CAPOEIRA AND HIP HOP IN NORTHEAST BRAZIL: RESISTANCE TO INEQUALITY

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ABSTRACT

In my MA thesis I argue that engagement in Capoeira and Hip Hop by Afro-Indigenous youth and community members in NorthEast Brazil ruptures their historically unequal status and enacts collective social change. My thesis is grounded on two programs I co-founded, "Capoeira for Street Kids" (Canada and Brazil) and "Hip Hop Rescues Kids" (Brazil). Both programs I co-created in 2005 with street involved and homeless kids and youth in Brazil. Both are unique forms of decolonizing research methodology and practice focused on healing from an Afro-Indigenous Brazilian worldview. The programs covers street health, harm reduction and community outreach with homeless and street involved people. This work is collaborative with communities with a history of diverse challenges including: poverty, homelessness, violence and addictions/mental health.

My MA thesis, "Capoeira and Hip Hop in NorthEast Brazil: Resistance to Inequality", archival and fieldwork research addresses the following two overarching questions. First, can community organizing, as expressed through popular culture and art, transform basic material conditions, including human rights, democracy, and citizenship?And second, how do expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop positively contribute to the lives of poor and extremely poor people and their neighbourhoods, by assisting them to gain better access to i) basic services (adequate shelter, clean water, food, health care), ii) employment, and iii) education?

In Chapter Two, "Violence, Heartbreak and Feminism: Capoeira as a Movement for Social Justice in NorthEast Brazil", I examine the Afro-Indigenous Brazilian artform of Capoeira (martial art) as a form of cultural activism that critically engages repressive state narratives and practices that reproduce class, gender and racial inequality in contemporary Brazil. Voices of street involved and homeless children and youth resonate, as they express their engagement in Capoeira as a grassroots movement for social justice. Through marginalized youth's participation in Capoeira as a form of social justice, human

rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil are transformed. First, I investigate and explore how youth engage in cultural activism through Capoeira as a catalyst for a more inclusive democracy in Brazil.-Marginalized young people in the cities of Recife and Igarassu, in Pernambuco, Brazil, are challenging extreme historical inequality with the state. Second, I reveal that through participation in Capoeira, marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife are improving their access to basic services (adequate shelter, food), employment and education.

Chapter Three of my thesis, "Peaceful Protest, Police Brutality and Feminist Spaces: Hip Hop Artist Activists Transforming Brazil"continues many themes from Chapter Two. First, I explore how the intersections of race, gender and class are impacting collective organizing within communities and the significance for political and social transformation, specifically for freedom from violence and improving basic material conditions. In the urban area of Recife, many communities are ravaged by economic poverty, gun violence, drug trafficking and crime. Second, I demonstrate through fieldwork case studies that Hip Hop in Recife provides the opportunity to transform the lives of street involved and homeless youth, rescuing them from a life of crime and drugs.

From a methodological perspective my MA thesis is cultural resistance to inequality. Chapters Two and Three are grounded in the feminist post colonial theories of Gloria Anzaldua (Keating, 2000), Evelina Dagnino (Dagnino 1998, 2005), Christina Sharpe (Sharpe, 2010), Marilena Chaui (Chaui, 2011) , Himani Bannerji (Bannerji, 1995; 2001; 2011), Benedita Da Silva (Da Silva, 1999), and Marie Battiste (Battiste, 2004) to examine subject formation, cultural citizenship and how cultural artforms challenge deeply ingrained state violence rooted in a history of colonization and slavery. Foundational to my analysis is my 2014 fieldwork, of over forty interviews and archival research in the state of Pernambuco, NorthEast Brazil.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my MA Thesis to Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas. With profound gratitude for your

endless patience, affection and intelligence. I love you from here to the moon and back.

through the *Prêmio Cultura Hip Hop 2014* (Cultural Award in Hip Hop) in recognition of the incredible work of Leandro "Passoca" Freitas. For the over forty people who I was blessed to interview in Brazil for my fieldwork, a profound gratitude for so generously sharing your time, knowledge and love with me. Without your cultural activism, this thesis would not exist. To family and friends, Saturday dance classes, late night chats and hot cups of tea provided invaluable physical and spiritual refuges. Finally, none of this work would be possible without the unconditional love and affection of my sweet cat Susie in Toronto, who went from being abandoned in Kensington Market to Queen of my heart, and my beloved animals in Brazil: *Raposa* the giant rescue dog who insisted on following us home; Lucky the kitten that miraculously survived; Chicky the tiny kitten saved from a busy road; and *Bola de Neve* the now beautiful and powerful snow white cat found as a sickly newborn discarded in a box, your warm cuddles and purrs have made the solitary pursuit of writing much more joyous.

I have been transformed by the last ten years of living in Brazil and Canada. I will always remember one night in Olinda, Pernambuco, Brazil. It was long after the weekly festival had ended, the *Maracatu*[1] drummers were packing their instruments, the Capoeira *Roda*[2] was a distant memory of sweaty energy and people were slowly dispersing down the steep hillside off into the velvety darkness. I was sitting on a low stone ledge that surrounded giant palm trees and thinking about the festive atmosphere, rhythmic live music and salty hot breezes. Small Afro-Brazilian children were efficiently crushing beer cans with speed and agility, putting the remains into rough burlap sacks. These silver vessels would be exchanged for a small pittance at the recycling depot in the centre of the city the following morning.

Next to me were two large plastic garbage cans, overflowing from the night of take out food stalls that lined the hillto Crouched next to the cans was a beautiful long-haired boy, perhaps 8 or 9 years old whom I had seen many times before. His long hair was bleached blonde from the sun and matted in

tangles, his t shirt, a murky grayish colour had a long rip along one side. The object of his attention was a discarded tin of condensed milk he had rescued from the trash. He was sweeping his finger along the contours of the can, ravenously licking every last drop of the sticky sweet contents. But suddenly he was not alone anymore. An older man, with a heavy German accent was sitting too close to him. His bulging stomach hung over his too tight shorts, balding pink scalp was covered in a fringe of thin white hair and he stank of c*achaça*, Brazilian sugar can liquor. His hands were climbing up the small thin boys thighs. I felt alternately repulsed, disgusted and outraged. I stood up quickly, without thinking and placed myself directly in front of the older man. I just stared at him. With a look of rage and desperation he practically ran in the opposite direction. The boy hesitantly extended his slim arm and slipped his still sticky fingers between mine. As his eyes darted quickly side to side, I instantly saw myself reflected in this child, in the vulnerability of poverty and sexual exploitation. My deep desire and motivation, to work with marginalized young people for social change, stems from my own experiences. This sentiment was echoed by the majority of my fieldwork interviews. My commitment to street involved and homeless children and youth is because I carry my own memories of trauma.

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Chapter 1
Capoeira and Hip Hop in NorthEast Brazil: Resistance to Inequality

This chapter is dedicated to all the young girls and women I have had honour to work with. You are rays of sunshine on the darkest days.

Academic scholarship has diverse interpretations of how to understand the roots of inequality. Often when striving to explain collective experiences, research has devoted considerable attention to individual agency while obscuring complex interactions of race, class, gender and power. Labels of "marginal" or "subaltern" are used to denote those who are struggling on the edges of society, in poverty and extreme poverty, often portrayed as without hope for the future. Unfortunately, mainstream academics' analyses of community despair is often framed with an Eurocentric perspective on what constitutes success and failure, which is rarely applicable in other cultural contexts. Challenging issues of representation, questioning the perspective of the author and examining theoretical groundings are tools to further examine constructions of knowledge and inequality.

In my thesis I argue that engagement in Capoeira and Hip Hop by Afro-Indigenous[3] youth and community members in NorthEast Brazil ruptures their historically unequal status and enacts collective social change. My archival and fieldwork research strives to address the following two overarching questions. First, can community organizing, as expressed through popular culture and art, transform basic material conditions, including human rights, democracy, and citizenship? And second, how do expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop positively contribute to the lives of poor and extremely poor people and their neighbourhoods, by assisting them to gain better access to i) basic services (adequate shelter, clean water, food, health care), ii) employment, and iii) education?

This thesis examines the art forms of Capoeira (Afro-Diasporic martial art) and Hip Hop as sites of cultural activism that critically examine state narratives that reproduce class, gender and racial inequality in contemporary Brazil. I document street involved and homeless children and youth's engage-

ment in Capoeira and Hip Hop as grassroots movements for social justice that is transforming human rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil. First, I document and analyze how youth engage in cultural activism and are effecting positive change in their communities working towards a more inclusive democracy in Brazil. I argue that both Capoeira and Hip Hop are catalysts for collective social change. Marginalized young people in the cities of Recife and neighbouring city of Igarassu, in Pernambuco, Brazil, are rupturing deep historical inequality with the state. Second, I demonstrate that through participation in Capoeira and Hip Hop, marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife are gaining better access to basic services (adequate shelter, food), employment and education.

My research topic is of vital importance because it demonstrates how grassroots social change in civil society is impacting central areas of the Social Sciences academically and the struggle for equality on the ground. My research addresses various topics relevant to the broad Social Sciences including: the study of inequality, poverty, health, representation, identity, empowerment, civil society, Brazilian politics, and indigenous rights. These areas require greater focus as global wealth disparities are looming larger, and increasing inequality within nations is spiralling out of control. The case of Brazil is particularly troubling as it is simultaneously a member of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), as an emerging economic power and yet the majority of the population live on a minimum wage of less that $350/month (in Canadian dollars). This paradox is discussed in detail in this thesis as a form of systemic violence and institutionalized oppression. This is not unique to Brazil, but has international implications as wealth distribution is structurally unequal in nations around the world. The conclusion of this thesis looks towards a transnational approach for further research, to draw comparisons globally regarding how racialized gendered vulnerabilities, state violence, and grassroots cultural activism struggles for equality are produced transnationally.

My research documents how marginalized young people are challenging the post-colonial context of vastly unequal access to food, housing, health care and education; police brutality and drug traffickers' violence; and the lack of ability to exercise political rights in Brazil. I seek to discover how the intersections of race, gender and class are impacting collective organizing within communities and what this means for political and social transformation, specifically for freedom from violence. In many neighbourhoods in Recife, daily life is circumscribed by economic poverty and violence. I argue that young Afro-Indigenous people are engaging in Capoeira and Hip Hop as a tool for social change and are influencing the Social Determinants of Health of their communities. Second, I demonstrate, through fieldwork case studies, that Capoeira and Hip Hop in Recife provides life changing opportunities for marginalized youth, providing alternatives to crime and drugs as the only source of income in impoverished communities.

(a) Social Determinants of Health

Social Determinants of Health were developed by WHO (World Health Organization) in 2005. The Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Portal of Best Practices defines the Social Determinants of Health as influencing the health of populations:

> They include income and social status; social support networks; education; employment/working conditions; social environments; physical environments; personal health practices and coping skills; healthy child development; gender; and culture (Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Portal of Best Practices, 2015, website)

An important connection to Brazil is that WHO had a global conference on 19-21 October 2011 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to build support for the implementation of action on the Social Determinants of Health. The Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health was adopted during the World Conference on Social Determinants of Health on October 21 2011. The declaration expresses global political commitment for the implementation of a Social Determinants of Health approach which seeks to reduce health inequities (WHO, 2014, website).

As noted by Louise Warwick-Booth, Ruth Cross and Diane Lowcock (2012) the WHO has been criticized for as being Eurocentric, overly idealistic and unattainable (Lucas and Lloyd, 2005). Much criticism has been generated regarding the WHO definition of health. The WHO states health is, "A state of complete physical, mental and social well- being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity" (WHO, 2014, website). This is problematic because according to this definition is it possible for anyone to be completely healthy? There is also a stark lack of other dimensions of health that are not considered in this definition such as sexual, emotional and spiritual health. (Ewles and Simnett, 2003). Health is a complex and contested area of investigation with diverse definitions, but remains a vital component of social justice.

Brazil has played a central policy role in the Social Determinants of Health. Filho and Vettore (2011) provide evidence of Brazil's role as an early policy pioneer, creating the Brazilian National Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CNDSS) which seeks to further the Brazilian health movement to deepen knowledge on the relations between socioeconomic determinants and health status and to promote concrete actions based on such knowledge (Filho and Vettore, 2011). The Brazilian example is challenging because although much policy work has provided a fertile source of knowledge construction and dissemination, the reality is that Brazil is a country of stark and shocking disparity. There are vast gaps in access to basic medical services, the majority of the population live in extreme poverty and experience chronic daily hunger. Thus, my research seeks to utilize the theoretical framework of the Social Determinants of Health while acknowledging the paradoxical fact that the majority of Brazilians live in startling poverty and gross inequality.

(b) Life Changing Opportunities

During my fieldwork interviews, many youth expressed that through the culture and education of Capoeira and Hip Hop their lives were transformed from poverty, drugs and violence to positive oppor-

tunities, knowledge, skill building and community organizing to improve basic material conditions. The connection between Capoeira and Hip Hop, human rights and greater social equality was emphasized by many of my fieldwork interviews. The histories of both Afro-Diasporic art forms are cited as opening dialogue in society regarding greater social equality for marginalized Afro-Brazilians as creators of culture, art and national heritage.

The life changing opportunities that improve basic material conditions tie directly into the Social Determinants of Health including: increasing income and social status through employment as Capoeira and/or Hip Hop teachers of classes and workshops, performing, and traveling; improving social support networks by meeting diverse people at classes and performances; providing opportunities to become educated in Afro-Indigenous history through Capoeira and Hip Hop and returning to formal studies; access to safer social and physical environments through Capoeira and Hip Hop, moving to a more tranquil neighbourhood, making basic improvements to their dwellings; greater sense of self-esteem and willingness to practice self-care; increased access to quality health care and medicine; empowerment of young girls and women in Capoeira and Hip Hop; greater opportunities for young children to be a part of communities that promote peace through Capoeira and Hip Hop; transforming aspects of discrimination against women in the arts and more broadly society; and, valourizing marginalized knowledges as integral parts of Brazilian culture.

Section One
Capoeira in NorthEast Brazil: Afro-Indigenous Resistance to Oppression

Capoeira is a Brazilian Afro-Indigenous martial art, with elements of dance and gymnastic movement vocabulary, performed via specific music forms (e.g. singing in Brazilian Portuguese, Afro-Indigenous musical instruments) (Almeida, 1986; Capoeira, 2003, 2006). Capoeira was developed by diverse enslaved peoples, of African and Indigenous heritage and Portuguese indentured labourers in Brazil during slavery, approximately 500 years ago (Ibid). Currently, Brazilian teachers of Capoeira are

found in many countries around the world (Stephens and Delamont, 2010; Joseph, 2008 a; Joseph 2008 b).   There is much excellent scholarship on the history of Capoeira as a culturally specific form of resistance to state oppression rooted in colonialism, slavery and authoritarian regimes in Brazil (Almeida, 1986; Capoeira, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Taylor, 2007; Talmon-Chvaicer, 2008; Drybread, 2009). Capoeira was successfully used by slaves to escape from their oppressive conditions and form free slave communities, known as *quilombos*, throughout Brazil (Capoeira 2002, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Joseph, 2008; Taylor, 2007; Wesolowski, 2012; Wilson, 2010).

(a) Capoeira: The Roots of Hip Hop?

The first known Capoeira *Mestre* (Master teacher) in North America during the 1970s, is often cited by the Capoeira community, as the originator of contemporary Hip Hop (Almeida, 1986; Capoeira 2002, 2003, 2006). However, there is considerable debate regarding the link between Capoeira and Hip Hop (Ibid; Pardue, 2012; Lee, 2008; Downey, 2000; Taylor, 2007; Neate 2007; Pardue 2012). Hip Hop is a genre that is comprised of rapping/*MCing*[4], breakdancing, graffiti art and DJing[5]. North American Hip Hop, and increasingly Capoeira, have become major commercial forms of entertainment that many youth from inner city communities, have used to successfully seek fame as professional artists. It is important to clarify that Capoeira is not a dance. Capoeira is an Afro-Diasporic multi-dimension martial art with aspects of dance, music and self-defence. Hip Hop is comprised of four main elements and many practitioners focus on one or more aspects of: rapping/MCing, DJing, breakdance and graffiti (please see endnotes 3 and 4 explaining Hip Hop). Hip Hop has been greatly criticized for reinforcing unequal capitalist accumulation, perpetuating an unequal power structure and commodifying and fetishizing culture in the guise of neo-liberal multiculturalism (Embora da Costa, 2010, 392). However, in North-East Brazil the roots of Capoeira and Hip Hop are *malandragem*[6] and *malandro*[7] both of which are steeped in the history and dynamics of vastly unequal race, class and gendered power relations among marginalized

Afro-Indigenous Brazilians (Capoeira 2002, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Joseph, 2008; Taylor, 2007; Wesolowski, 2012; Wilson, 2010).

