

## **Annotated Bibliography**

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## **Introduction**

This annotated bibliography will evaluate a cross-section of the sources that will inform the literature review for a doctoral dissertation proposal within the next year. The research question being investigated is: Is Hip Hop Based Education (HHBE), rooted in critical and culturally relevant pedagogy, well suited to address the long-standing achievement gap in Nova Scotia schools? To address the potential applications of Hip Hop Based Education (HHBE) in the Nova Scotia school system, the following sixteen articles and texts will illuminate the value, viability, and established need for HHBE in Nova Scotia, in a manner that emphasises the role of the teacher in successfully employing these practices and the advancement of the field, as a whole.

## **Method**

This annotated bibliography focuses on five key areas that provide a path toward understanding the literature relevant to my research: Methodology, understanding hip hop culture, hip hop as a localized practice, hip hop based education, and the Nova Scotian context. These sources were selected because they represent the extant body of knowledge and/or data and the main points of what will become my dissertation proposal. This curated list is far from complete, but provides a cursory look at the intended arc of my research.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Freire, P. (1981). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.

**Abstract:** First published in Portuguese in 1968, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was translated and published in English in 1970. The methodology of the late Paulo Freire has helped to empower countless impoverished and illiterate people throughout the world. Freire's

work has taken on a special urgency in the United States and Western Europe, where the creation of a permanent underclass among the underprivileged and minorities in cities and urban centers is increasingly accepted as the norm. (Freire, 1981)

Students from marginalized communities, whose scholastic performance falls well below average provincial figures, adhere to Freire's definition of oppression, rendering his seminal work on education as liberatory praxis essential to arguments in favor of adapting HHBE to Nova Scotian educational contexts. Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed, "a pedagogy which must be forged with, not for, the oppressed" (p.48) speaks to the central ideas of HHBE, specifically that hip hop is a language that marginalized students understand and can engage with in ways allowing them to incorporate their own cultural contexts into their studies. In avoiding the banking model of education, HHBE encourages students to play an active role in their own educational liberation, and transcend the institutional biases that have historically disadvantaged them.

Prier, D. (2012). *Culturally relevant teaching: Hip hop pedagogy in urban schools*. New York, NY: Lang.

**Abstract:** *Culturally Relevant Teaching* centers hip-hop culture as a culturally relevant form of critical pedagogy in urban pre-service teacher education programs. In this important book, Darius D. Prier explores how hip-hop artists construct a sense of democratic education and pedagogy with transformative possibilities in their schools and communities. In a postmodern context, students' critical street narratives challenge educators to rethink where 'public education' can happen, and the political and empowering purposes to which Black popular culture can serve social justice ends for youth in urban education. This book provides educational leaders in the academy and public schools with new cultural contexts that connect teaching and learning with music

and popular culture in relation to race, class, gender, culture, and community. (Prier, 2012)

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy encourages educators working in multicultural spaces to be mindful of the diverse cultural identities in their classrooms and to find ways of connecting curriculum content to the cultural contexts and experiences of students. This is particularly effective when seeking to engage learners through a Freireian approach that urges students to be involved in their own liberatory education. As Prier states, “reading and interpreting the sociocultural contexts of hip hop texts are central to understanding new forms of social knowledge produced by urban youth within the subculture” (p. 33). Many young people involved in hip hop culture are already engaging in critical social discourse and combining the aims of culturally relevant pedagogy with HHBE embraces this fact. In recognizing the widespread appeal of hip hop culture among youth, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, culturally relevant pedagogy requires teachers to deal in the lingua franca of their students instead of denying it.

