where the results of one interview informs the next. The interview with community historian will be provisionally coded with codes generated from my research questions. Additionally, historical events and places on Sapelo Island will be identified and used to inform the content of interviews with community elders. Community elders’ interviews will also be provisionally coded using researcher generated codes from my research questions (citizenship knowledge, citizenship practices, citizenship knowledge transmission, citizenship knowledge re-creation, community classrooms, spatialization, and demonization). Coded content regarding geographic and cultural history will feed the parent and youth interviews. Events and places identified in oral history interviews will feed the Community Walk interview. At the completion of all interview, transcripts will undergo the second phase of analysis.

Observations and visual data will be analyzed using interactional analysis. This included the Community Walk and group interview. This method acknowledges participatory production of knowledge and focuses on the dialogic process of co-construction amongst all interview participants (Riessman, 2003; Pink, 2006). Body
language communication and visual documentation of the social construction of space, organization of people and community interactions will be analyzed as a part of the narrative interactional analysis process.

Public record documents including demographics, land deeds, tax records, maps and newspaper articles will be analyzed using first cycle coding. Music lyrics will be analyzed using provisional and thematic coding to compare with themes evident in other data.

All data sources will be examined from a socio-cultural perspective through narrative analysis in the second phase of analysis. The socio-cultural approach is based on assumptions that narratives “reflect culture, ideology and socialization, but also provide insights into the political and historical climates impacting on the storytellers’ lives” (Grbich 2009, 130). In this analysis, I will identify participant language used in describing concepts of citizenship, citizenship practice and social spatial demonization. According to Grbich (2009), this approach bounds segments of the narrative into segments which I will examine for meaning. I investigate meaning making in each segment and compare narratives with each other, linking them to social and political processes. I interpret the narratives, fully cognizant of my positionalities (Grbich 2009, 130-131). Lastly, cultural data and photographs from my reflexive journaling will be used during the research process to elicit conversation during interviews.

Summary

This research is designed to investigate the evidence, production, practice and transmission of citizenship knowledge in an historically demonized Indigenous Knowledge Community. Results of this research will be used to expand the general
conception of citizenship and citizenship practice by creating a classroom intervention for middle school students to learn about citizenship in an Indigenous Knowledge Community.
References


APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Alterity/Alter Ego
Fanon (1952/2008) explains the role of the alter ego in Black Skin White Mask. The white imagination conceives of the Black man as a criminalized, psychopathic, overly virile object “dissected under white eyes” as the complete opposite of the Ideal. “For not only must the Black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man… it is a definitive structuring of the Black self and the world-because it creates a real dialectic between my body and the world” (110,116). Fanon asserted Black is necessary for white to define its Ideal. It must have an image of what not to be like. Within the dialectical relationship white has in opposition to Black, the Negro myth prevails in the white imagination. Wynter (1995) concurred, “s/he is the alter ego who embodies the alternative of chaos to the orthodox behaviors expressive of the normative national identity” (17). Alter ego is the Negro myth that creates white panic, while Alterity is a privileged position outside of the dominant ideology.

Black Studies
Black Studies emerged as a movement and discipline of “critical, intellectual study of the thought and practice of African people in their current and historical unfolding” (Karenga, 2002). As a multidisciplinary area of study, Black Studies recognized Black agency, experience and capacity to critically contribute to social change and human freedom (Karenga, 2002). Black Studies recognizes in the “historical commitment to social and personal investigation, description and criticism present in the blues” as a resource for knowledge and a source of theory” (Woods, 2007).

Blues Epistemology
The Blues are an historic record of philosophy, citizenship, failed governmental policies, Jim Crow, and local protests (Woods 1998). According to Woods (1998), Blues are a symbol of freedom. The Blues valorize Black indigenous community knowledge therefore; it is an apt tool for researching it. Clyde Woods (1998) articulates Blues Epistemology as a construction of working class Black Americans in the Black Belt South. Moreover, he states Blues is “a system of explanation that informs [their] daily
life, organizational activity, culture, religion, and social movements” (15). Blues Epistemology adheres to Smith’s definition of a decolonizing methodology because it not only retrieves the story of an indigenous community, but also resists efforts to dehistoricize a people (Smith, 1999).

Historically, the Mississippi Delta has been a place of extreme violence, where “the ideological and territorial consolidation of the Deep South plantation regime” was realized (Woods, 1998). Expansive slave labor camps, also named plantations and “factories in the fields” were established to farm the fertile Mississippi land which required concentrated numbers of enslaved Africans (Woods, 1998). Vastly outnumbered and periodically devastated by flooding, whites unified into an “ethnic solidarity.” The plantation regime was wrought with barbaric assaults on humanity: institutionalized rape, year round labor, unjustified murders, routine tortures, geographic confinement, and family fragmentation. Enslavement in the Delta was an assault on the human; Black body and Black soul. Blues emerged as protest to that plantation ideology (Woods, 1998).