There are similarities in the philosophies associated with Brazilian Hip Hop and Capoeira regarding blackness, poverty, violence, power, resistance and capitalist accumulation (Pardue, 2007, 264; Joseph, 2008(b)). However, in the *favelas*[8] of Brazil there is a distinct manifestation of these multifaceted art forms based on the impacts of the Brazilian transition to democracy (Chauí, 2011); poor and extremely poor living conditions (Holston, 2009); police brutality (Huggins, 2000; Enrique, 2006); the violence associated with drug trafficking (Arias, 2006); and, the resistance and activism of young Afro-Indigenous Brazilian people (Drybread, 2009; Pardue, 2012). For many, their lives are similar to those who have grown up in a war zone, although no one regards them as inhabiting a formal space of war. The psycho-social impacts of the normalization and internalization of violence, leaves an indelible mark on *favela* residents (Pieterse, 2010, 430).

Section Two
NorthEast Brazil: Economic Poverty and Cultural Riches

The region of NorthEast Brazil is characterized by stark conditions of regional poverty and economic disparity with millions dying every year of malnutrition and dehydration (Chauí, 2010). The people and geography of NorthEast Brazil are traditionally stereotyped and essentialized as backward, folkloric and steeped in inexorable poverty (Ibid) by Brazilians in the South in the large urban centres of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. In reality, the NorthEast is a major centre of Afro-Indigenous Brazilian popular culture, with the state of Pernambuco home to the creation of distinct and unique forms of music, dance, and theatre not easily located in other parts of the country. For example, *Maracatu, Frevo, Afoxé, Côco de Roda, Ciranda,*[9] and many others, are spatial and culturally specific art forms, unique to the state of Pernambuco. This is important because Capoeira and Hip Hop, in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil, are fusions of these cultural forms. Combining percussive elements, singing and dance move-

ment vocabularies, these syncretic art forms are imbued with both Afro-Indigenous spiritual elements and various saints from Catholicism. This dates back to colonialism and slavery when the African and Indigenous slaves were forced to build Catholic churches. Many enslaved people were skilled artisans who were able to create hidden images, from their distinct spiritual traditions, thus creating a unique Afro-Indigenous spiritual heritage that continues to evolve in contemporary times (Ligiéro and Dandara, 1998). Popular culture in Pernambuco is of central importance for two reasons: Firstly, Capoeira and Hip Hop in Pernambuco are fusions of Pernambucano popular cultural forms that are particular to the NorthEast of Brazil. Therefore, Capoeira and Hip Hop in Pernambuco are distinct cultural expressions with specific regional Afro-Indigenous context and meaning. Secondly, the Afro-Indigenous images within the churches are pioneering forms of cultural resistance by marginalized and racialized communities in Brazil. Thus, community resistance to inequality, embedded in Capoeira and Hip Hop in Pernambuco, has deep spiritual roots dating back to slavery in Brazil.

(a) Dying for Water: The Violent Vestiges of a Plantation Economy

Despite the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of marginalized Afro-Indigenous communities in NorthEast Brazil, there is a desperate shortage of water throughout the region. The vast interior is a dry and arid desert. NorthEast Brazil is the most eastern part of the Americas, with both a coastal region hugging the ocean and the *Sertão* (vast arid interior region). The expansive interior of Pernambuco is a desert, with perpetual drought conditions, and extreme lack of access to water and food. Overall, the region is a transitional plantation economy, with many deeply ingrained patterns from the colonial era prevailing, related to economic, political and social relations of power. The capital city of the state of Pernambuco, Recife, is plagued by some of the highest rates of violence in the country. In 2010, Recife had the dubious honour of being the most violent city in Brazil (*Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*/Public University of Pernambuco (UFPE), 2010; Pelizzoli (ed.), 2010).

It is important to note that although Brazil has been experiencing tremendous economic growth over the last ten years, and is considered a major emerging economic global power and part of the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) there is gross structural inequality. This is directly related to systemic violence (Ibid). Inequality and violence in Recife are exacerbated by inflation rates that continue to spike and spiral, creating vastly disproportionate costs of the basic necessities of daily life relative to the buying power of the minimum wage. The seemingly out of control inflation, that has plagued Brazil since the end of the Military Dictatorship in 1988, is deeply problematic and directly related to socio-economic and political inequality. Furthermore, empirical evidence supports the relationship between inequality, citizenship and economics in Brazil. Recife's major daily newspaper, *Folha de Pernambuco,* reported that in 2013:

> To achieve paying for the basic necessities for Brazilian families, the minimum salary
> for the last year [2013] should have been R$2,765.44 per month [about $ 1330 Cana-
> dian dollars), more than four times of *R$ 678* per month [about $338 Canadian dollars]
> which is currently the minimum wage up to December [2013] *(Folha de Pernambuco*,
> January 10, 2014).

Clearly, the minimum wage of $338 Canadian dollars per month[10] is inadequate to provide for the most basic standard of living. Inflation continues to be unstable and thus prices are constantly increasing while the national minimum wage remains stagnant. Systemic inequality and structural violence in Brazil must be understood to frame the urgent human rights context of grassroots struggles for social justice in NorthEast Brazil (*Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*/Public University of Pernambuco (UFPE), 2010; Pelizzoli (ed.) 2010). Basic human rights of adequate shelter, access to food and clean water are not being guaranteed by the state in Brazil. Citizenship is violated on a daily basis and the vast majority of the population is slowly starving to death (Chauí, 2011).

(b) Tropical Paradise for Whom?

The regional climate in Recife is markedly influenced by its location seven degrees south of the

Equator. Temperatures average 28 degrees year round, with highs in the 40+ degree range and a lows of about 12 degrees in the rural areas during winter. The architecture of the small towns is significantly influenced by Dutch colonialization of the region resulting in a style of colourful low rise buildings with Baroque motifs. Economically, the coastal region is a former ocean fishing industry, now overfished and with extensive pollution. Currently, the NorthEast Brazilian coastal region is mainly a tourist based economy, particularly in Olinda and Igarassu. Rates of unemployment and underemployment range from 20-60% in the region (*Ministério de Trabalho e Emprego Brasil*/Ministry of Employment Brazil). The rates of unemployment are much higher for marginalized youth (Ibid). All the cities in my research, Recife, Olinda and Igarassu are coastal cities with greater opportunities for employment, education and health care than the interior of Pernambuco, Brazil. Recife is a medium urban metropolis, with areas of swampland scattered throughout and a population of approximately 4.5 million. The city of Olinda is a small town with many areas of preserved rain forest, about 5 kilometres north of Recife, with approximately 500,000 inhabitants. A few kilometres further north, is the town of Igarassu which borders Olinda. Igarassu is intertwined with a large ecosystem of rain forest, with about 200,000 people living in a semi-rural setting (*Folha de Pernambuco,* January, 10 2014).

Section Three
Literature Review

I am interested in literature concerning the production of forms of resistance to inequality. Grassroots community organizing for social change in NorthEast Brazil has implications for the broader society in Brazil, Latin America and globally. From a methodological perspective, I engage with multiple and diverse political theorists, social scientists, critical race legal scholars, feminists, post-colonial Afro-Brazilian, Indigenous, and Diasporic scholars who critically engage with contestations and contradictions of dominant hegemonic narratives embodied in neo-liberal multiculturalism. My thesis engages with the following areas of literature: A) Post-Colonial, Indigenous, Marxist, Feminist Theory; B) Struc-

tural Violence and Post-Structuralism; C) Critical Race Theory; D) Citizenship; E) Marginalized Youth in Brazil F) Urban Grassroots Movements in Brazil.

(a) Self-Reflections in Social Justice: Post-Colonial, Indigenous, Marxist, Feminist Theory

In Chapters Two and Three I explore my personal stories, in relationship to my academic research and work in Brazil. I aim to de-construct my subject formation primarily through the post-colonial feminist theorizing of Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Himani Bannerji and Marie Battiste. My research is guided by Anzaldúa's testimony of post-colonial feminist socio-political cultural analysis (Anzaldúa 1981, 1987, 2002; Keating, 2000); Bannerji's analyses of post-colonial feminist critique of racialization and class from a Marxist interpretation (Bannerji, 1995, 2001, 2011); and, Battiste's contribution to decolonizing methodology (Battiste, 2004).

(i) Gloria Anzaldúa: My Spirit Journey

The intricate connections between body, mind and spirit have been traditionally resisted by academia. Insistence on prioritizing objective quantitative knowledge has dominated Western political thought. The translation of spirituality into intellectual language can be fraught with reductionism into separate categories that do not speak to the fluidity of spirit. Often conflated with organized religion and thus rejected as reinforcing the status quo or appropriated by new age commercialization, spirituality is a terrain of interconnections between the cosmic, sacred, material and non-material realities. Our bodies are the primary vessels for spiritual experiences that transcend static and separate identity categories, thus emphasizing universal commonalities working towards social change.

In AnaLouise Keating's *Interviews: Entrevistas with Gloria E. Anzaldúa* (Keating, 2000), the voice of Gloria Anzaldúa is beautifully articulated. Anzaldúa takes a risk in re-defining knowledge by situating her reflective personal stories with action to challenge the status quo. Anzaldúa has effectively constructed several theoretical frameworks that blend Indigenous and Native beliefs with her Chicana

heritage. In Chapter Two I explore how I construct knowledge as writing in conversation with displaced and marginalized people. Anzaldúa's concepts and practices are used as tools of analysis throughout my thesis, specifically her concepts of *conocimientos* which seeks to deconstruct what is considered 'academic' knowledge. Furthermore, in this first Chapter of my thesis, Anzaldúa's 'New Tribalism' and *nepantla* are examined as forms of "spiritual activism" that form the tools for oppressed groups affecting social change. All of the theoretical contributions are facets of Anzaldúa's spiritual theory and praxis based on interconnections of a cosmic spirit force that is constantly in motion and becomes evident in material and non-material forms.

Anzaldúa's contribution to deconstruction of knowledge production, through a deeply personal and spiritual exploration of herself, is reflected in my fieldwork case study of community leader in Hip Hop, Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, in Chapter Three. Leandro expresses his personal spiritual connection to his artistic activism for social change. He explores how assumptions of what constitute race, gender and class are social constructions, often of the dominant upper middle class, which is also a central theme of Anzaldúa's work. Leandro draws from his grandmother's wisdom as his spiritual reference point and gives evidence of Anzaldúa's *conocimientos.*

Anzaldúa's deconstruction of race, gender and class by women who are labeled as 'different' or 'women of color' or 'non-white women' is exemplified through the case study of militant black feminist Hip Hop leader, Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce in Chapter Three. Both Anzaldúa and Gabi articulate, the act of naming is a powerful method of formulating an identity through finding representations of oneself that do not fit, that do not represent who one is in the world. Through rejecting mainstream feminist materials, women are asserting their demand to name themselves and tell their stories in their own words. These lived experiences cannot be fully captured by abstract theoretical frameworks that are not con-

nected to each other. People do not fit into the rigid categories of thought, their lives are vibrant expressions that are simultaneously fluid and continuous.

(ii) Himani Bannerji: Deconstructing Subject Formation

I was further inspired by how Bannerji situates herself within social and material relations; first as a non-white female foreign student, then as a university professor in Toronto, Canada. Her lush and evocative prose convey how experiences of profound social isolation and simultaneous racism and sexism radically impacted her theoretical perspectives. Bannerji examines how identity, subjectivity and experience have influenced political theory in recent times. Focusing on representation, distribution of power and political agency, identity is investigated from a variety of Marxist and feminist perspectives. Specifically, the post-colonial and post-slavery subjects of North America are the focus of inquiry to articulate the historically and socially constructed context of contemporary relations of dominance and resistance. Bannerji illuminates a central tension within post-colonial feminist thought:

> Those who dismiss so disdainfully all projects of self-naming and self-empowerment as "identity politics" have not needed to affirm themselves through the creative strength that comes from finding missing parts of one's self in experiences and histories similar to others. They have no project for change. They would prefer to forget their history, for whatever reason. For me, this process of discovering the many names of my oppression in all its complexity brought sanity (Bannerji, 1995, pgs. 9-10).

In the chapter "Introducing Racism", Bannerji discusses how the formation of class is both gendered and raced (Ibid). She further analyzes the word "women" as infused with patriarchial social relations that are located mainly outside of a historical context. Many of my Afro-Indigenous Brazilian female fieldwork interviews reflect Bannerji's analysis. The women I had the honour to interview express Bannerji's arguments that essentializing, or the assumption that all women are linked in some kind of universal sisterhood, is problematic. In particular, Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce discusses her philosophy and practice of militant black feminism in relationship to her lived experiences of racism, classism and sex-

ism. Gabi provides many situations that echo Bannerji's poignant examples of gaps and silences in what is expressed by the term 'women'. For Bannerji the racism of tokenistic portrayals of non-white women in university materials and courses is evidence of how the intersecting identities of race, gender and class conspire to make the voices of many women invisible in the dominant discourse. In response, Gabi insists on changing the dominant patriarchal discourse and refuses to be silenced or excluded. Through her feminist Hip Hop art, Gabi is demonstrating tangible social change that is inclusive and critical of the status quo.

(iii) Marie Battiste: The Decolonizing Methodology of Marginalized Knowledge

To analyze and deconstruct marginalized communities historic inequality with the state I engage with Battiste's post-colonial Indigenous framework to analyze Eurocentric roots of neo-liberal multiculturalism and subject formation (Battiste, 2004). I also demonstrate how Capoeira and Hip Hop in NorthEast Brazil are forms of decolonizing methodology, particularly in the program I founded, "Capoeira for Street Kids / Capoeira para Crianças de Rua" and the program I co-founded with Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, "Hip-Hop Rescues Kids / Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças". Battiste's critical analysis of knowledge production is rooted in Edward Said's colonialist and imperialist 'Othering' (Said, 1977), which analyzes how repeated attempts to silence Indigenous people's heritage and knowledges, through valorizing a Western cannon of thought as the only legitimate and authentic source of knowledge. Battiste writes extensively on cognitive imperialism and the decolonization of Aboriginal education. Her work, illuminates how through cultural appropriation of First Nations knowledge, often Eurocentric forms of thought are valorized and legitimized as the only truth (Battiste, 2005). This is relevant to radicalization of marginalized youth in Brazil. Youth are critically engaging with the dominant hegemonic narratives embodied in neo-liberal multiculturalism through grassroots cultural production of Capoeira and Hip Hop in Brazil.

(b) Structural Violence, Police Brutality and The Disappeared: State Sponsored Terror in Brazil

To examine structural violence, that disproportionately impacts marginalized youth in Brazil, my analysis is grounded in Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1971, 1990) and Paul Farmer (Farmer, 1996, 2004). Galtung developed the concept of "structural violence", where he articulates a difference between personal and structural violence. Personal violence is directly forced onto an object and shifts over time; structural violence is more stable, does not force direct violence onto an object, and is based in structures of inequality and social injustice (Galtung, 1969, pgs. 171-175; Andreetti Vélez, 2009).