## **UNDERSTANDING HIP HOP CULTURE**

Hip hop is a vibrant culture that grew out of Black and Latino communities New York City during the 1970s, and has subsequently grown into a global phenomenon. Comprised of four elements—MCing (rapping), DJing (manipulating records to create new musical compositions), breaking (dance), and graffiti (visual arts)—and other aspects that include beatboxing (vocal percussion), fashion, music production, slang, theatre, and other modes of cultural production, hip hop plays a major role in 21<sup>st</sup> century popular culture. The culture is also intimately connected to social justice, with many of the elements originating as conflict resolution tools allowing gang-affiliated youth in the Bronx to resolve issues through arts-based competition. The culture’s most visible form, rap music, provides the

soundtrack to the lives of millions of people around the world and has, since its earliest days, been a voice of opposition toward dominant social systems and power structures. Hip hop has been called the most culturally impactful musical form of the last 100 years, surpassing even The Beatles in terms of its measurable influence on subsequent cultural products (Mauch, MacCallum, Levy, and Leroi, 2015).

Despite this, within educational spaces, a lack of familiarity with hip hop culture and its significant figures causes some teachers to avoid HHBE altogether. How can a teacher effectively engage students about hip hop if they don't know who Rakim or Kendrick Lamar are, or if they only understand graffiti in the context of vandalism? Youth who engage with hip hop, in essence, speak a language and share a history that many teachers simply do not understand. Given the breadth of the culture, it's nearly 50-year arc as a popular cultural form, and its influence upon youth around the world, developing a degree of fluency in hip hop is critical for educators. By demonstrating the depths of hip hop's culture and history, and the potency of the debates that exist within hip hop communities, these texts will help to establish a foundational understanding of what hip hop is, and what it can do.

Chang, J. (2005). *Can't stop won't stop: A history of the hip hop generation*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

**Abstract:** Forged in the fires of the Bronx and Kingston, Jamaica, hip-hop became the Esperanto of youth rebellion and a generation-defining movement. In a post-civil rights era defined by deindustrialization and globalization, hip-hop crystallized a multiracial, polycultural generation's worldview, and transformed American politics and culture. But that epic story has never been told with this kind of breadth, insight, and style. Based on original interviews with DJs, b-boys, rappers, graffiti writers, activists, and gang members, with unforgettable portraits of many of hip-hop's forebears, founders, and mavericks,

including DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, Chuck D, and Ice Cube, *Can't Stop Won't Stop* chronicles the events, the ideas, the music, and the art that marked the hip-hop generation's rise from the ashes of the 60's into the new millennium. (Chang, 2005)

Widely considered the preeminent history of the formative years of hip hop culture, Chang's *Can't Stop Won't Stop* traces the social, cultural, economic, and musical factors that led to the emergence of a new youth-driven movement in the 1970s. While I may draw from other sources to articulate the origins of hip hop culture (Charnas, 2010), the clarity that Chang's work brings to the subject makes this text an ideal point of reference for establishing a baseline understanding of the elements that comprise hip hop.

One criticism that Chang has faced, however, is the codification of a narrative that situates DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash as the de facto father figures of the culture, to the exclusion of other relevant figures. While his title, which proclaims itself 'a history' rather than 'the history', serves as an acknowledgement that his narrative is one of many, it does raise an important issue. It is important to draw from multiple sources to develop a realistic understanding of historical events. While it is difficult to encompass the entirety of a historical moment in text, failing to try effectively erases the contributions and identities of individuals or groups who rightly deserve acknowledgement.

Rose, T. (2008). *The hip hop wars*. New York, NY: Basic Civitas.

**Abstract:** Hip-hop is in crisis. For the past dozen years, the most commercially successful hip-hop has become increasingly saturated with caricatures of black gangstas, thugs, pimps, and 'hos. The controversy surrounding hip-hop is worth attending to and examining with a critical eye because, as scholar and cultural critic Tricia Rose argues, "hip-hop has become a primary means by which we talk about race in the United States." In *The Hip-*

*Hop Wars*, Rose explores the most crucial issues underlying the polarized claims on each side of the debate: Does hip-hop cause violence, or merely reflect a violent ghetto culture? Is hip-hop sexist, or are its detractors simply anti-sex? Does the portrayal of black culture in hip-hop undermine black advancement? A potent exploration of a divisive and important subject, *The Hip-Hop Wars* concludes with a call for the regalanization of the progressive and creative heart of hip-hop. What Rose calls for is not a sanitized vision of the form, but one that more accurately reflects a much richer space of culture, politics, anger, and yes, sex, than the current ubiquitous images in sound and video currently provide. (Rose, 2008)