Blues Epistemology applies a Gramscian notion of organic intellectual and a general orientation (McKittrick & Woods, 2007). While Blues most readily lends itself to the disciplines of history, geography and pedagogy, it does not have a “disciplinary referent,” therefore, it can exist within a variety of disciplines (Wineburg & Gross, 2008). Blues Epistemology creates a methodological space conducive for this work.
APPENDIX A 2: The Blue and Black

How the Blues tell Black histories
“The Work Song”

Breaking rocks out here on the chain gang
Breaking rocks and serving my time
Breaking rocks out here on the chain gang
Because they done convicted me of crime
Hold it steady right there while I hit it
well I reckon that ought to get it
been working and working
but I still got so terribly long to go

I committed crime, Lord I needed
Crime of being hungry and poor
I left the grocery store man bleeding
When they caught me robbing his store
Hold it steady right there while I hit it
Well I reckon that ought to get it
been working and working
but I still got so terribly long to go

I heard the judge say five years
On chain-gang you gonna go
I heard the judge say five years labor
I heard my old man scream "Lordy, no!"
Hold it right there while I hit it
well I reckon that ought to get it
been working and working
but I still got so terribly far to go

Gonna see my sweet honey bee
Gonna break this chain off to run
Gonna lay down somewhere shady
Lord I sure am hot in the sun
Hold it right there while I hit it
well I reckon that ought to get it
been workin' and workin'
been
workin' and slavin'
an'
workin' and workin'
but I still got so terribly long to go

The lyrics of this Blues song tell an American story. They depict a culturalized history that centers the Black experience in the South, encased in a simple, yet deep social commentary. Similar Blues or work songs were sung by chain gangs in the post-civil war south, to accompany hard labor (Jones, 1964). Chain gangs, indicted as “the most brutal form of forced labor,” were chiefly comprised of Black Americans (Lichtenstein, 1993) whose bodies, knowledge and Blackness “was necessarily behaved against” resulting in high incarceration rates then and now (Wynter, 1992). “The Work Song” directly incriminates the nation-state. The specific crimes of hunger and poverty are a result of restricted access to land. The land provides nourishment and sustainability. The first chain gang members were newly emancipated farmers denied their indigenous right to land (Lichtenstein, 1993), whose historic connection with flora, fauna, and local economies was interrupted by colonialism (Woods, 1998). Black farmers then were exploited under the sharecropping system in much the same way Black farmers recently were denied government dispersed subsidies (Equal Opportunity in Farm Programs 1965, USA Today March 2013).

The convict lease system, instituted by the nation-state in 1865 to assuage white fears, was and continues to be integral in the building of the economic capital of Southern
states (Adamson, 1983). Chain gangs not only built transportation thoroughfares and infrastructures of cities; prisoner fines funded city and state economies throughout the South (Lichtenstein 1993, Burns 1997). While the convict lease program phased out of use in the 1950s, the Alabama prison system reinstituted it in the 1990s (Gorman, 1997).

_The Work Song_ “transmutes” reality” (King 2006, 28) by reporting a culturalized history of enslavement and white panic, both of which were integral in the making of America. Work songs originally sung in the late 19th century, as an *a capella* accompaniment to hard labor; have historical relevance (Jones, 1964). _The Work Song_ chronicles the history of Black subjugation and vision of equity and governance in the _Land of Liberty_. In its simplicity, “The Work Song” holds a mirror to the face of the American ideal, a nation that instituted systems of Black bondage in colonial times and has maintained them throughout history. Black Americans have transnational experience of being indigenous to two lands (King, 2006). They have cultural connections with African descended people in this hemisphere and they have centuries of uninterrupted occupation in local contexts. In addition, Black Americans have the unique perspective of Alterity and Blues – always looking up from the underside of democracy and not only chronicling historic events, but also leaving record of personal and community experiences preserved in the Blues (Woods, 1998).

Blues cannot be understood independent of the community of Africans in the Black Belt of America (Cone, 1972).⁹

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⁹ All the blues songs actually related back to Africa. . . By knowing about yesterday, how things came along and are still advancing, it can give you a greater idea of what the future could be. This is why the blues represents the past, the present and future. (Dixon 1990).
Blues’ musical, historical, and philosophical roots are West African, Senegambian in particular, where griots publically sang the oral history of their people (Kublik, 1999). Some griots sang in courts, streets, or groups to encourage farmers and other workers by setting rhythm for their tasks” (Palmer, 1981). This oral tradition was forcibly removed during the colonization of the “new world,” where it reemerged in the Mississippi Delta, the crucible of the plantation economy (Palmer, 1981; Woods, 1998).