Farmer extends Galtung's analysis and makes some central connections between structural violence, specifically the impact of systemic poverty on the biology and health outcomes for strikingly impoverished communities in Haiti. As Farmer is a doctor and medical anthropologist, who directs a community health clinic in rural Haiti, he has firsthand experience of the astonishing level of inequality, and deep suffering and oppression of the majority of the Haitian people. The main point Farmer strives to express is how the suffering of economically impoverished peoples is embedded in structural violence, and deeply rooted in slavery, colonialism and contemporary neo-liberal economics, which have important adverse outcomes. Farmer explains:

> The adverse outcomes associated with structural violence—death, injury, illness, subjugation, stigmatization, and even psychological terror—come to have their "final common pathway" in the material. Structural violence is embodied as adverse events if what we study . . . is the experience of people who live in poverty or are marginalized by racism, gender inequality, or a noxious mix of all of the above. The adverse events to be discussed here include epidemic disease, violations of human rights, and genocide (Farmer, 2004, 308).

The structural violence that Farmer is articulating is not unique to Haiti. In NorthEast Brazil, the concept is central to the daily lives of marginalized communities. The oppressive social order is perpetuated by those Brazilians in power who languish in indolent corruption, inflict violence with impunity and exploit the majority of racialized and impoverished people (Chauí, 2011; Collins, 2011). Vastly un-

equal access and quality of health care, education and employment opportunities deeply constrain and scar the lives of the majority of Brazilians. My thesis explores how communities living in poverty resist the oppression of structural violence through cultural expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop in NorthEast Brazil.

Farmer is critical of resistance to inequality. He argues that,

> … many texts have celebrated various forms of "resistance" to the dominant social order and its supports, symbolic and material. Romanticism aside, the impact of extreme poverty and social marginalization is profound… (Farmer, 2004, 307).

However, of central importance to my thesis, Farmer also acknowledges, "In some of these places, there really are social spaces of spirited resistance" (Ibid). I argue that the cities of Recife, Olinda and Igarassu in NorthEast Brazil are "social spaces of spirited resistance" to inequality and social injustice by the very people whose daily lives are most impacted by the dominant social order: the poor and impoverished.

In order to fully understand the realities of structural violence experienced by the poor and impoverished, unequal distribution of power and abuse of privilege must be addressed. Kirmayer, in commenting on Farmer's work, elucidates:

> Structural violence is not, however, primarily about individual choice—it is built into the functioning of impersonal (bureaucratic, technocratic, and automatic) systems and applied to whole classes of people … hence the limitations of the moral vocabulary derived from individual agency for analyzing the larger systems of oppression and exclusion. We need to understand how the system builds and rebuilds itself, neutralizing and absorbing opposition and reform (Kirmayer, 2004, 321).

The central importance of structural violence to marginalized and radicalized youth in Brazil is reflective of Michel Foucault's pioneering post-structural scholarship, framing the Panopticon of structural violence as embodied in systems of state repression, for example police brutality. Foucault's analysis of power in relationship to state sponsored violence is evident in the Brazilian case (Foucault, 1977). Furthermore, Jorgenson and Phillips's *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* informs my research

methodology and critical engagement of interview data from a post-structuralist perspective (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2003).

As Galtung and Farmer elucidate, historical events and material social conditions are of central importance to understanding structural violence (Galtung, 1971; Farmer, 2004). Two Latin American feminist academics, Nora Strejilevich and Marilena Chauí, engage with the concept of structural vio-lence on a personal level with culturally specific implications for the Brazilian case. Strejilevich draws on her own experience of personal and structural violence in Argentina. Through her critical testimony of a radicalized young woman, disappeared and tortured by the military state (Strejilevich, 2002) I draw connections to Brazil's military dictatorship, (1968-1988) and the continuation of racialized community leaders in Capoeira and Hip Hop being targets of police violence, and being disappeared and tortured by the military police (Jones, 2006; Veissiere, 2010; Hurt and Lo Forte, 2010; Strejilevich, 2002). Brazilian feminist scholar Chauí, analyzes social authoritarianism and clientelism in Brazil, which provides exten-sive evidence of the long history, from colonization and slavery in Brazil, of spatial, socio-political and economic segregation based on state sponsored violence and constructions of 'race' (Chauí, 2011).

(c) Critical Race Theory

In Chapters Two and Three I attempt to unpack the limitations of law as a measure of citizenship and democracy in Brazil. My analysis of the construction of 'race' in Brazil is informed by Franz Fanon's theorizing on race and resistance to colonization, as I frame Brazil as a neo-colonial country with stark inequalities of race, class and gender (Fanon, 1963(a), 1963(b), 1967). Secondly, Siba Grovogui's critical race legal scholarship on post and neo-colonial nations in Africa informs my analysis of the transition to democracy in Brazil, from a military dictatorship spanning twenty years. (Grovogui, 1996). Thirdly, Danielle Robinson and Jeff Packman's critical engagement with cultural dance forms in the African diasporic region of North Brazil has honed my exploration of Capoeira and Hip Hop in the

region (Robinson and Packman, 2012). As my critical analysis is influenced by Fanon, Grovogui and Robinson and Packman, I directly engage with the critical scholarship of Bernd Reiter, Bernd Reiter and Gladys Marshall and John Collins in Chapter Two (Reiter 2013; Reiter 2011; Reiter and Marshall, 2010; Collins, 2011) to provide detailed and extensive engagement with the structural and systemic state violence against racialized youth in Brazil. Reiter and Collins' work reflects a clear understanding that racial constructions are deeply entrenched, from the state to community levels. Chapter Two further engages with Chrisina Sharpe's pioneering work regarding how cultural production can rupture the violence of dominant hegemonic discourse in the U.K. and the USA and is examined in the Brazilian context (Sharpe, 2010).

(i) Bendita da Silva and Carlos Marighella: Afro-Brazilian Politicians for Social Justice

Chapter Three examines the testimonial biography of Benedita da Silva, the first Afro-Brazilian woman elected to Senate and then Secretary of State for former President Lula (da Silva, Benjamin, and Mendonca, 1997) Feminist community organizer da Silva was a marginalized and racicalized young women from a *favela* in south Brazil during the 1950s and 60s. Through a combination of neighbourhood activism in support of racial equality and improved access to basic services for her community, da Silva became the political voice of her region. da Silva's insights into Brazil's vast inequalities, which she expresses as systemic and structural racial, gender and class discrimination, prejudice and violence, are critical to my research in Brazil. She deconstructs racism, while most Brazilian scholarship on inequalities focuses on social relations of class. da Silva's analysis of racism is central to the several areas of literature that have contributed to the development of my thesis.

A second central Afro-Brazilian politician, Carlos Marighella, was the leader of the Communist party in Brazil during the years of the military dictatorship (1968-1988) and was assassinated by someone from within the ruling military dictatorship in 1970. A figure of great importance in the current con-

text of NorthEast Brazilian socio-economic inequalities, Marighella's scholarship critiqued the military dictatorship in Brazil as a genocide of Afro-Indigenous Brazilians by the state (Marighella, 1969).This is relevant in the contemporary context of NorthEast Brazil, as many scholars of racial politics argue, that state sponsored violence against racialized and economically impoverished communities continues with impunity (Collins, 2011; Reiter 2013). Marghella advocated for a radically different socio-political and economic system, to re-distribute wealth and address the injustices of state sponsored violence against racialized and impoverished communities.

(ii) The Myth of Racial Democracy in Brazil

In Brazil the post-colonial state has been grounded in a myth of 'racial democracy' (i.e. equity). Racial democracy is a key to a theoretical and practical understanding for the case of Brazil. The vast inequality in distribution of resources is often treated in terms of class, which can effectively obscure the racial dynamic. In addition, policies that aim to address racial inequality through affirmative action or school curriculum reforms are met with opposition as the desire for a racial democracy remains strong and many refuse to acknowledge racism as it does not fit with the dominant discourse (Emboaba Da Costa, 2010, 373). Social and class status have been traditionally located in proximity to physical and cultural 'whiteness', which causes many Afro-Brazilians to hide their racial and cultural backgrounds. Through a multicultural approach of 'racial democracy' whiteness is normalized and other racial identities are identified as different. In addition, a romanticized ideal of racial mixing, in the form of *mestiço* essentialism, can obscure ongoing racism (Ibid, 375). This can lead to the promulgation of stereotypes and isolate racialized Brazilians if they do not conform to the essentialized images of multiculturalism. Neo-liberal multiculturalism is utilized to obscure structural racism and systemic power imbalances.

(iii) World Cup Soccer 2014: Celebrating Corruption?

New academic scholarship on the social construction of 'race' is the focus of emerging scholar-

ship on Brazil (Collins, 2011; Reiter, 2013). Specifically, in Brazil the state has been colluding with elites, both within the government, bureaucracy, corporations and the media to control and shape a racially fetishized nationalist narrative that Brazil is a mixed race paradise (Collins, 2011; Reiter, 2013; Joseph, 2008b). A contemporary example of the racialized collusion of the Brazilian state, with the government and corporations, is evident in the rampant corruption of public spending of tax dollars for the 2014 Soccer World Cu This international sporting event was held in all the state capital cities of Brazil in June and July of 2014. The government has spent billions of dollars to construct luxurious new stadiums and infrastructure to receive soccer tourists (*Folha de Pernambuco*, May 20, 2014). However, the public health care and education systems are often lacking basic medical supplies and schools are in rapid structural decline. Marginalized and racicalized youth and *favela* communities are disproportionately impacted by state corruption as communities in the periphery notoriously receive a fraction of state resources as compared to elite neighbourhoods. Additionally, many corporations are getting lucrative contracts and much money goes directly into the pockets of the business owners to finance their personal projects and bank accounts (Ibid).

(iv) Discourses of the Diaspora: Neo-Liberal Multiculturalism and Inequality

Much as in soccer, Capoeira athletes often work internationally and live outside of Brazil. Authenticity and authority are often established through creating somewhat imaginary connections to an exotic, distant and multicultural home of Capoeira in Brazil. This uncritical celebration results in obscuring structural racism (Stephens, 2008; Joseph (a) 2008, Joseph (b) 2008, Joseph 2010; Wesolowski, 2012). Furthermore, neo-liberal multiculturalism perpetuates the myth of racial democracy in Brazil, constructed as a place where racial difference is valued and all are treated with universal equality (Burt, 2011). The myth of racial democracy obscures marginalized Afro-Brazilian claims of unequal treatment and undermines their collective actions to mobilize for social justice based on race, class and gender

(Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998, 9; Embora Da Costa, 2010; Wilson, 2010, 19).

(d) The Inequality of Citizenship in Brazil

Neighbourhood associations, in economically impoverished communities, organized to provide basic services many decades before the military dictatorship in Brazil. Social scientists have documented the 1940s Brazilian neighbourhood associations were an important precursor to contemporary forms of organizing for social change (Kridchke, 2001; Emboaba Da Costa, 2010). In 1988, the Brazilian Constitution legally guaranteed democracy and transformed the concept of citizenship for Brazilians (Holston, 2008; Bohn, 2011, 2013; Zucco and Power, 2013). People in Brazil became more aware of their rights and supported the strengthening of their community organizations in an effort to gain state services (Holston, 2008, 306).

Despite great gains, political democracy was not enough to guarantee civil and social citizenship or democratic rule of law in Brazil (Ibid; Silva and Souto, 2009). Thus, democracy lost much legitimacy in practice, especially in the lives of racialized and economically poor communities, living on the peripheries of large urban centres. This is important because the failure of the state and non-state actors to analyze the contradictions that accompany democratic developments in Brazil has global implications which act to undermine democracy worldwide (Holston, 2008; Chauí, 2011). A central contradiction of the transition to democracy in Brazil that is lacking academic analysis is the mistaken image of homogenous poor communities (Goirand, 2003; Drybread, 2009). Rather, these are diverse communities with noticeable differences in the way that power dynamics have impacted racialization, class, gender (Lassalle and O'Dougherty, 1997).

(i) Evelina Dagnino: Cultural Citizenship in Brazil

A legacy of authoritarianism created categories of people in rigid hierarchies based on their differences. Therefore the struggle for rights by marginalized peoples and communities is a political strug-

gle against the dominant hegemonic narratives and culture of social authoritarianism (Silva and Souto, 2009; Dagnino, 1998, 2003, 2005; Holston, 2008; Cornwall et al., 2008; Chalmers et al, 1997; Krischke, 2001; Collins, 2011; Reiter 2013; Reiter and Marshall, 2010; Kraay, 1998; Chauí, 2011; Torres et. al., 2013; Afolabi, 2009). In Brazil being poor is not only economic, but refers to a set of cultural rules that establish a complete lack of being subjects, a lack of rights. Being poor is a sign of inferiority, of not being worthy of exercising rights (Dagnino, 1998, 48). A new notion and practice of cultural citizenship begins with lived experiences in particular historical and structural contexts (Caldwell, 2009, 56). Beyond state and legally defined rights, this cultural citizenship includes the invention of new rights that are grounded in the struggles of historically specific daily practices. Participation in redefining rights in this context constructs formerly poor and marginalized Brazilians as active social subjects demanding new social relations and equality on all levels (Dagnino 1998, 50, Caldwell, 2009, 57). My fieldwork interviews emphasize how their engagement in Capoeira and Hip Hop is directly related to the struggle for equality. Evelina Dagnino refers to cultural citizenship as rising up from grassroots communities across Latin America, which is reflected in my case studies in Chapters Two and Three. In Brazil, marginalized communities demand to be distinct, yet equitable members of society (Dagnino, 1998; 2003; 2004). This new "cultural citizenship" is grounded in people's daily experiences and historical trajectories (Dagnino, 2005).

Cultural citizenship is more than an expression of citizenship from below that incorporates demands for rights (housing, education, health, etc.) because its ultimate aim is to critically analyze the paradoxes of democracy, at the levels of civil society, the state and the market, from a grassroots community approach (Dagnino, 2005). This is important because there is a contemporary global shift that is impacting democracy worldwide. The neo-liberal focus of the individual's relationship to the market, increasing privatization of state social policies, and the simultaneous commodification of culture and the

regulation of authentic state sanctioned cultural expression are impacting aspects of substantive equality, particularly with marginalized Afro-Brazilian communities in Brazil (Emboaba Da Costa, 2010).

(ii) Evelina Dagnino: The Right to Have Rights

Evelina Dagnino and many contemporary scholars argue that citizenship is a contested concept with many different meanings (Dagnino, 2003; Foweraker, 2003; Fabricant, 2011; Medeiros, 2001; Hale, 2002; Poole, 2010; Hooker, 2005; Wolford, 2003; Mora, 2007; Laurie et al, 2005).   The concept of the "right to have rights" is the basis of cultural citizenship according to Dagnino (Dagnino, 2003). A focus on culture and identity through the "right to have rights" has shifted meanings of citizenship in Latin America, and specifically Brazil, from a legal definition to a rights based discourse. The long history of social authoritarianism in Latin America has shaped how the vast majority of the population, the economically poor and impoverished (i.e. people living in extreme poverty, who experience chronic daily hunger) have been treated as undeserving of political participation.

The "right to have rights" is the concept whereby people who have been historically marginalized and oppressed by state and non-state actors, have the right to shape the definition of citizenshi The classical liberal concept of citizenship, as legal equality, is analyzed by the poor as being exclusionary based on class, race and gender relations (Medeiros, 2001; Hale, 2002; Poole, 2010; Hooker, 2005; Laurie et al, 2005).   Marginalized people articulate the traditional definition of citizenship as deeply problematic because the definition is state centric and reflects the re-production of an elite privileged status quo.

(iii) Valdete da Silva Cordeiro: Afro-Brazilian Women, Cultural Citizenship, Capoeira and Hip Hop

There are many Brazilian academic sources that articulate the views of Afro-Indigenous community leaders in *favelas* and Afro-Brazilian politicians who articulate how traditional citizenship is exclusionary throughout Brazil (da Silva, Benjamin, Mendonca, 1997; Marghiella, 1969). A prominent exam-

ple is Lilly Caldwell (Caldwell, 2009) who conducted fieldwork regarding cultural citizenship in Brazilian *favela* communities in the south of Brazil. When interviewing a 56 year old Valdete da Silva Cordeiro, Afro-Brazilian women's community leader about how marginalized youth engagement in Capoeira and Hip Hop is an important form of organizing for social change, Caldwell found evidence of a direct connection between popular culture (Capoeira and Hip Hop), racialized and marginalized youth and cultural citizenshi

Valdete's testimony, to be further examined in Chapter Two, provides insight into Capoeira and Hip Hop as central elements in grassroots struggles for cultural citizenshi This is of particular note as Capoeira and Hip Hop are both often associated with young, racialized and marginalized males; historically women were excluded from many aspects of Capoeira and Hip Ho However, as I argue in my thesis, young marginalized Afro-Indigenous women are participating as leaders in Capoeira and Hip Hop in growing numbers and this, in turn, is transforming the discourse of cultural citizenship[11] to highlight how gender, race and class intersect in daily struggles for social justice in NorthEast Brazil.