It is not enough to lay out the history of hip hop culture as the sole point of entry into understanding. As a far-ranging culture with social implications that go well beyond its artistic elements, Rose's work evaluates some of the existential questions that have emerged since hip hop's cultural mainstreaming in the late 1990s. In addressing hip hop's relationship to violence, misogyny, homophobia, sexuality, and depictions of blackness, *The Hip Hop Wars* lays bare the routine criticisms and false assumptions that plague the culture in public discourse and demonstrates a level of studious self-awareness within the broader hip hop community that reveals the depths of its cultural impact. In doing so, Rose highlights a key component of the argument in favor of HHBE, that "debates about hip hop stand in for discussion of significant social issues related to race, class, sexism, and black culture," (p. 7) creating opportunities to address these issues in educational spaces using a language and lens familiar to youth.

While these arguments remain vital in the field of Hip Hop Studies, it is also important to recognize that a decade has passed since *The Hip Hop Wars* was published and hip hop's cultural landscape has changed dramatically. It will be important to elaborate upon the ways in which Rose's work does or does not reflect contemporary issues, though it is fair to say that race, class, sexism, and black culture remain significant social concerns.

## **HIP HOP AS A LOCALIZED PRACTICE**

One of the cardinal rules of hip hop cultural production is related to representation. Regardless of the medium, practitioners speak to their own identity and their own social and geographic context. It would be incongruous for a Halifax-based MC, for example, to rhyme about the day to day struggles of youth living in impoverished corners of New York City. Instead, hip hop encourages artists to focus on their own surroundings and the social issues relevant to who they are and where they are from. This localized emphasis has become increasingly significant as hip hop culture has globalized. Using a foundational template that roughly defines how hip hop art is created, practitioners around the world have applied their own language, cultural heritage, politics, and artistic traditions to the form, generating work that is both familiar and unique. By drawing upon this aspect of hip hop culture, and learning from the experiences of international communities, HHBE can be adapted and meaningfully employed in a wide variety of contexts, including the Nova Scotian education system.

Alim, H., Ibrahim, A., & Pennycook, A. (2010). *Global linguistic flows: Hip hop cultures, youth identities, and the politics of language*. New York, NY: Routledge

**Abstract:** Located at the intersection of sociolinguistics and Hip Hop Studies, this cutting-edge book moves around the world – spanning Africa, Asia, Australia, the Americas and the European Union – to explore Hip Hop cultures, youth identities, the politics of language, and the simultaneous processes of globalization and localization. Focusing closely on language, these scholars of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, cultural studies, and critical pedagogies offer linguistic insights to the growing scholarship on Hip Hop

Culture, while reorienting their respective fields by paying closer attention to processes of globalization and localization. The book engages complex processes such as transnationalism, (im)migration, cultural flow, and diaspora in an effort to expand current theoretical approaches to language choice and agency, speech style and stylization, codeswitching and language mixing, crossing and sociolinguistic variation, and language use and globalization. Moving throughout the Global Hip Hop Nation, through scenes as diverse as Hong Kong's urban center, Germany's Mannheim inner-city district of Weststadt, the Brazilian favelas, the streets of Lagos and Dar es Salaam, and the hoods of the San Francisco Bay Area, this global intellectual cipa breaks new ground in the ethnographic study of language and popular culture. (Alim, 2010)

While mainstream rap music in North America tends to be geographically rooted in the East Coast (New York City), the West Coast (Los Angeles), or The South (Atlanta), it is important to recognize that hip hop culture is thriving in cities all over the world. Far from mimicking the sounds and styles of North American artists, these hip hop practitioners have fused the elements of hip hop with their own identities and traditions. Following up on earlier studies into international hip hop (Mitchell, 2001; Bertot, 2014) Alim, Ibrahim, and Pennycook have assembled a collection of detailed ethnographic studies focusing on "hip hop cultures, youth identities, the politics of language, and the simultaneous processes of globalization and localization" (p.4) in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, and North America to highlight how hip hop forms an incredibly diverse transnational network with localized characteristics built around globalized modes of expression. In examining how hip hop has been adapted and remixed in each of these contexts, there are lessons to be learned about how hip hop functions in unique conditions and how it might be applied in Nova Scotia.

It will be important to remember that the flexibility that allows hip hop culture to be replicated in different contexts has limitations. Simply because something works in one context does not mean that it will work in another. Identifying the historical, demographic, and linguistic character of a given region is important in understanding how hip hop culture functions in that context and how to apply HHBE effectively.

Porfilio, B., & Viola, M. (2012). *Hip-hop(e): The cultural practice and critical pedagogy of international hip hop*. New York, NY: P. Lang.

**Abstract:** Illuminating hip-hop as an important cultural practice and a global social movement, this collaborative project highlights the emancipatory messages and cultural work generated by the organic intellectuals of global hip-hop. Contributors describe the social realities – globalization, migration, poverty, criminalization, and racism – youth are resisting through what we recognize as a decolonial cultural politic. The book contributes to current scholarship in multicultural education, seeking to understand the vilification of youth (of color) for the social problems created by a global system that benefits a small minority. In an age of corporate globalization, *Hip-Hop(e)* highlights the importance of research projects that link the production of educational scholarship with the cultural activities, everyday practice, and social concerns of global youth in order to ameliorate social, economic, and political problems that transcend national boundaries. (Porfilio and Viola, 2012)

While Alim, et al., have focused on the ways that hip hop culture has been transplanted and reimagined in various international contexts, Porfilio and Viola have curated a collection of qualitative research papers that situate HHBE projects in similarly international contexts within a Freireian framework.

Arguing that “racialized youth from the ghettos of Western Europe, the occupied territories of the Middle East, the shantytowns of Southeast Asia, and the favelas of Latin America have utilized hip hop as their own unique counterspace to explore possibilities for critical inquiry, sites of historical reclamation, as well as avenues that nurture an emancipatory imagination” (p.6), this collection offers a wealth of examples of liberatory HHBE in practice. In centering critical pedagogy and HHBE research, *Hip Hop(e)* is an invaluable resource for establishing the value of hip hop in educational spaces.

Forman, M. (2002). *The 'hood comes first: Race, space, and place in rap and hip hop*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

**Abstract:** The 'Hood Comes First looks at the increasingly specific emphasis on real neighborhoods and streets in rap music and hip hop culture as an urgent response to the cultural and geographical ghettoization of black urban communities. Examining rap music, along with ancillary hip hop media including radio, music videos, rap press and the cinematic 'hood genre, Murray Forman analyzes hip hop culture's varying articulations of the terms "ghetto," "inner-city," and "the 'hood," and how these spaces, both real and imaginary, are used to define individual and collective identity. Negotiating academic, corporate, and "street" discourses, Forman assesses the dynamics between race, social space and youth. Race, class and national identification are recast and revised within rap's spatial discourse, concluding with the construction of 'the 'hood'; a social and geographic symbol that has become central to concepts of hip hop authenticity. Additionally, the book analyzes the processes within the music and culture industries through which hip hop has been amplified and disseminated from the 'hood to international audiences.

(Forman, 2002)

Forman's application of spatial analysis to hip hop presents a strong argument for the idea that hip hop culture is fundamentally concerned with, among other things, space. How particular spaces define identity, how spaces define and reinforce power dynamics, and how claiming or reclaiming previously denied spaces is an act of social agency are central to understanding hip hop's localized nature. As Forman states, "Hip hop developed and expanded outward as its impact and influence were circulated onto the regional and national scales, yet as young people throughout the nation (and the world) encountered hip hop in all its forms, they quickly adapted it to their own localized patterns and practices, reinventing hip hop according to entirely contingent and locally relevant logics" (p. 24). In referencing Forman's work, the complex connection between hip hop culture and its specific localized expressions can be established.