(e) Marginalized Youth in Brazil

Academic literature has multiple definitions of both the age range of "youth" in society and street youth. While there is not a standard definition, 14-35 years old provides a baseline for my research following Brazilian Federal government definitions and Tobias Hecht's pioneering research on street youth in Recife, Brazil (*Ministério da Educação, Brasil*, *'Projeto ProJovem'* www.projovem.br, 2014; Hecht, 1998). The term 'street youth' will be further deconstructed in Chapter Two as a fluid and shifting term encompassing a range of living situations.

Moreover, available research has conflicting analyses of Afro-Brazilian youth, citizenship and social movements. Dispossessed Afro-Brazilian youth, engaged in cultural expressions, are asserted to be crucial to the deepening of democracy in Brazil (Butler, 2008; Drybread, 2009; Klees et. al 2000).

Paradoxically, marginalized street involved and homeless youth are also often portrayed as destitute victims, lacking political consciousness and collective organizing (Hecht, 1998; Filho, 2001; Goldstein, 2003; Veloso, 2008). The pioneering role of racialized youth as leaders in Hip Hop and Capoeira has been the focus of many academic studies (Pardue 2007, 2012; Drybread, 2009; Yudice, 2001). An important area for further research, that I examine in my thesis, is the role of marginalized youth in transforming their communities' material conditions and challenging spatial segregation.

Through my research I have found there is very limited academic work produced on the state of Pernambuco, in the NorthEast of Brazil, regarding social activism by communities, specifically Afro-Indigenous youth living in poverty. There is extensive scholarship on urban regions in the south of Brazil (Rio De Janeiro, Sao Paulo), but generally all academic inquiry stops at the North Brazilian state of Bahia (Salvador), the former colonial capital of Brazil. This is evidence of the racial and spatial segregation and marginalization of certain communities in Brazil. However, I am fortunate to have an academic colleague, Viviane Souza, who co-directed a new documentary film, "*Hip Hop: Da Marginalidade a Opportunidade/* Hip Hop: From Marginalization to Opportunity (Souza, et. al., 2013). Viviane is featured in Chapter Three as her work is a central reference for my thesis. The film profiles key Afro-Indigenous youth community leaders, many of whom are former street involved and homeless children and youth, in the city of Recife. The central point of the documentary is to provide a platform for the voice of youth Hip Hop community leaders in the city of Recife to demonstrate the social and political nature of their work. Souza also interviews Hip Hop organizational leaders who are employed by the city of Recife, and refers to their academic qualitative and quantitative research, providing scholarly evidence that demonstrates youth are transforming their marginalized communities through Hip Ho

(i) Legal Statutes: Institutionalized Violence and Grassroots Resistance

To shift back to a historical perspective, street involved and homeless children and youth were framed by the dominant hegemonic discourse of neo-liberal multiculturalism, in the newly democratic nation in 1988, as the recipients of a huge legal victory and vast improvement in all aspects of their lives. The 1990 law of *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente/Children and Adolescents Act* (ECA) legal-ized full formal citizenship rights for all children and youth, including poor children who live at home and often work on the street to earn extra income for their families, as well as children and youth who live entirely on the streets (Drybread, 2009). Prior to this era, from 1907-1970, the repressive *O Código de Menores/*Minors' Code was a law that saw racialized and impoverished children and youth, as crimi-nalized, disappeared and tortured in the name of law and order.

Chapter Two examines the ECA (1990) and, *O Código de Menores/*Minors' Code, Law 17.943-A (1927-1990) in relation to the Brazilian state program of *Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil* /Program to Eradicate Child Labor*;* Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) *Movimento Na-cional de Meninos e Meninas de Rua/* The National Movement of Street Boys and Girls (MNMMR); two case studies of Edgar Rodrigues, better known in the Capoeira community as, Mestre Bambu, the founder of Grupo Capoeira Madeira de Lei in Recife, PE, Brazil and Ricardo Viera do Nascimento, offi-cially known as Mestre Relâmpago, the founder of Capoeira Canoa Grande in Igarassu, PE, Brazil. The two laws are federal Brazilian legal statutes. The Brazilian state program of PETI and MNMMR are also both national in scope. The two Capoeira groups, that are framed as movements for social justice, are specific to the state of Pernambuco, in the cities of Igarassu, Olinda and Recife. For all the case studies, the particular contexts analyzed are the communities in the cities in Recife, Olinda and Igarassu, in the state of Pernambuco in NorthEast Brazil.

The structural discrimination of institutionalized racism and gross power inequality is clearly

demonstrated in Brazilian discourses and practices around rights for vulnerable children in the 1990s. A pervasive contemporary view, in the middle and upper classes and perpetuated in the media, portrays youth living in *favelas*, as a potential risk to elite society and needing to be prevented from entering a life of crime (Udi Mandel Butler, 2008, 306). This contested perspective of youth, based on the Minor's Code, Law 17.943-A, 1927-1990 contains a fragmented concept of citizenship (Ibid, 2008, 307). Youth participants in current state funded programs featuring Capoeira and Hip Hop are often cited in scholarship as being empowering to participants, in contrast to their previous internment in state institutions (Pardue, 2007; Udi Mandel Butler, 2008, 311). However, these programs often emphasize the importance of creating productive members of society who do not challenge the status quo. The question then becomes, empowerment for whom? (Butler, 2008, 307) Values and goals behind such current participatory programs must be critically explored, from the perspective of street involved and homeless youth.

(ii) Voices of Street Youth: Transforming Academic Knowledge Production

The voices of street involved and homeless youth community leaders, from previous fieldwork interviews from 2005-2013[12], are briefly summarized here but not included in my thesis. The interviewees clearly articulated they often do not have access to basic human rights of adequate shelter, clean water and access to food. Therefore, much time and effort is dedicated to attempting to secure basic human rights of daily survival. The ambition to pursue higher education, for example complete high school or attend university, are goals for many marginalized youth I interviewed. However, due to the time constraints, on a daily basis, access to education is for the privileged elite. Marginalized youth expressed great frustration that constant daily hunger is impeding their educational goals. The frustration from daily experiences of structural violence is transformed into resistance to inequality by marginalized youth in NorthEast Brazil. This resistance is not what Paul Farmer calls 'romanticism' i.e. celebrating resistance to the dominant social order and oppression (Farmer, 2004). The acts of resistance, embodied by

the poor and impoverished through Capoeira and Hip Hop are necessary for their daily survival and furthermore to secure basic human rights.

(f) Urban Grassroots Movements in NorthEast Brazil

Prominent Western academic literature about NorthEast Brazil offers contradictory views on the role of marginalized people and social movements. The mainstream (e.g liberal economics, 'culture of poverty' approaches) focuses on the individual, not collective institutions, as responsible for economic decisions. An examination of individual psychology is highlighted, as poverty is thought to create enduring cultural beliefs and practices (Scheper-Hughes, 1992; Hecht, 1998). However, emerging cultural political economy argues that such a traditional "blame the victim" approach implies that people cease to be poor if they change their culture and their day to day lives (Silva and Souto, 2009; Dagnino, 1998, 2004; Holston, 2008; Cornwall et al., 2008; Chalmers et al, 1997; Krischke, 2001; Collins, 2011; Reiter 2013; Reiter and Marshall, 2010; Kraay, 1998; Chauí, 2011; Torres et. al., 2013).

Urban popular movements make a vital connection between marginalized culture, citizenship and socio-economic aspects of politics that they express through their collective action (Dagnino, 2005). The concept and practice of citizenship became a common reference point in the 1980s and 1990s when social movements in Latin America including diverse groups such as women, Afro-Brazilians, gay and lesbians, and urban and rural workers coalesced around issues such as housing, health, education and access to food and clean water (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998). Social movements offer a unique view of politics because they create new forms of organization and representation between daily life and formal institutions. They are often ambiguous and contradictory and their creation is deeply historical and culturally situated. Therefore social movements are not merely responses to crises at certain times, nor do they only demand resources or increased political rights. This is in contrast to earlier literature on social movements that depicts distinct and separate spheres for political actors. (Rubin, 2003, pgs.

106-108; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2005).

The political struggle for social justice by marginalized peoples for themselves, their communities and more broadly the nation, also includes the creation of new rights; for example the right to difference, such as ethnic, which broadens democracy. This is important because there are explicit implications for a new agenda of revolutionary change and political violence in the 21st century (Grandin and Joseph, eds. 2010), and impacts international solidarity coalition building and radical organizing (Ibid). Furthermore, impoverished Brazilians struggles for citizenship extend beyond the individual in relation to the state and law. Urban popular movements focus on the individual in relationship to his/her community, for example, the relationship between Afro-Brazilians, *caboclos* (Indigenous and European) and *cafuzos* or more popularly called *morrenos/as* (Indigenous and African ancestry) and other citizens.

(i) NGOs: Social Change or Status Quo?

A contested area of research scholarship and one that has been increasingly adopted by NGOs working in collaboration with civil society groups is the 'social movements and cultural citizenship approach'. This approach considers how the dynamics of race, class and gender shape what it means to be an active and participating social citizen. It posits that cultural practices that focus on collective organizing can transform issues of inequality and exclusion (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998; Dagnino, 2003; Caldwell, 2009). It is important to also note the NGOs have many contradictions and challenges. Literature suggests that NGOs may be dependent on marginalized communities remaining on the periphery of society in order to continue to secure continued funding (Petras and Veltmayer, 2005; MacDonald, 2001; Drybread, 2009). Additionally, literature expands on the contradictions of international and national NGOs who are funded by sources that may have agendas contrary to the NGOs, thus hampering the effectiveness of social change for marginalized communities (Ibid; Laurie et al, 2005). This is of particular salience to street involved and homeless youth in Brazil, as my archival research documents

widespread and deep divisions between marginalized youth and the NGO community in NorthEast

Brazil (Drybread, 2009).

However, there are many grassroots social movements in Latin America that work within communities with limited to no contact with NGOs. In Brazil, specifically in *Zona Norte* (North Zone) region of the city of Recife, which is a case study in Chapter Three, community movements for social justice place strong emphasis on citizenship's cultural dimensions that move beyond legal rights (Pelizzoli, 2010). Capoeira and Hip Hop are vehicles for articulating diverse perspectives in a public way that demands recognition (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998).

Section Four
Methodology

Fieldwork is an ethically challenging experience when the documentation of communities is conducted by researchers who are privileged and who reinforce the status quo of 'who gets to do the research'. The question then becomes, what is the responsibility of the researcher to the community from whom they are gathering information and knowledge? I mean to question the role and responsibility of the academic researcher in community settings. This thesis is an engagement of the structural inequality and violence of academic research. Researchers are most often privileged in many distinct ways of class, race and gender. The power dynamic can be oppressive to communities being researched, particularly Afro-Indigenous communities living in poverty. My goal is to articulate that academic researchers have a responsibility and obligation to the communities being researched which extends long after the researcher leaves the community. This way of doing research is grounded in post-colonial Indigenous feminist literature. (hooks, 1994, 2004; Bannerji, 1995, 2001; Anzaldúa, 2000; Battiste, 2005).

(i) Feminism in Capoeira and Hip Hop

Women, race, class and sexuality have numerous references in Capoeira and Hip Ho However, women's participation in the movement vocabularies of Afro-Diasporic martial arts and breakdance was

not popularly documented in Capoeira until the 1970s and in Hip Hop in the 1990s in Brazil (Barbosa, 2005; Pardue 2007, 2012) . Thus, there are many gaps in how gender was historically and culturally constructed in Capoeira and Hip Hop theory and practice (Almeida, 1986; Downey 2000; Pardue 2007, 2012). Scholars assert women traditionally have had a large role in Candomblè[13] (Landes, 1947; Ligiéro and Dandara, 1998), but analysis of women in the physical movements of Capoeira and Hip Hop is limited (Barbosa, 2005; Pardue 2007, 2012). However, this rigid gender dichotomy obscures how multiple intersections of gender and sexuality are represented in Capoeira and Hip Ho This is an exciting terrain for the construction of diverse knowledge that contributes to how cultural art forms, as catalysts for mobilization for social justice, can grow into a more inclusive and critical collective struggles for equality.

My thesis is shaped by my experiences as a young, feminist, street involved woman in Capoeira and Hip Hop in Canada and Brazil. My role as participant observer has become blurred through fourteen years of training Capoeira, ten years of teaching Capoeira and living in both countries. I am deeply involved in forms of cultural resistance to inequality, embodied in Hip Hop and Capoeira in NorthEast Brazil. Thus, my research is a form of an extended conversation with street involved and homeless Afro-Indigenous women and men, in solidarity with feminist values of equality, valuing difference and ending sexism. The young people I interviewed for my thesis fieldwork are emerging as leaders in Capoeira and Hip Hop and are transforming gendered cultural citizenship for social change. My analysis is reflective of hooks' contribution to unpacking gender, racialization, sexuality and class relations from a post-colonial feminist perspective (hooks 1994, 2000, 2004, 2011). hooks has greatly contributed to creating an inclusive feminism, that encourages solidarity of men working towards feminist values of ending sexism:

> Males of all ages need settings where their resistance to sexism is affirmed and valued. Without males as allies in struggle feminist movements will not progress. As it is we have to do so much work to correct the assumption deeply embedded in the cultural psyche that feminism is anti-male. Feminism is anti-sexism. A male who has divested

of male privilege, who has embraced feminist politics, is a worthy comrade in struggle, in no way a threat to feminism . . . Feminist politics aim to end domination to free us to be who we are - to live lives where we love justice, where we can live in peace. Feminism is for everybody (hooks, 2000, p 11-12, 118).

hooks' analysis is of central importance globally, with emerging scholarship on the social activism of young women of color, and men in solidarity, gaining international prominence (Taft, 2011; McAllister and Nelson (eds) 2013).

(ii) Academic Research as Relations of Power

My responsibility to community members, as a researcher, is my priority. I am in conversation with community members to articulate their needs and goals from the research project. I am both an 'insider' and, simultaneously, an 'outsider' in the communities in which I am conducting academic research, which I explore further in Chapter Two. It is important to highlight that I conceptualize insider/outsider as a socially constructed continuum, rather than a reified and static binary opposition. Diverse scholars have argued, social relations are constructions of power, embodied in deeply reified categories of 'race' or racialization, gender and class (hooks, 1994, 2004; Bannerji, 1995, 2001; Said, 1978; Anzaldúa, 2000; Battiste, 2005; Foucault, 1977; Fanon 1963 (a)). In addition, academics often discuss other signifiers of power: sexuality, citizenship, ability, age and many more. These categories are frequently challenged by scholars as oppressive and exclusionary to marginalized peoples, as often the definitions are articulated by people and institutions in positions of unacknowledged privilege who control the dominant social order (Ibid).

My discomfort with an insider/outsider continuum is located in my personal history and a broader context of my ancestors' experience of structural violence. I share many similarities to the people I research, our experiences of structural violence are painfully similar and achingly real. However, there are many divergences too. The spatial location is different: I was born in Canada, I am researching in Brazil. The social construction of racialization is different: I pass as Caucasian, my diverse heritage is

beneath the surface of my skin. I am in solidarity with the people I research. My history and ancestral

social memory (Ford-Smith, 2010) are of being displaced from the land ('The land' refers to where peo-

ple live. For example, being displaced from one's home, place of residence or ancestral region). Land-

lessness; lived poverty and impoverishment fits with the Brazilian research participants I am interview-

ing. We share a reality, " . . . where everyday life has felt like war . . ." (Farmer, 1996, 262)

(iii) Challenging Privilege with Lived Experiences of Resistance to Inequality

Here I do apply a post modern perspective. I am articulating a series of questions and concerns,

rather than making a conclusion about who can do research. I am interested in engaging in critical analy-

sis of my two key thesis questions: First, can community organizing, as expressed through popular cul-

ture and art, transform basic material conditions, including human rights, democracy, and citizenship?