## **HIP HOP BASED EDUCATION**

Hip Hop Based Education is a significant aspect of broader Hip Hop Studies. Named by hip hop scholar Marc Lamont Hill to describe his use of hip hop culture in classroom settings, HHBE has grown into its own philosophy of education, equally informed by Freire's liberatory pedagogy (1981), culturally relevant pedagogy (Prier, 2012), and the elements-based practices of hip hop itself. As HHBE began to spread throughout the urban centres of North America, "scholars have shown how the elements of hip hop culture—rap music, turntablism, break dancing, graffiti culture, fashion, and language—can be used within classrooms to improve student motivation, teach critical media literacy, foster critical consciousness, and transmit disciplinary knowledge" (Hill, 2009, p. 2). As more and more scholars and educators take on HHBE, whether theoretically or in practice, and as it manifests itself in unique ways wherever it is applied, a growing body of knowledge is emerging that speaks to the broad potential for HHBE anywhere that youth are engaging with hip hop culture. As previously stated, what works in one

context may not necessarily work in another, but these sources provide documentation of both successes and failures in applying HHBE to classroom settings that is nevertheless invaluable.

Hill, M. (2009). *Beats, rhymes, and classroom life: Hip hop pedagogy and the politics of identity*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

**Abstract:** For over a decade, educators have looked to capitalize on the appeal of hip-hop culture, sampling its language, techniques, and styles as a way of reaching out to students. But beyond a fashionable hipness, what does hip-hop have to offer our schools? In this revelatory new book, Marc Lamont Hill shows how a serious engagement with hip-hop culture can affect classroom life in extraordinary ways. Based on his experience teaching a hip-hop-centered English literature course in a Philadelphia high school, and drawing from a range of theories on youth culture, identity, and educational processes, Hill offers a compelling case for the power of hip-hop in the classroom. In addition to driving up attendance and test performance, Hill shows how hip-hop based educational settings enable students and teachers to renegotiate their classroom identities in complex, contradictory, and often unpredictable ways. (Hill, 2009)

Among the first to identify their pedagogical practices as HHBE (and, in fact, the first to formally apply that label), Hill's analysis of a hip hop based English literature course showcases how hip hop's primary pop culture product—rap music—can provide the basis for textual analysis and composition in a way that engages students' own cultural identities and experiences. Far from theoretical, Hill's research has the benefit of practical application, allowing the successes and failures of implementation to be recorded and addressed as the course progressed. Further, this text will assist in illustrating the development of HHBE, its efficacy in English classrooms, and the areas that Hill identifies as requiring further research.

Mooney, B. (2016). *Breakbeat pedagogy: Hip hop and spoken word beyond the classroom walls*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

**Abstract:** Breakbeat Pedagogy provides a groundbreaking framework for the inclusion of Hip Hop culture in schools. Working from the perspective of a classroom teacher, Mooney reflects on the story of *Word Up*, a Hip Hop and spoken word poetry event that began with students in a New Jersey high school, making the case for a pedagogy with the potential to transform urban schools and the way we think about them. This is essential reading for any teacher committed to social justice and culturally responsive education. (Mooney, 2016)

This case study follows Mooney's oversight of student-led hip hop and spoken word poetry clubs whose popularity grew to the point that they became large-scale events showcasing student talents for the entire school. Where Hill (2009) focuses on textual interpretation in English classes, Mooney examines the facilitation of content creation, working with students to develop their own raps and poems for performance. Dubbed Breakbeat Pedagogy, working with students toward performances within clubs or in school assemblies "breaks from what Freire calls 'the banking model of education' in a radical way [by positioning] the student as curator, presenter, teacher, storyteller, director, lecturer, organizer, and planner" (Mooney, 2016, p.54). The focus on creating original works and presenting or performing them is an important aspect of HHBE and helps to establish that it is not a unidirectional process of analysing existing materials. Instead, encouraging students to produce their own hip hop works, having educators participate by creating their own works, and doing so in a collaborative fashion (sharing drafts, editing),

creates opportunities to discuss the themes and issues that students choose to address, situating Breakbeat Pedagogy within the Freireian model of student-directed education.

O'Connor, C. (2016). *A hip hop pedagogy: Effective teacher training for the millennial generation*. Lexington, KY: Ubiquitous Press.

**Abstract:** Studies have found that millennials are greatly influenced by mass media such as films, music and hip hop culture which serve a function in identity formation, lifestyle choices, and perspectives on critical areas of their lives. For many students, especially minority urban youth, hip hop texts serve as a basis for the formation of notions of self within and outside of formal educational spaces. An important shift in the focus of teacher training discussions is the move toward a willingness to make inquiry student-focused, rather than predominantly teacher-focused. In addition to the political and legal mandates imposed by No Child Left Behind legislation, there is a moral imperative to investigate and develop ways to best meet the needs of all students, especially those most in danger of truly being left behind. In 'A Hip Hop Pedagogy: Effective Teacher Training for the Millennial Generation,' Dr. Carol A. O'Connor explores factors contributing to the enhancement of teacher preparedness and provides answers to the questions... How does formal teacher training prepare teachers to meet students' needs? How does experiential training affect teacher preparedness? How do the characteristics of students from diverse backgrounds impact teacher preparedness? What recommendations do teachers propose to inform practice and enhance preparedness? The significance of Dr. O'Connor's timely study lies in its likely contributions to policy, practice, and the amelioration of the harmful neglect of student

needs. It also may result in the refinement of existing theories of learning, the generation of new theories, and may serve as a starting point for additional research in these areas. These contributions to the body of knowledge are expected to occur within a current societal context where greater accountability for performance and achievement is expected of students, teachers, and administrators. (O'Connor, 2016)

While many of the texts related to HHBE elaborate upon some of the ways in which teachers have been resistant to the adoption of hip hop pedagogy, few confront the issue as directly as O'Connor's qualitative study into teacher preparedness. Hip hop emerged as a by-product of the research, with O'Connor noting that, "a theme that occurred regularly in the data was the efficacy of utilizing hip hop culture to engage students through building on their prior knowledge and constructing lessons that students perceived as relevant to their own lives." (p. 11) Pursuing this revelation, O'Connor also finds that "most teachers recommended the inclusion of hip hop awareness as an element of formal teacher training programs." (p. 12) The text itself is, perhaps, not as well known as some other canonical works on HHBE, but the focus on reception among teachers and the rigorous research that underscores the work make it an invaluable source for understanding the obstacles to implementation that exist, and some of the arguments that have been made to challenge them.

Akom, A. (2009). Critical hip hop pedagogy as a form of liberatory praxis. *Equity & Excellence In Education*, 42(1), 52-66.

**Abstract:** This article uses Paulo Freire's problem-posing method, youth participatory action research, and case study methodology to introduce an alternative instructional strategy called Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy. This approach attempts to address deep-rooted

ideologies to social inequities by creating a space in teacher education courses for prospective teachers to re-examine their knowledge of hip hop as it intersects with race, class, gender, and sexual orientation; while analyzing and theorizing to what extent hip hop can be used as a tool for social justice in teacher education and beyond. Borrowing and extending the work of critical race theorists, particularly, Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, CHHP utilizes the following five elements to form its basic core: “1) The centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of oppression; 2) Challenging traditional paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color; 3) The centrality of experiential knowledge of students of color; 4) The commitment to social justice; and finally 5) A transdisciplinary approach” (Solórzano, D. G. & Delgado Bernal, D. 2001, pp. 312-315).