And second, how do expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop positively contribute to the lives of poor and

extremely poor people and their neighbourhoods, by assisting them to gain better access to i) basic ser-

vices (adequate shelter, clean water, food, health care), ii) employment, and iii) education? I return to

these central arguments, regarding cultural resistance to inequality, in the conclusion of this thesis.

I am not suggesting that only those who have suffered can research suffering or that those in the

working class can research the working class. I am asking for dialogue on academic research, as it ap-

pears to be a rather unequal and exclusionary practice. I often ask myself: Where are the academics and

researchers with histories like mine? Who are the scholars that intimately understand human suffering

on a personal and ancestral level? What are the roots of academics interest in Latin America? What are

the academics personal stories? How do they see themselves reflected in the eyes of the people they re-

search?

These questions have led me to the work of diverse scholars in solidarity with peoples in poverty,

whose lives are embedded in structural violence, scarring their consciousness (Galtung, 1971, 1990;

Farmer, 1996, 2004; McNally, 2006) and of academics who explore post-colonial Indigenous feminist praxis, because Afro-Brazilian youth and I see parts of our stories reflected through the words of personal resistance to inequality (hooks, 1994, 2004; Bannerji, 1995, 2001; Anzaldúa, 2000; Battiste, 2005). To clarify, I refer to 'our stories' to reflect two aspects. First, to express that I share experiences with many of my research participants for example; I taught Capoeira classes with Mestre Relâmpago and Leandro and I were taken at gunpoint by the police, while we were walking together. Second, to draw from my lived experiences of poverty, I am placing myself in conversation with marginalized peoples, which I define here as going deeper than solidarity. This is an important distinction because through sharing numerous experiences with many of the people I interviewed, as an active participant, I was exposed to a deeper level of understanding through embodied knowledge (to be discussed further in Chapter 2). When I do not directly and actively participant in an experience, I claim no ownership of the narrative, nor would I consider it to be 'our story'. However, I do draw some connections between lived experiences of poverty and violence between myself and research participants. This will be further discussed in the next Chapter.

(iv) Sources of Literature Review

My research has been conducted in three main categories: (i) university libraries and community organizations; (ii) government policy document and legal statutes available online; (iii) and reports from Brazilian newspapers and media sources. Firstly, academic literature, policies and articles were located at the following university and community libraries: York University, University of Toronto, UFPE (*Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*); Cultural Centres in Brazil (*Centro Comunitário Chão de Estrelas*); NGOs – Reports. Secondly, government policy documents and legal statutes of *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente/Children and Adolescents Act* (ECA), 1990 and *O Código de Menores/*Minors' Code Law *17.943-A* (1927-1990) were accessed from Brazilian Government Databases (with Public

User Access) such as the *Ministério da Cultura – Fundação Nacional da Arte (FUNARTE), Fundação Cultural Palmares; Cidadania e Diersidade; Ministério da Educação; Ministério da Justicia; Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN); Secretaria de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial; Sistema Nacional de Promoção da Igualdade Racial (Sinapir): Núcleo de Formação de Agente Cultural da Juventude Negra, Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome, Ministério de Trabalho e Emprego Brasil;* and, Brazilian government legislative and law databases. Thirdly, reports from Brazilian Newspapers and media sources were consulted: *Folha Pernambuco; Diario de Pernambuco; Globo;* and, *Levante Popular Pela Juventude.* I engaged with *Folha Pernambuco* as a primary media source, as it has a critical social analysis specific to marginalized communities, structural violence and poverty in NorthEast Brazil. I examined *Diario de Pernambuco* as a more traditional and conservative media outlet to reflect an engagement with a range of political perspectives on the state of Pernambuco. The majority of Brazilian media is owned by *Globo* which is comprised of television and radio stations, socio-political magazines and newspapers. I seek to address the dominant elite status quo perspective from *Globo* to ensure a variety of dialogues are represented in my thesis. Alternatives sources of media information are available from *Levante Popular Pela Juventude* website and conferences. *Levante* is a national youth social movement for Afro-Indigenous equality and a wide range of social justice issues, organized by middle and upper class white Brazilian university students in solidarity with marginalized youth. This source of national and local alternative views ensures that youth and marginalized opinions inform my thesis.

(iv) Primary Research

Primary research, in the form of original interviews, were carried out in Recife, Olinda and Igarassu, in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil and are combined with rigorous study of academic literature, government policy documents and media reports. Systematically examining Afro-Indigenous youth

can be difficult because statistical data is not always available (Neate and Platt, 2007). Thus, extensive field research with participant observation and interviews was necessary for my project. For some years now, I have collected data from first person interviews, original documentary photography and video, archival research and literature review of subjects which are briefly summarized in my thesis, but not included as fieldwork interviews. I accomplished fieldwork interviews in 2014 that are included in this thesis.

The format of thirty-seven of the forty interviews were structured and opened ended, with a few being semi-structured. The interviews consisted of seven questions: 1) May I interview you? 2) What is your name and/or what name would you like to use? (Asking permission of what name to use, given name or self-identified name, was done for the safety of participants) 3) How old are you (if you would like to say)? 4) Where do you live (if you would like to say)? 5) What is your role/connection to the arts? 6) What is your opinion of art and culture in Pernambuco, Brazil? 7) What is your opinion of human rights in Pernambuco, Brazil? I originally planned to ask many more questions, but often the person I was interviewing was engaged in another activity (working, performing etc.) and had little time to answer questions. Thus, I selected the questions I felt were most related to my research, neutral and clear (Richie and Lewis, 2003). The interviews lasted from three minutes to three hours long each. Three of the interviews were conversational, open ended with diverse questions. This was done to accommodate the interviewees expressed wish to convey a depth of knowledge over many topics. These three interviews lasted from thirty minutes to four hours each.

I use a combination of ethnographic qualitative and case study research methods in my thesis. I combined the two methods because I feel that it is important to study aspects of Brazilian culture, specific to Afro-Indigenous people engaged in Capoeira and Hip Hop in Recife, with a in-depth analysis. This is because my research topic is complex and is understudied academically. I began my ethnographic re-

search on Brazilian culture related to social justice. I initially thought to focus on Capoeira, as I have a deeper knowledge through fourteen years of practicing Capoeira. Additionally, as the history of Capoeira is five hundred years old and rooted in the struggle for equality and freedom, I felt that it was an ideal area to focus on. However, through ethnographic research I became aware how in the last ten years in Recife, marginalized youth are becoming increasingly engaged in cultural activism through Hip Hop to transform their communities. Through this research I saw that Capoeira and Hip Hop were two major tools that have been successfully used by community members for social change in Brazil. After extensive participant observation and participatory action in Capoeira and Hip Hop communities, discussed in more detail below, I clearly saw the central importance of both art forms to social change in Brazil.

My goal is to give voice to marginalized forms of knowledge through organizing my interview data into easily accessible chunks of information in the forms of case studies (Prill-Brett, 2004). I selected the case studies based on individuals that are making remarkable contributions to their communities, yet are relatively unknown in academical research and literature. This is because I aim to create a fresh and new body of research documenting the vital and valuable contributions of community leaders in Capoeira and Hip Hop in Recife, Brazil. I utilize a feminist scholar activist role to synergize academic research and activism that focuses on respect for diversity and inclusion. Here I draw from a the University of Georgia's organization 'Feminist Scholar-Activists' (FSA):

> We, the FSA, believe education is key to personhood and full participation in society, so it is through scholarship and activism, we seek to trouble dogmatic ways of knowing, to create different ways of knowing, and to open different ways of being through exploration and experimentation (FSA, 2015).

As noted above, participant observation and participatory action were very important to deepen my knowledge of the specific contexts of Capoeira and Hip Hop in Recife. Although the disadvantages of participant observation and participatory action are that they are time consuming, challenging to doc-

ument the data and inherently subjective; I found them to be integral and vital pieces of research methodology. The insights I gained into contexts, relationships, behaviour of a marginalized youth engaging in cultural activism to impact social change, was particularly original and unique as this is an understudied topic in relation to this population. As a participant observer, engaging in participatory action research, I was able to gather previously unknown information which was crucial to my project design, data collections and interpretation of data (Mack et. al, 2005). I designed my research project as a form of direct engagement with social activism, as a feminist scholar activist, a role that I define as imbued with an analytical framework of grassroots resistance to inequality. Jennifer Bickham Mendez (2008) describes how scholar activist are contributing to shifting North-South dialogue and making the global more accountable to the local:

> In this way, scholar activists who are undertaking collaborative projects could contribute to a shift in the direction of North-to-South accountability, making the 'global power' of the scholar activist accountable to the 'local power' of the community or organization (Mendez, 2008, 152).

The conclusion of this thesis returns to the concept of feminist scholar activist as a space for further study and research.

Based on ten years of participant observation in NE Brazil as a Capoeira and Hip Hop student, performer, teacher and researcher I have had the opportunity to meet with many community leaders. I am active in community arts and popular culture in NE Brazil and have based the selection of individuals, groups, and organizations on a variety of sampling techniques. I utilized 'snowball sampling', drawing from the rich knowledge of people I interviewed over the last nine years from this community. I recognize that the diversity of the sample may be compromised as new sample members are generated through existing ones, thus I employed additional sampling techniques (Richie and Lewis, 2003, 94). Often access to marginalized youth was location based, for example at the event *Ocupe Estelita.* Therefore I engaged in 'flow populations' sampling to identify and access a specific population of young mar-

ginalized people engaged in cultural activism at specific locations (Ibid).

The people I chose to interview are Brazilians who live in Recife and have lived experiences of resistance to inequality. Thus the purposive sampling I selected, included diversity so that the impact of cultural activism of marginalized Afro-Brazilians could be explored in the context of multiple perspectives including: judges, lawyers, on-duty police officers, artists, street involved and homeless youth, and community leaders. I employed 'critical case sampling' to attempt to identify individuals that demonstrate a position that is pivotal in resistance to inequality through cultural activism. The logic I was drawing from was that these cases are 'critical' to any understanding offered by my research (Richie and Lewis, 2003, 79-80). Through employing three sampling techniques of snowball, flow populations and critical case purposive sampling I addressed concerns of bias in research design. Furthermore, I selected various communities comprised of diversity in the areas of income and classes, ethno-cultural heritage, educational and employment, and gender/sexuality self-identification (Please note that a number of interviews self-identified as being on the gender spectrum, rather than the binary of male or female. These o expressed they did not want to discuss their sexuality and thus I have omitted their gender narratives from this thesis). The majority of my interviews were in communities of high levels of poverty and impoverishment because this population of mainly Afro-Indigenous people politically organize through the art forms of Capoeira and Hip Ho

I use two sets of interviews for this research. I carried out the first set of twenty interviews between 2005 and 2013 that are briefly summaries on pages 33-34 of this chapter, but not included in fieldwork interview data for this thesis. This group was comprised of fifteen Afro-Indigenous men and five women (fourteen Afro-Indigenous Brazilian, one Portuguese, two Italian and three German Brazilian). Many participants from my first set of interviews appear in two published documentaries, "*Batizado de Canoa Grande*" and "*Relâmpago Capoeira*" (Gophert, 2006, 2011). I conducted my second set of

interviews in spring and summer 2014. These are the fieldwork interviews for this thesis and which build on the first set of interviews, but go further by addressing the perspectives of individuals who self-identify as the following four sub-groups: i) Afro-Indigenous community cultural leaders; ii) organizational/social movement leaders working in solidarity with Afro-Indigenous peoples in Brazil; iii) government/state/institutional (e.g. university) individuals working in solidarity with Afro-Indigenous; iv) community members who live and/or work with Afro-Indigenous peoples in NE Brazil. Most of the interviews are accompanied by a photograph of the interviewee and myself to show relational context and put a face to the voice. I interviewed forty-two individuals, thirty Afro-Indigenous men and ten Afro-Indigenous women who work in the cultural sector of Capoeira and Hip Hop in their communities. I interviewed thirty people from above sub-group i); five people from sub-group ii); three people from sub-group iii); and, two people from subgroup iv).

I had access to people in the above four sub-groups because I have volunteered for the national *Movimento Nacional de Meninos E Meninas de Rua (MNMMR)*/ National Movement of Street Boys and Girls and *Ruas e Praças*/Streets and Squares in the city of Recife; participated in *Levante Popular Da Juventude*/ Youth Social Movement; volunteered with two national Brazilian Governmental programs, *Escola Aberta*/Open School and *O Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil (PETI)*/The Program to Eradicate Child Labor; participated in three Capoeira dance groups and two Hip Hop groups, in the cities of Recife, Olinda and Igarassu.

I am fluent in Brazilian Portuguese and have fourteen years of Capoeira training and ten years of Capoeira teaching in Canada and Brazil. My field research was conducted in the cities of Recife, Olinda and Igarassu, in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil because I have built strong Afro-Indigenous connections there over the past nine years. Additionally, these cities are important because Recife is the fifth largest city in Brazil and capital of Pernambuco; Olinda is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and

Igarassu is one of the oldest colonial settlements in Brazil. Capoeira and Hip Hop have social, political and cultural roots in the state of Pernambuco. As Capoeira has increased in international popularity, many practitioners have moved out of Brazil into the diaspora. This has led to the rising influence of Hip Hop as a contemporary expression of Afro-Brazilian cultural, legal and political activism.

My research is focused on interviewing people, thus the well-being of my research participants is my top priority. I adhered to the following fundamental research ethics principles: 1) respect for persons and communities that is reflected in my commitment to autonomy and dignity of all people I inter-viewed; 2) beneficence which I demonstrated through my commitment to minimizing the risks associat-ed with research including psychological and social risks; 3) justice in my commitment to ensuring a fair distribution of the risks and benefits resulting from my research (Mack, et. al, 2005, pg. 8). I aim to translate my thesis into Brazilian Portuguese to make my research accessible to the people who partici-pated in my research. I also am dedicated to publishing my thesis and any income I gain from the book will go back into the social programs I developed in Recife of "Capoeira for Street Kids" and "Hip Hop Rescues Kids". I ensured that all research participants granted me oral informed consent before I inter-viewed them, therefore are all attributable sources for my research. The consent was oral due to literacy concerns of certain populations I interviewed. I was given ethics approval by York University and suc-cessfully completed a Canadian government online training in ethics.

Section Five
Thesis Outline

This thesis investigates forms of cultural resistance to inequality in NorthEast Brazil. Chapter Two "Violence, Heartbreak and Feminism: Capoeira as a Movement for Social Justice in NorthEast Brazil" examines the Afro-Indigenous Brazilian artform of Capoeira (Afro-Diasporic martial art) as a form of cultural activism that critically engages repressive state narratives and practices that reproduce class, gender and racial inequality in contemporary Brazil. Voices of street involved and homeless chil-

dren and youth resonant, as they express their engagement in Capoeira as a grassroots movement for social justice. Through marginalized youth's participation in Capoeira as a form of social justice, human rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil are transformed. First, I investigate and explore how youth engage in cultural activism and at the community level, with Capoeira as a catalyst for a more inclusive democracy in Brazil. I argue that youth participation in Capoeira aims to effect collective social change. Marginalized young people in the cities of Recife and Igarassu, in Pernambuco, Brazil, are challenging extreme historical inequality with the state. Second, I reveal that through participation in Capoeira, marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife are improving their access to basic services (adequate shelter, food), employment and education.