Akom’s connection of hip hop pedagogy to Freire’s liberatory model of education underscores the methodological approach that will be used to demonstrate the potential value of HHBE in Nova Scotian educational contexts. Further, the development of a new way of situating HHBE, as Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy (CHHP), highlights hip hop’s ability to address a multitude of contemporary social issues. For example, Akom argues that, “through engagement in real world issues that shape their daily lives such as environmental racism, police brutality, school safety, school closure, tracking, and racial profiling, youth learn to move past victimization and confront unjust social and economic conditions” (p. 6). This article will provide a key insight into the subject of HHBE, showing that, rather than simply bringing popular music into classrooms, HHBE or CHHP are educational models connected to established pedagogical practices.

Hill, M. & Petchauer, E. (2014). *Schooling hip-hop*. Teachers College Press.

**Abstract:** This book brings together veteran and emerging scholars from a variety of fields to chart new territory for hip-hop based education. Looking beyond rap music and the English language arts classroom, innovative chapters unpack the theory and practice of hip-hop based education in science, social studies, college composition, teacher education, and other fields. Authors consider not only the curricular aspects of hip-hop but also how its deeper aesthetics such as improvisational freestyling and competitive battling can shape teaching and learning in both secondary and higher education classrooms. *Schooling Hip-Hop* will spark new and creative uses of hip-hop culture in a variety of educational settings. (Hill, 2014)

Two leading HHBE scholars, Hill and Petchauer, have assembled this collection of articles to demonstrate how HHBE has evolved beyond language based applications into STEM fields, humanities, and teacher training, making it a broadly applicable methodological philosophy of education. Further, they point to this traceable evolution as a roadmap for expansion in three critical areas: “First, HHBE scholarship must locate and engage in a wider range of hip hop cultural production. . . . Second, HHBE must embrace a wider range of disciplinary locations. . . . Third, HHBE scholars must move beyond teacher-researcher accounts in urban schools” (Hill and Petchauer, 2014, p. 2-3). These gaps in existing HHBE literature indicate the outer limits of the field, establishing what is known and what is not known at the time of its publication. This is a valuable resource for the literature review and the research question, itself, as provides direction toward the creation of new knowledge.

## THE NOVA SCOTIAN CONTEXT

Central to the research question being posed is the potential for HHBE in Nova Scotia. It has been implemented successfully around the globe (Porfilio & Viola, 2012; Alim, Ibrahim, & Pennycook, 2010), and in Canada (San Vicente, 2014; MacDonald, 2016), but has not been formally adopted in the Maritime provinces. By incorporating a diverse selection of sources, a case will be made for the viability of HHBE in the Nova Scotia school system. Specifically, Department of Education reports have, for years, indicated that African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal students are less likely to meet provincial averages in reading, writing, and mathematics (BLAC, 1994; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016), suggesting that there is a need for alternative pedagogical approaches. Nova Scotia is also home to a vibrant and diverse hip hop community that has flourished since the mid-1980s, and a larger music scene that the provincial government has recently committed itself to supporting in ways that include music education. This section will outline some of the sources that will comprise the Nova Scotian portion of the overall argument.

Black Learners Advisory Committee. (1994). *BLAC Report on Education: Redressing inequity – empowering Black learners*. Halifax, Canada: Black Learners Advisory Committee.

No abstract available.

The BLAC report is a foundational document that identified obstacles to African Nova Scotian students within the education system during the 1990s. Though dated, this report formed the basis of a decades-long effort to address structural inequities and what is called the achievement gap (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). The fact that marginalized students underperform relative to provincial averages is not a recent revelation, as this document shows. The BLAC report called for “an education

system which is equitable, accessible, inclusive for all learners by the year 2001” (p.14), a goal which has yet to be met in 2017. The achievement gap in Nova Scotia is a decades old issue that has not been adequately addressed. The BLAC report will be included to show specific areas that have been identified as needing better support, and how HHBE is, perhaps, well suited to respond to these needs. A number of follow-up reports have been generated in direct response to the BLAC Report on Education, as recently as 2016, and will be included in the literature review.

Nova Scotia Department of Education. (2016). *Nova Scotia assessments results for students with Aboriginal heritage and students of African descent*. Halifax, Canada: Nova Scotia Department of Education.

No abstract available.