In Chapter Two I ground my analysis in the feminist post colonial theories of Gloria Anzaldúa, Evelina Dagnino, Christina Sharpe and Marilena Chauí to examine subject formation, cultural citizenship and how cultural artforms challenge deeply ingrained state violence grounded in a history of colonization and slavery. My analysis is grounded in my 2014 fieldwork, of over forty interviews, and archival research in the state of Pernambuco, NorthEast Brazil. I explore Capoeira and feminism; the concepts of cultural citizenship and the right to have rights, developed by Brazilian feminist Political Scientist Evelina Dagnino; Capoeira as historial resistance to state oppression; the myth of racial democracy; the transformative power of Capoeira to change lives; Structural violence in Brazil; genocide in NorthEast Brazil; the two Brazilian laws of *O Código de Menores* and *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente;* and, three case studies of Grupo Capoeira Maderia de Lei, Mestre Bambu; *Grupo Canoa Grande, Mestre Relâmpago* and *Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil* /Program to Eradicate Child Labor (PETI) (Federal Government Program).

Chapter Three "Peaceful Protest, Police Brutality and Feminist Spaces: Hip Hop Artist Activists Transforming Brazil"continues many themes from Chapter Two. I explore how young Afro-Indigenous

people are critically engaging in cultural activism in Northeast Brazil. I document how through community organizing in Hip Hop, young people are creating a movement for social justice that impacts human rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil. Youth vigorously dispute the historical injustice of vastly unequal access to basic services of food, housing, health care and education; police brutality and drug traffickers violence; and the lack of ability to exercise political rights in Brazil. First, I explore how the intersections of race, gender and class are impacting collective organizing within communities and the significance for political and social transformation, specifically for freedom from violence. In the urban area of Recife, many communities are ravaged by economic poverty, gun violence, drug trafficking and crime. I illustrate that young Afro-Indigenous people participate in Hip Hop as a tool for social change and are transforming their basic material conditions. Second, I demonstrate, through fieldwork case studies, that Hip Hop in Recife provides the opportunity to transform the lives of street involved and homeless youth, rescuing them from a life of crime and drugs.

In Chapter Three, I continue my analysis from the previous chapter to unpack subject formation, cultural citizenship and the transformative power of cultural art forms as sites for decolonizing knowledge production and the history of state violence in Brazil. In addition, I examine the feminist post colonial theories of Himani Bannerji, Benedita da Silva, and Marie Battiste to deepen the critical dialogue regarding the struggle for equality. I build my documentation around four case studies of Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce, Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, six Hip Hop community leaders from *Zona Norte* and six artist activists at *Ocupe Estelita.* Through these cases I explore black feminist Hip Hop collectives; how militant Hip Hop social activism is challenging drug traffickers, police repression and the inequality of democracy in Brazil; how Hip Hop artists are protesting inequality through daily resistance; success stories of how Hip Hop has transformed the lives of marginalized youth; and how young people are fighting for democratic urbanization through cultural activism.

Chapter Two
Violence, Heartbreak and Feminism:
Capoeira as a Movement for Social Justice in NorthEast Brazil

> When I began Capoeira, it opened many doors of opportunity. I started to study and think about the future. Not only my future, but the future of all street children. I didn't want the same, for the street children, I didn't want the same things that happened to me (Ricardo Veira Do Nascimento, Capoeira Mestre Relâmpago, 1998).

Chapter Two is dedicated to Ricardo, Mestre Relâmpago you are always in our hearts.

This chapter examines the Afro-Indigenous Brazilian artform of Capoeira (Afro-Diasporic martial art) as a complex cultural struggle that critically contests contradictory state narratives and practices that reproduce class, gender and racial inequality in contemporary Brazil. Despite recognition by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity"[14](UNESCO, 2014), the cultural activism of Capoeira is understudied. I frame street involved and homeless children and youth's engagement in Capoeira as a grassroots movement for social justice that is transforming human rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil. First, I document and analyze how youth engage in cultural activism and positively impact their communities (Da Costa, 2010; Rubin, 2004), working towards a more inclusive democracy in Brazil (Butler, 2008; Klees, 2000). I argue Capoeira is a catalyst for collective social change and that marginalized young people in the cities of Recife and Igarassu, in Pernambuco, Brazil, are challenging and rupturing deep historical inequality with the state. Second, I demonstrate that through participation in Capoeira, marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife are gaining better access to basic services (adequate shelter, food), employment and education.

As I discuss in Chapter One, the Social Determinants of Health are a productive analytical tool to deconstruct and clarify how Capoeira and Hip Hop contribute to better material conditions and improved life opportunities in Recife. In this Chapter I will examine Capoeira as an example of accomplishing im-

provements to some of the indicators that are recognized by both the WHO, Canadian and Brazilian governments as being integral social aspects of measuring health including: increasing income and social status through employment as Capoeira teachers of classes and workshops, performing, and traveling; improving social support networks by meeting diverse people at classes and performances; providing opportunities to become educated in Afro-Indigenous history through Capoeira and Hip Hop; access to safer social and physical environments through Capoeira and Hip Hop; greater sense of self-esteem and willingness to practice self-care; empowerment of young girls and women in Capoeira and Hip Hop; greater opportunities for young children to be a part of communities that promote peace through Capoeira and Hip Hop; transforming aspects of discrimination against women in the arts and more broadly society; and, valourizing marginalized knowledges as integral parts of Brazilian culture.

I draw from the feminist post colonial theories of Gloria Anzaldúa, Evelina Dagnino, Christina Sharpe and Marilena Chauí to examine subject formation, cultural citizenship and how cultural artforms rupture deeply ingrained state violence grounded in a history of colonization and slavery. My analysis is grounded in my 2014 fieldwork and archival research in the state of Pernambuco, NorthEast Brazil. The cities of Recife and Igarassu are urban and semi-rural areas of poverty, racial segregation and suffer profound lack of access to health care, education and basic public services. I completed over 40 interviews with Brazilians: street involved and homeless youth, Capoeira teachers and masters, community leaders, young Hip Hop and Capoeira artists, social educators, on duty police officers, the lead public defender for children in Recife, the lead judge for child and youth rights in Recife, social activists, musicians, political protesters, coordinators of regional cultural organizations, young participants in community centers, radical Afro-Brazilian feminists and young Afro-Brazilian documentary journalists. The majority of young people I interviewed currently practice Hip Hop, but began in Capoeira and continue to fuse

the philosophy and practice into their artistic expression.[15] My fieldwork, archival and documentary research demonstrates how Capoeira is a form of cultural resistance to state oppression.

I ground my words in who I am, in my personal stories of how I construct knowledge. Analysis of my subject formation is inspired by the post colonial feminist writing of Gloria Anzaldúa, who takes a risk in re-defining knowledge by situating her reflective personal stories with actions to challenge the status quo. As Anzaldúa illuminates nature (plants, animals, topographical landscapes etc.) is a potent and raw source of spirituality and both simultaneously represents and explores the fluid embodiment of multiple, intersecting and conflicting identities. Just as we cannot separate and fragment the identity of a river or mountain into discrete individual categories that are independent of each other, our human identities incorporate various elements that must be examined in relationship to each other to understand a person or community.

Weaving threads of post colonial theory and feminism in Anzaldúa's work is expressed by *conocimientos,* another way of looking at what is validated as knowledge by the academy. The relationship between what is considered legitimate and authentic intellectual knowledge and power is revealed as a colonization of people's minds, bodies and emotions (Keating, 2000, 216). The metaphor of a bridge is used throughout to express the movement of people from spiritual to material worlds, from one culture to another, of mobility and migration. However, the artificial segmentation of knowledge creates abrupt ruptures in this bridge and alienates people from each other, supports the status quo and dominant hegemonic discourse.

As I noted earlier in Section Four - Methodology, I am simultaneously an 'insider' and an 'outsider' in the communities in which I am conducting academic research. There is academic inquiry into the positionally of the academic researcher as occupying a space in between, which challenges the dichotomy of insider versus outsider status. Human experiences are fluid and multidimensional complexi-

ties which reflect that holding membership in a group does not mean that one is the same as other members of that group. Therefore, a discrete separation of binaries unfairly narrows understanding and experiences. There are complexities from being in the space in between, or along the continuum of (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Often, I find my positionally shifting very quickly such that cannot be located along a horizontal continuum, but rather reflects the depth and volume of multiple shifting factors of any given experience. Thus, I would argue that based on numerous factors, that can change rapidly, my positionally is always in flux. Some of the factors to which I am referring to are my sense perception of an event or experience (sight, touch, memory etc.) which is a fluid understanding; others' perception of an event or experience (for example two people witnessing the same event may have different experiences based on multiple shifting factors such as past experiences, age, gender, race, class, sexuality, time arrived at event, location from which the event is viewed, participation level in the event etc.). I include gender, race and age as shifting factors as they are perceived differently by people. For example, in Canada I am often perceived as a average Canadian, Caucasian, English speaking, average height and weight, in my late twenties or early thirties, and a strong woman, which is constructed as positive and healthy in North American. In Brazil, I have been perceived as European, American, Spanish, Argentinian, Southern Brazilian, Chilean, and once in ten years, Canadian. People remark that I am extremely big and tall and often perceive me as 'masculine', which is socially constructed as a serious insult to a woman in NorthEastern Brazil. This demonstrates the fluidity of interpretation is based on many factors that shift and change over time.

My discomfort with an insider/outsider continuum is located in my personal history and a broader context of my ancestors' experience of structural violence. I share many similarities to the people I research, our experiences of structural violence are painfully similar and achingly real. However, there are many divergences too. The spatial location is different: I was born in Canada, I am researching in

Brazil. The social construction of racialization is different: I pass as Caucasian, my diverse heritage is beneath the surface of my skin. I am in solidarity with the people I research. My history and ancestral social memory (Ford-Smith, 2010) are of being displaced from the land ('The land' refers to where people live. For example, being displaced from one's home, place of residence or ancestral region). Landlessness; lived poverty and impoverishment fits with the Brazilian research participants I am interviewing. We share a reality, " . . . where everyday life has felt like war . . ." (Farmer, 1996, 262)

Therefore, it is vital to articulate how I construct knowledge as writing in conversation with displaced and marginalized people. Growing up, my experiences of poverty, violence and constant uncertainty shaped my worldview. My early life was an opportunity to gain firsthand exposure of oppression on multiple levels. Therefore, my subject formation is being made visible in my academic writing as being an insider/outsider of a community of street involved and homeless people in North East Brazil. I have a deep empathy for human suffering, injustice, and oppression as I experienced many aspects of this at an early age. My construction of knowledge is informed by my belonging to multiple groups where I have shifting similarities and differences with other group members as I occupy the space in-between insider/outsider, as noted earlier. I am deeply interested in forms of resistance to inequality because my own lived experiences have been shaped by numerous struggles for justice. However, I must acknowledge that living through poverty and violence, I cannot escape my own experiences of marginalization and dislocation. At the same time, I cannot escape the privilege afforded to me as a Canadian woman, which I discuss later in respect to 'white privilege'. It is because we are not the same, 'we' being researchers, our confessions, sensitivities, and analysis in a feminist methodology generates diverse contributions to constructing knowledge.

I seek to understand how narratives are both personal and collective collections of knowledge construction. Through narrative research I strive to understand diverse elements of interpretation includ-

ing psychological, sociological, anthropological, cultural and media studies, humanities, arts and performance research traditions (Centre for Narrative Research, 2015, website). There is valuable information which often cannot be fully captured through writing; for example cultural art forms involving live performance, particularly in Capoeira and Hip Ho The songs of Capoeira are oral narratives that impart historical wisdom that was not captured in writing due to oral traditions of many enslaved peoples and the Brazilian government destroyed many Capoeira texts as after slavery was abolished in the late 1900's, Capoeira was illegal for many years.

Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003), seeks to expand what is understood as "knowledge", which is a vital aspect of this thesis. Taylor expresses that embodied (through the body) expression is an important aspect of the transmission of social knowledge, memory and identity (Taylor, 2003, 16). Taylor's work provides exciting avenues for future research in the construction of knowledge, specifically the development of postcolonial research methodology, which I return to throughout this thesis. Briefly, postcolonial research methodology can be conceptualized as challenging Eurocentric constructions of 'the Other' (non-European, formerly colonized) and reconstructing a body of knowledge that promotes social change. Post-colonial research methodology is informed by Indigenous and other marginalized groups knowledge systems, critical theory, post-colonial discourses, feminist theories, critical race, post-modern and neo-Marxist theory. The ontological assumptions are that there exist multiple realities shaped by diverse human experiences influenced by the environment, the cosmos and living and non-living things (Chilisa, 2001).

Critical race theory is important to post colonial research methodology in many aspects, particularly the examination of white privilege. Major academic contributions are provided by Cheryl Harris (1993), George Lipsitz (2006), Betsy Lucal (1996), and Peggy McIntosh. Harris, Lipsitz and Lucal argue that "whiteness" has historically been conceptualized as a form of property rather than a racial biological

imperative. This means it has been treated as an object with value that necessitates social and legal protection. This can be clearly seen in this Chapter's examination of Brazilian laws for children and youth. McIntosh (1998) provides analysis of how as a white woman she has benefitted from white privilege. She cites numerous experiences where racial inequality has advantageous effects to whites.

My research participants certainly echoed McIntosh's analysis, but also acknowledged that there are multi-dimensional aspects that impact race and privilege. For example, many of my interviews remarked that I was very different from many foreigners they had met and that I seemed to be a native Brazilian. This brings forward the questions: To what aspects of me were these people (many of whom were complete strangers) referring to? Is it my race that makes me different than other 'gringo/as' (foreigners to Brazil)? Why do I seem to be a native Brazilian? These are important questions, because racially I am easily perceived by others as a 'white' women. Therefore, are my research participants suggesting other gringoes are not white individuals, or perhaps not women? This seem improbable as Recife is a major beach tourist destination for North America and Europe. Furthermore, the majority of Recife's population is Afro-Indigenous and 'white' Brazilians are in the minority, therefore white tourists are easily noticeable in the general population. I did ask for clarification from my interview participants and they overwhelmingly located my proximity to being a native Brazilian outside of race, but very much related to privilege. As many of my participants provided a racial analysis of their lived experiences, I could argue that race was of central importance to their lives. However, it was clearly articulated that it was not only race, but a combination of gender, class, sexuality, age etc. that combine to shape privilege. So, what did my participants say about me? Many said I seemed Brazilian because we shared similar personal lived experiences of: where we live (in *favelas*), poverty and violence, our mutual dedication to grassroots social change that comes from within communities, and that we create cultural projects in the communities we live in. Many participants insisted that without direct experience of

suffering on many different levels, it is impossible to truly understand what it feels like. In sum, privilege is conditioned by multiple factors that shift and change over time and space: class, gender, race, sexuality, age etc. Therefore, while I acknowledge white privilege is an important and integral aspect of both academic research and lived experiences, there must also be attention draw to the other elements of privilege to accomplish a more meaningful analysis and provide possibilities for social change that is inclusive and egalitarian.

Here I draw from reflexivity as a methodological tool as it intersects with questions surrounding representation and legitimization of qualitative research. The questions are critiques that are raised surrounding the concept "politics of the gaze" in ethnographic research (Pillow, 2003). This concept calls into question the ability of the researcher to represent and raises critical question about researcher authority, identity and the ethics of representation. Questions of who is researching whom, why and how are vital aspects of ethnographic writing and are reflected in practices of researchers confessionals and practices of reflexivity (Pillow and Mayo, 2012, 190) Pillow argues, through the self- reflexive research strategy of recognition of self in relationship to other people it is possible to find a transcendence in confession that yields a catharsis of self-awareness as a researcher. It is important to acknowledge there are questions surrounding reflexivity as to whether it produces better research. To address this critique Pillow illuminates that reflexivity is not about better methods or to represent people better, but rather to be be searingly honest with oneself as a researcher to strive to be accountable for peoples' struggles for self-representation and self-determination. This is messy and uncomfortable work, without resorting to a linear victim/resistance tale, but rather a fluid space of crossing borders that is subversive and contradictory (Pillow, 2003). Through this thesis I attempt to engage in reflexivity of myself in relationship to my research participants and topics of poverty, resistance to inequality and cultural activism effecting social change.

My words create imaginary landscapes of who I am and what my experiences are and also in the process give texture and vibrations to my dreams and aspirations as a woman speaking from a specific social location. Often I find my mind wandering, as a passing cloud that with time will reveal a clear sky and brilliant sun. Most often, by the time night arrives, a profound sense of loss has settled over my heart and the moon rises like a dagger. A life marked by pervasive violence, trauma and loss is what my spirit inhabits and the ghosts of the present are all shades of grey. I have always personally known violence, we have a long relationship and really, I suppose should now be close friends. Many events that shock or impress people pass over my soul with dull reservation. I am alive, but often just barely. I cannot be responsible for telling other people's stories, I almost cannot tell my own.

Section One
Capoeira, Young Women and Feminism

> For me, for us, for others (Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce, 28 years old, Afro-Brazilian Feminist Hip Hop Artist and Educator, Recife, 2014).

My story as a young woman in Capoeira is fraught with violence, heartbreak and feminism. This memory begins with moments strung together over fourteen years of training Capoeira and ten years of teaching street involved and homeless youth through the program I created called "Capoeira for Street Kids". Capoeira academics assert that:

> In Capoeira, as in other spheres, women have to overcome sexism, to gain acceptance. The sexism is never overwhelming, though, and a lot of women report that this hasn't been a problem for them (Taylor, 2007, 207).

However, my lived experiences and fieldwork interviews certainly tell a very different tale. I vividly remember in 2004 I was forced to use every ounce of my strength to defend myself against a professional Capoeirista from raping me in my own home. I will never forget in 2009 one of the saddest moments of my life when my partner, a Capoeira Brazilian Master, Ricardo Veira Do Nascimento, better known as Mestre Relâmpago whose life work is a case study in this chapter, was kidnapped at gunpoint

and disappeared by the Brazilian military police in front of our Capoeira academy for street youth. What rescued me from heartbreak was the creativity, ingenuity and resilience of Brazilian youth. In particular, the young girls involved in Capoeira who expressed a fierce leadershi These remarkable young women motivated me to create my program "Capoeira for Street Kids / Capoeira para Crianças de Rua" in partnership with street involved and homeless young women in Canada and Brazil. "Capoeira for Street Kids" is a program I created in 2005 with street involved and homeless kids and youth in Brazil. We developed a new decolonizing research methodology and practice focused on healing from an Afro-Indigenous Brazilian worldview. We identified street health, harm reduction and community outreach as key goals. Our work is collaborative with communities with a history of diverse challenges including: poverty, homelessness, violence and addictions/mental health. My vision incorporates self-acceptance, self-empowerment and exploration of self-identified spirituality as the core practices. My work builds on the positive strengths of homeless populations as creators of culture, art and social justice. This benefits our communities and more broadly, society. This program is discussed further in the conclusion of this thesis.

As discussed in Chapter One, women's participation in the martial arts movements of Capoeira was not popularly documented until 1970s. Thus, there are many gaps in how gender was historically and culturally constructed in Capoeira theory and practice (Almeida, 1986; Downey 2000). To highlight from Chapter One, this thesis strives to acknowledge the diverse voices of women and men in feminist theory and practice of Capoeira. Many of my male identified fieldwork interviews expressed perspectives that embody aspects of feminism. In particular, resistance to inequality, through cultural activism in Capoeira and Hip Hop was a central element in 90% of interviews. The salience of the struggle for equality resonates in my experiences of fourteen years of training in the martial arts movements of Capoeira, many when I was a young street involved woman. The importance of fighting for equality was

further illuminated through the testimonies of the Afro-Indigenous girls living in economic poverty, with whom I collaborated to develop my Capoeira program "Capoeira for Street Kids". This demonstrates girls and women are emerging as protagonists in the martial art aspects of Capoeira. Together, with men in solidarity with feminist values, we are transforming gendered cultural citizenship for social change. However, as my story expresses, women involved in Capoeira experience sexism. While interviewing young women in Hip Hop, I was stunned to hear that I was considered a role model for other women.

Victoria, a young Afro-Brazilian feminist and Hip Hop BGirl who I interviewed, expressed frustration with the sexism she experienced as a young female. Victoria discussed the importance of women in culture, Hip Hop and Capoeira as role models to other women to transform the gendered discrimination.

> It is a cultural thing, that women are discriminated against. I can see that through Hip Hop, dance and Capoeira. It's really important that girls have the thought to continue and not give u I think you, Hilary, are very intelligent to continue until the end. Because while you are doing your work, you do not realize, but you are a role model for other women. A child, a youth is observing you and learning (Victoria Paiva, 18 years old, Recife, 2014).

I had just met Victoria a few moments before the beginning of the interview and I was profoundly moved by her words. I observed how she was organizing a Hip Hop dance rehearsal with mainly male dancers. I quickly noticed that although her voice was quiet, when she spoke all the young men gave her their full attention with great respect.

Young women were very specific about the intersections of race, class and gender in the discrimination they face on a daily basis. I conducted many interviews at a site of political, cultural and social grassroots protest and occupation: *Occupe Estelita.* The opportunity to dialogue with a large group of young cultural activists, many of whom where street youth, was inspiring. In the face of severe violent police repression, they were united to peacefully create culture to express their rights. The next chapter on Hip Hop explores in depth the incredible grassroots cultural activism of *Occupe Estelita.* One young

female voice stands out as making a deeply personal connection to the discrimination, grounded in who she is, that she endures on a daily basis. Camila is a young artist and cultural activist who was occupying the contested land by living in a tent. Her tone was gentle and her frame slight, but when she discussed personal experiences it became clear she was a warrior for women's rights:

> I am a young Afro-Indigenous woman here. I have endured various types of discrimination for who I am. When I go out into the street people look at me with a different way. But this strengthens me more every day that passes. I am a wonderful person and I am not alone, I have people here with me (Camila, 18 years, Recife, 2014).

Camilia's voice became muffled with tears, hot streaks shot down her face filled with anger at the indignation she faced every day, just for being a young Afro-Indigenous woman. I was profoundly moved, not by pity or sadness, but rather by inspiration. How remarkable of Camila to find strength in her struggle. To know that she was not an isolated victim of bias, but had a community of people who stood together demanding their rights to be recognized. Camila is struggling not as only as young Afro-Indigenous woman, but as a person, an activist transforming cultural citizenship.

Young women like Victoria and Camila are making incredible change in their communities, as I discuss through my case studies in Capoeira later in this chapter. In the next chapter on Hip Hop, I explore how young Afro-Brazilian feminists and men in solidarity with feminist struggles for equality, have created feminist groups and organizations to transform the sexist, racist and gendered dialogue into safe spaces where all are welcome and women are producers, directors and leaders of cultural activism.

(a) "Cultural Citizenship" and the "Right to Have Rights" in Brazil

I have grounded myself in conversation with the community of marginalized and displaced people in NorthEast Brazil. My lived experiences are directly connected to Evelina Dagnino's theorizing about what is means to be poor in Brazil. People who are economically poor are viewed as not being subjects; not legal holders of citizenship and not worthy of rights (Dagnino, 1998). Poor Brazilians are not only marginalized but are also criminalized. This is because of Brazil's history of authoritarianism,

based in colonialism and slavery. Hence, Dagnino argues that poor and marginalized people in Brazil are constructing a new form of cultural citizenship in resistance to historical oppression. This new "cultural citizenship" is grounded in people's lived daily experiences (Dagnino, 2005). The transformation of what are considered rights is a central aspect of cultural citizenshi Grounded in the struggles of historically situated daily lived experiences, the concept and practice of the "right to have rights" expresses how through culture and identity, Afro-Indigenous Brazilian community leaders in *favelas*, have shifted the meaning of citizenship in Latin America. Grassroots cultural activism has created the concept the right to have rights, which is articulated through the struggles of marginalized people to shape the definition of citizenshi The traditional liberal definition of citizenship is deconstructed as exclusionary as it is state centric and reflects the re-production of social inequality (Ibid).

James Holston, an academic who writes about citizenship in Brazil notes that liberal citizenship emphasizes equality before the law as individuals having particular rights and all being equally free to pursue their differences in the market. However, there is no responsibility of the state or society to further substantive rights to equalize opportunity or pursue social justice for all citizens (Holston, 2008, 29). Holston argues that traditional liberal citizenship legalized privileges and legitimated inequalities. He articulates that traditional citizenship is a mechanism to distribute inequality:

> Most Brazilians have been denied political rights, limited in property ownership, forced into segregation and often illegal conditions of residence, estranged from the law and funnelled into labor as servile workers. These discriminations result not from the exclusion of Brazilians from citizenship itself. . . Rather, these Brazilians are discriminated against because they are certain kinds of citizens (Ibid, 2008, 7).

The certain kinds of citizens that are discriminated against are the poor, Afro-Brazilians, Indigenous peoples, women, youth and in particular those who lack formal education (Ibid). However, Holston aims to prove that, ". . . The most entrenched regimes of inegalitarian citizenship can be undone by insurgent citizen movements." (Ibid, 2008, 4) I build on Holston's analysis by examining how young marginal-

ized Afro-Indigenous people's cultural activism in Capoeira, embodied with feminist values, is transforming democracy, human rights and citizenship in NorthEast Brazil.

I examine how cultural citizenship is expressed in artforms; namely Capoeira. More specifically, I investigate how economically impoverished Afro-Indigenous youth are asserting themselves and proving that they are not marginal elements or criminals, despite state sponsored violence. This is demonstrated by examining Capoeira as historical resistance to state repression; as an expression of gendered cultural citizenship and a social critique of two laws affecting children and youth in Brazil. The two case studies of Edgar Rodrigues, better known in the Capoeira community as, Mestre Bambu, the founder of *Grupo Capoeira Madeira de Lei* in Recife, PE, Brazil and Ricardo Viera do Nascimento, officially known as Mestre Relâmpago, the founder of *Grupo Capoeira Canoa Grande* in Igarassu, PE, Brazil are informed by archival research, documentary film interviews and fieldwork interviews I conducted from April-June 2014.

Section Two
Capoeira as Historical Resistance to State Construction of Race, Class and Gendered Repression

The starting point for examining children, youth, Capoeira and social justice in Brazil is paradoxical, linked as it is with the history of injustice, repression and exclusion by the state. There is much excellent scholarship on the history of Capoeira as a culturally specific resistance to state oppression (Almeida, 1986; Capoeira, 2002, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Taylor, 2007; Talmon-Chvaicer, 2008). Although it is outside the bounds of this paper to provide an exhaustive history of Capoeira, certain key points need to be understood. The aspects of music and spirituality are not discussed in this chapter, but must be acknowledged as having roles of central importance to Capoeira as a catalyst for social change. This grounds our discussion in the context of vastly unequal power dynamics in race, class and gender and how historic cultural constructions of *malícia, malandragem, mandinga, malandro* and *maldade*

have shaped choices and constraints for Brazilian grassroots social movements in increasingly neo-liberal global political economy.

The origins of Capoeira is surrounded in myth, legend and numerous contested narratives. (Almeida, 1986; Capoeira, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Joseph, 2008 (b); Taylor, 2007; Talmon-Chvaicer, 2008; Wilson 2010). However, almost all agree Capoeira was developed by diverse enslaved people, in the context of colonialism in Brazil (Joseph, 2008(b), 502). Capoeira was successfully used by diverse enslaved peoples to escape from their oppressive conditions and form free slave communities, known as *quilombos*, in Brazil. The longest lasting, *Quilombo dos Palmares,* in Pernambuco, Brazil, remained liberated for 100 years in the 17th century, despite repeated government attempts to invade (Acordeon, 1986, 12). Many historic and legendary figures emerged as contemporary symbols of Afro-Indigenous resistance to oppression, notably Zumbi dos Palmares and his wife Dandara who are celebrated in an Brazilian National Holiday '*Dia de Zumbi'*.

The history of state sponsored violence and police repression of people engaging in Capoeira has a long history. Enslaved peoples and free people of colour who practiced Capoeira were harassed by police and often detained in the 1800s. From 1890-1930 Capoeira was illegal until Brazilian president Getulio Vargas lifted prohibitions, as Capoeira was becoming valorized as a form of martial arts training for the military in Brazil. The legalization of Capoeira was paradoxical as it both appropriated the historical roots of Capoeira as freedom from oppression and also institutionalized rigid hierarchal rules in the form of Capoeira academies and a belt graduation system. Capoeira was becoming an indoor national sport taught to and often by white elite (Downey, 2000, Joseph, 2008 (b), 502). State ideological construction of Capoeira in close proximity to whiteness was of central importance to the transformation of Brazilian national identity as a romanticized racial mixture that effectively made invisible the deep social, racial and gender inequality of the vast majority of the Afro-Brazilian population who struggle with

malnutrition and deep poverty. The Brazilian state was constructing a nationalism steeped in a mythical social equality: the 'myth of racial democracy' was born.

(a) The Construction of 'Race' in Brazil: The Myth of Racial Democracy

The famous Brazilian sociologist and congressman, Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987) from Recife, PE, Brazil, developed the vision of the colonial master and slave relationship as a benevolent extended family, which created the *moreno/a* (mixed race) construction of "race" as beautiful and desirable. Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala* (1933) contributed to the nationalistic themes of the Vargas government which portrayed Brazil as a paradise of racial harmony. This served to create a palatable founding ideology in which the Brazilian elites could imagine themselves as tropical and exotic Europeans. The official Vargas project of building one nation obscured the violent and oppressive realities of colonialism and slavery. Afro-Brazilian mobilization was undermined in this system, as social mobility and greater equality was tied to the assimilation of European values. The discourse of merit was associated by proximity to the construction of "whiteness" and it devalued and made dangerous elements of "blackness". In fact, "whiteness" came to symbolize education, a steady job, middle-class, having money, owning a car and access to other private services (Reiter and Mitchell, 2010).

My fieldwork research demonstrates that Afro-Indigenous marginalized youth consistently identify social inequality, poverty and sexism as grounded in racism, prejudice and discrimination as barriers to equality. Young Afro-Indigenous people connected the social inequality in Brazil to internalized racism and class discrimination grounded in a post-colonial framework. Leandro "Passoca" Freitas, a young Afro-Indigenous Hip Hop Artist and Social Educator, clearly illuminates:

> The great bias is that people install this discrimination in their own minds. This is due to 500 years ago, when slavery existed and today still exists. The great difference is earning money. 500 years ago enslaved people were forced to work for free. Today our people get a small amount of salary so they do not die of starvation. But a great slavery still exists. White Brazilians have better, mostly desk jobs, earn better salaries, and are often overweight. In truth, black Brazilian and mixed race Brazilians are suffering with

difficult jobs, exhausting physical labor jobs and earning very little. Our earnings do not go far, only enough for basic food. You cannot purchase anything extra: not a computer, not a phone line in your home, not a good quality refrigerator, not a nice television. You do not have the ability to have these things. You must choose between either buying clothing or dying of hunger (Leandro "Passoca" Freitas, Hip Hop Social Educator, 30 years old, Recife, 2014).

Leandro's lived experiences and observations of racial and class inequalities are supported with stark empirical evidence about how the digital divide perpetuates racism and classism in Brazil. According to 2011 Brazilian Federal Senate Legislation, Proposal to Amend the Constitution to include internet access as a fundamental social right of citizenship, the Proposal refers to the current state of digital access in Brazil as a "digital apartheid". The Proposal identifies that of the 10% most impoverished in Brazil, only 0.6% have internet access. In the general population, only 13.3% of Afro-Brazilians use the internet; in the NorthEast of Brazil the internet is accessible to a shockingly small percentage of the population: 11.9% of people have internet access. (Brazilian Federal Senate Legislation, Proposal to Amend the Constitution, Number 6, 2011). Further evidence is provided by the Brazilian Institute in Research in Economics (IPEA). In 2004, just 8% of all Afro-Brazilian headed households had a personal computer at home and 60% had no telephone at home (IPEA, 2004)

Leandro continues to clearly convey the ingrained racism of romanticizing and essentializing Brazil as a exotic and tropical paradise. He astutely expresses how this rhetoric obscures the colonial legacy of poverty, social inequality and discrimination:

Things here in Brazil are not as the great majority of people outside Brazil think: "Brazil is soccer, marvellous, tropical, beautiful beaches." But behind all of this there exists misery, *favelas*, inequality, bias, lack of unity. These things are inside of me. I see them with my own eyes (Leandro, Recife, 2014).