This report, issued by the Nova Scotia Department of Education, offers disaggregated data on the percentage of students of African or Aboriginal heritage at or above expected provincial averages in reading (grades 3, 6, and 8), writing (grades 3, 6, and 8), and mathematics (grades 3, 6, and 8). By incorporating data from the 2013/2014, 2014/2015, and 2015/2016 school years, it is possible to discern several downward trends that reveal a growing disparity between African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal students and the overall student body. Per the report, “the results provide teachers with information to inform instructional planning; parents and guardians with information on their child’s performance; the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and school boards with information to inform educational decisions” (p. 1). The inclusion of this data in a literature review provides tangible evidence of the need to adopt new educational strategies that address and correct these problems.

Later provincial reports and assessments, not included here in the interest of brevity, specifically cite this report in their calls for the development of culturally responsive educational practices.

McGuire, M. (2011). *How the east coast rocks: A history of hip hop in Halifax, 1985-1998* (MA Thesis). Halifax, Canada: Dalhousie University.

**Abstract:** Between 1985 and 1997 a hip hop culture emerged in Halifax, Nova Scotia through rap music artists' live performances at various venues, and by releasing original music on commercial and non-commercial cassette tapes and compact discs. This thesis examines the evolution of this grassroots musical culture through the lenses of Halifax's geography, innovative musical and technological trends, ever-present racial politics, and a strong "do-it-yourself" ethic. This thesis argues that hip hop in Halifax during these years can be divided into two eras distinguished by dynamic racial and stylistic changes. While the 1980s saw a predominantly Black hip hop community take root around Uniacke Square and Gottingen Street, the 1990s saw a geographic and demographic shift as the rap music scene expanded and competed with the mainstream music scene of the city. In doing so, the integrated downtown hip hop community produced a significant amount of work, overcoming institutional opposition to what was perceived as Black music and navigating long-standing racial politics. Where no institutional support was offered, the hip hop culture in Halifax grew on the strength of its own community networks, and through the technological means that created a physical record of its creative output. This thesis chronicles this historical period to capture the beginnings of a cultural phenomenon of the musical interest and experience of inner city youth - rap music in Halifax.

The inclusion of my own Master's thesis on the history of hip hop in Halifax serves two purposes. First, it is the only in-depth analysis of hip hop culture in the province, to date, and contains valuable insight into the ways that locally produced hip hop music reflects and negotiates race, class, and gender issues in a Nova Scotian context. Secondly, it illustrates how hip hop's localized nature generates culturally relevant content, which will support the argument that Nova Scotian youth already engage with hip hop culture and that it therefore constitutes a valid and demonstrable path toward the creation of culturally relevant pedagogical practices.

East Coast Music Association. (2016). *Striking a new a-chord: Recommendations for the growth & development of Canada's east coast music industry*. Halifax, Canada: East Coast Music Association.

No abstract available.

While this report does not come from educational circles, it nevertheless calls for the creation and maintenance of a music-focused arts strategy to foster and support the diverse musical community in Nova Scotia. Created in consultation with provincial music organizations throughout the Maritimes, *Striking a New A-Chord* seeks to invigorate both culture and commerce by changing the way the music industry operates on a domestic scale. Part of this strategy is a reconsideration of the role of arts education, which calls for, "each Provincial Ministry of Education [to] identify gaps in access to quality music education at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary level; each provincial Ministry of Education [to] form a collaborative task force to identify strategies to increase access to quality music education. This should include music educators, music industry professionals, artists, current students and recent graduates. Industry Associations should partner with provincial Ministries of Education to identify various experiential learning opportunities for youth" (East Coast Music Association, p. 53-54).

One possible response would be the inclusion of hip hop in music education curricula, but HHBE literature argues that hip hop can be applied across all subject areas, albeit in different ways. Further, HHBE is well suited to foster literacy in media, technology, and the arts (Hill, 2009; Mooney, 2016; Akom, 2009). Including this report in the literature review demonstrates how HHBE can contribute to achieving stated provincial goals in both education and culture sectors.

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