His analysis speaks to the deeply personal impacts of social inequality of neo-liberal multiculturalism that is being propagated by the state for capitalistic gain by the tourism industry. This has salience in contemporary socio-economic realities of Brazil's growing numbers of impoverished. Currently, finan-

cial forecasters are beginning to admit that perhaps the striking numbers that were used to demonstrate growth and increasing social equality in Brazil are disguising issues of corruption and crime (Financial Times, Nov. 3, 2014).

Another way to conceptualize the poverty in Brazil is through analyzing income inequality. According to Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report 2014, Brazil ranks number 10 in the world for income inequality. Overall inequality is high by conservative measures, for example the Gini coefficient, which is meant to represent the income distribution of a country with complete equality as 0 and inequality as 100, has a value of 82 in Brazil. To further understand, the top 10% of wealth holders, which is 5 million people or 2.5% of overall population, controls 73.3% of the wealth (Credit Suisse, 2014, Global Wealth Report). Thus the remaining 196 million people, or 97.5% of the population, divide 26.7% of the wealth. In Brazil, major newspapers are reporting numbers from the major Brazilian economic organization, Institute of Applied Economic Research, a growth in people living at the lowest levels of poverty, people living on less than $35 Canadian dollars/month. This increase in the most impoverished has risen 3.5%, to over 10.45 million of the overall population in Brazil, for the first time since 2003 (Folha de Sao Paulo, Nov. 6, 2014).

Social inequality and neo-liberal multiculturalism is further examined in this chapter with the case studies on Edgar Rodrigues, Mestre Bambu and Ricardo Veira Do Nascimento, Mestre Relâmpago. Both were street kids and share a dedication to rescuing street children through Capoeira, opening their homes as emergency hostels to young people in need and finding better opportunities for youth. However, they travel different paths to achieve the same goal. Mestre Bambu dreams of becoming a registered NGO to further his work of developing young creators of culture and citizenship rights, through Capoeira, and then finding them formal employment. Mestre Relâmpago's work as a Afro-Indigenous Brazilian was distinctly informed by constructions of race, class and gender. He valiantly fought in resis-

tance to neo-liberal multiculturalism, for the rights of street children and social justice, and was punished by state sponsored violence. Mestre Relâmpago's pedagogy was a reflection of his lived experiences of institutionalized racism, poverty and being abandoned by his birth mother on the streets as a newborn. The work Mestre Relâmpago engaged in, reflected his values of indigenous spirituality and herbal medicinal knowledge, respect for the Earth and advocation for *favela* dwellers in the face of great political repression. Mestre Relâmpago's work and life was violently severed in 2009. His story serves as a poignant reminder that challenging state sponsored neo-liberalism can have deadly consequences for marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth.

(b) Capoeira Changes Lives: Citizenship, Human Rights and Afro-Brazilian Culture

Many youth expressed that through culture and education of Capoeira their lives were transformed from poverty, drugs and violence to positive opportunities, knowledge, skill building and community organizing to improve basic material conditions. BBoy Denis, a young Hip Hop artist, articulates how through cultural social action of Capoeira in vulnerable socio-economic communities, youth are rescued from a life of drug trafficking, crime and violence:

> I have many friends that were involved in a life of crime in the *favela*. Because when you are young, you must occupy your mind with something, for example Capoeira. If you have nothing to do, the people who traffic drugs will put you to do something: to deliver drugs, to sell drugs. Many of my friends, who were involved in crime, were saved by social actions: the organization of cultural events of Hip Hop and Capoeira in our communities (Denys Cesar, "BBoy Dan", Hip Hop Artist, 28 years old, Recife, 2014).

The connection between capoeira, human rights and greater social equality was emphasized by Capoeira teachers in North East Brazil. "Fofo", a Capoeira teacher in Recife, explains the importance of the history of capoeira, to open dialogue in society regarding greater social equality for marginalized Afro-Brazilians:

> Human rights are inside the very history of capoeira. Until today capoeira fights for freedom and equality for all in society. There still exists a specific bias and discrimina-

tion throughout society. Capoeira succeeds in opening the eyes of society to improve social equality for marginalized Brazilians. Capoeira accomplishes this through the greater visibility of Capoeiristas in society ("Fofo", Capoeira Teacher, Recife, 2014).

Fofo's analysis is deepened by a Afro-Brazilian female Hip Hop DJ in Recife, Ralaca, who illuminates the specific constructions of race and class in the production of culture and more specifically, Capoeira. Ralaca expresses the importance of marginalized Afro-Brazilian as creators of culture, art and national heritage:

> Tell me what music the middle class has created, you can't. All music is created by people who live vulnerable communities: rap, samba, forro, coco. Brazilian culture comes from inside these communities. And Capoeira comes from where? Black people. Today Capoeira is worldwide and who created it? Black people. They are a a community that generated the great Brazilian culture. There is no way to deny the significance of Black Brazilians, it is written in our books, in our history (Ralaca, DJ, 34 years old, Recife, 2014).

The power of Capoeira to change lives has a distinct heritage in being born out of resistance to colonialism and slavery. The practice and philosophy of Capoeira is a unique decolonizing methodology. Capoeira has deep roots in five main elements that are generally considered to represent authentic and legitimate Capoeira practice: *malícia, malandragem, mandinga, malandro* and *maldade* (Capoeira 2002, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Joseph, 2008; Taylor, 2007; Wesolowski, 2012; Wilson, 2001). The central aspects of *malandragem* and *malandro* are steeped in dynamics of vastly unequal race, class and gender power of marginalized Afro-Indigenous Brazilians. *Malandragem*, or acts of a *malandro* nature, are central to regional, Angola and *Contemporânea* styles of capoeira. *Malandro* is often constructed as a male street smart scoundrel, a trickster who has many bad intentions and cannot be trusted. In middle class representations the *malandro* is often criminalized, but in Capoeira he is a legendary character representing Afro-Indigenous Brazilian resistance to state oppression (Capoeira 2002, 2003, 2006; Downey, 2000; Wilson, 2001). It is important to note that both the criminalization and emancipatory potential of the *malandro* are reflections of state and legal systemic oppression of Afro-Indigenous men and women

during slavery and the resistance of Afro-Indigenous communities to assert their selfhood in defiance of ongoing discrimination that denies them rights and citizenship in contemporary society. Furthermore, rather than a strict binary opposition, in practice the *malandro* manifests along a continuum of actions and consequences that is based on vastly unequal social relations of power.

There are differing interpretations that focus on how the *malandro* is not revolutionary as he does little to change the social institutions and hierarchies he opposes every day (Downey, 2000, 183). This demonstrates the complex nature of resistance as it can be constructed as paradoxically reproducing social authoritarianism that elites utilize to justify discrimination and prejudice as they claim the *malandro* is a not a negative stereotype, but rather the *malandro* is who Afro-Indigenous 'naturally and inherently' are. The elites claim that marginalized and racialized communities in Brazil are in poverty and do not deserve rights because they are *malandro* and therefore not fully human. Generally, elites utilize a liberal or neo-liberal framework of focusing of individual merit and the myth of meritocracy which states all people are equal and thus have the same opportunities in life. Liberal economics, 'culture of poverty' focuses on the individual as responsible, with economic decisions made by the individual and not collective institutions. Individual's psychology is highlighted, as poverty is thought to create enduring cultural beliefs and practices (Scheper-Hughes, 1992; Hecht, 1998). Elites then utilize liberal economics to portray communities in poverty as being the problem, rather than examining systemic barriers to equality such as legal discrimination and state violence, for example in the form of police terrorizing communities living in poverty.

(c) Brazil Has the Highest Number of Murders in the World: Structural Violence, Afro-Brazilian Young Men and State Impunity

The shameful legacy of state sponsored violence legacy continues to present day. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro's analysis the first ten years after the most recent military dictatorship in Brazil, from 1985-1995, demonstrates structural violence:

After nearly ten years of restored democracy, Brazil has yet to find a solution to endemic violence and human rights violations. Violence in Brazil emerges in a setting of extreme economic and social inequalities, of huge income gaps . . . The failure to control violence is illustrated by: (1) the continued use of torture against suspects in most police precincts throughout the country; (2) the ill treatment of inmates in prisons . . . (3) extra-judicial killings by police-linked death squads; (4) the murder of street children and adolescents . . . The majority of these cases have a common denominator of impunity. . . Under democratic rule, the principal target of arbitrary rule and human rights abuses are the most defenceless group-the poor, prison inmates, rural workers and trade union activists, racially discriminated minorities, destitute children and adolescents. . . As a result, many violent and organized crimes and most human rights violations ~ such as those allegedly committed by state agents-are never persecuted. Moreover, rigorous and respected legal precepts regulating arrest, right to counsel, interrogation, and imprisonment are unknown to the poor segments of the population on the periphery of metropolitan areas (Pinheiro, pgs. 269-273).

To grasp the magnitude of structural violence in Brazil it is important to examine contemporary statistics. The United Nations Office on Drug and Crime reports that in 2011, Brazil had the dubious honour of the highest absolute number of intentional homicides in the world: close to 50,000 in 2012 (UNODC, Global Study on Homicide, 2012). To put this into perspective, from 2004-2007 in Brazil 192 million people were murdered. This surpasses the combined total number of homicides in the conflict zones in Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan, Columbia, Congo, Sri Lanka, India, Somalia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Israel/Palestine which is estimated at 170 million. (Anistia Internacional Brasil - Amnesty International Brazil, 2014). To further deconstruct who is at highest risk of being murdered, Amnesty International argues that youth between the ages of 15-29 years old, who are 26.9% of the general population, are murdered at a astonishingly disproportionate rate; they accounted for 30,000 or 60% of murder victims in 2014. Furthermore, impunity is rampant in Brazil, with only 5-8% of murder cases taken to a court of law. The structural violence is grounded in deep colonial and slavery roots. This becomes evident as 77% of youth murder victims are young Afro-Brazilians men and boys (Ibid).

(d) Genocide in NorthEast Brazil: Afro-Brazilians, Indigenous Peoples, Women and State Sponsored Violence

Human rights do not exist here. (Fabio, Police Officer, Recife, Brazil, 2014)

The analysis of systemic violence is brought into focus in NorthEast of Brazil with Marilena Chauí's haunting insights. Heralded as one of Brazil's most eminent philosophers, Chauí argues that structural violence masks paternalism and clientelism, which are constructed as positive attributes of Brazilian national character. Chauí asserts that rights are often portrayed as a special favour to the poor in Brazil, as the exercise of their rights is wholly dependent on the personal will of those in power (Chauí, 2011, pgs. 173-174). Furthermore, Chauí gives startling figures of a race and class based genocide in the North-East in Brazil:

> . . .economic inequalities can be linked to genocide (the estimated deaths of more than 5 million people in the Northeast is due to malnutrition and hunger). It is a society in which blacks are seen as infantile, ignorant, and inferior and dangerous race (Ibid, 2011, 175).

Chauí makes clear linkages to police as the main perpetrators of structural violence in Brazil. Specifically Chauí asserts the police strategically target Afro-Brazilians, Indigenous peoples and women:

> . . . an inscription in Sao Paulo's police academy: " When standing still, a black man is suspicious, when running he is guilty." It is a society in which Indians are seen as irresponsible (not capable of citizenship), lazy (unable to adapt to the capitalist market), dangerous and who need to be exterminated . . . It is a society in which women who turn to the police when they are beaten or raped are subsequently violated in police stations where they are again beaten or raped by the "authorities". Not to mention the torture carried out in prisons on homosexuals, prostitutes and petty criminals. In sum these are the so-called subaltern classes, who are stigmatized by the constant burden of suspicion, guilt and discrimination (Ibid).

Brazilian police are argued to be some of the most dangerous in the world. The Wall Street Journal recently asserted that:

> Brazilian police are killing at least six suspects a day in the line of duty, a number that puts the country's law-enforcement officers among the deadliest in the world, according to a study by the São Paulo-based Brazilian Forum on Public Security (The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 11, 2014).

However, the most disturbing and insightful analysis regarding human rights in Recife, Brazil, came from police officers in Recife. During my fieldwork interviews I approached two on duty police officers at a popular weekend musical event. Both work for the military police and shared their perspectives on human rights for the poor and institutionalized violence of the military police against the most vulnerable section of society. Fabio, a police officer, was very clear on human rights:

> Human rights do not exist here. They have been left to get rusty. I think the poor class, they are less favoured. There is a division, this is due to a lack of better action from the government. The impoverished who live in the hills, their communities lack support on all levels (Fabio, Recife, 2014).

Giles, also a police officer, provides a more reflective analysis that is simultaneously hopeful and tragic:

> Human rights are relative. They favour some and not others. An example is the military police. They had some problems, for example a family that was shot. The police are not worried about this threat and no police will appear. The institution itself, some of the police officers will help, but the institution itself turns it's back on the military police officers. Human rights are only for some people."(Giles, Recife, 2014)

Despite the institutional violence of the military police organization, Giles had some positive and hopeful ideas for grassroots community cultural programs to provide opportunities to marginalized youth. He had particular insights about the importance of Capoeira projects in *favelas* to prevent crime and provide positive opportunities for young people.:

> I am a Capoeira teacher, I have trained for 15 years and I taught in the neighbourhood of Santo Amaro. I spent may years teaching voluntarily, with no financial compensation. Due to this lack of salary I had to search for another career as a police officer . . . There are criminals who enter the wrong path of life, maybe because they did not have opportunities to choose a better life. Why do not the police work for intervention, before a person enters the life of crime. We could have a project the young people before they enter crime and not after they are already criminals (Ibid).

Giles thoughtful insights into the power of grassroots communities and culture to improve life opportunities is a central theme echoed by 75% of all fieldwork interviews. The profound importance of community based cultural programs to transform lives, riddled with crime and poverty, is exemplified in

the two Capoeira case studies in this chapter. Both Mestre Bambu and Mestre Relâmpago's body of work demonstrates how Afro-Indigenous communities are engaging in cultural activism of Capoeira to improve access to human rights of food, shelter, education and employment.

Section Three
Capoeira as an Expression of Cultural Citizenship in Brazil
(a) Social Movement for Afro-Indigenous Equality

Capoeira is more than grassroots cultural activism, Capoeira is a movement for social justice in vulnerable communities. Academic literature refers to social movements as encompassing these goals through social organizing to question traditional paradigms of democracy, citizenship and human rights. Thus, the Capoeira case studies in this chapter are examples of social movements for Afro-Indigenous equality that address the structural violence of inequitable distribution of resources through cultural citizenshi

Social movements challenge boundaries of democracy, of what is defined as politics; its participants, its institutions, processes, agenda and scope. The process of economic globalization has changed the relationship of state and civil society, where citizenship is increasingly equated with individual integration with the market (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998, 1). Politics are power struggles in many spaces that occur in historically and culturally specific contexts of social processes (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998, 11). Grassroots social movements are redefining the notion of citizenship and rights and this does not imply a refusal of institutional engagement, but a radical assertion for transformation of social change (Dagnino, 1998, 47). Collective identity and strategies are grounded in culture as a set of material practices (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998 pgs. 3, 6).

In Brazil being poor is not only economic, but refers to a set of cultural rules that establish a complete lack of being subjects, a lack of rights. Being poor is a sign of inferiority, of not being worthy of exercising rights (Dagnino, 1998, 48). A new notion and practice of citizenship begins with lived ex-

periences in particular historical and structural contexts (Caldwell, 2009, 56). It is beyond state and legally defined rights, this cultural citizenship is the invention of new rights that are grounded in the struggles of historically specific daily practices. Participation in redefining rights in this context constructs formerly poor and marginalized Brazilians as active social subjects demanding new social relations and equality on all levels (Dagnino 1998, 50; Caldwell, 2009, 57).

This focus of research is important because cultural citizenship asserts that there is a need for a radical transformation of practices that reproduce inequality and exclusion throughout society. Thus, cultural citizenship is more than an expression of citizenship from below that incorporates demands for rights (housing, education, health, etc.) because its ultimate aim is to transform democracy (Dagnino, 2005). This is important because the contemporary global shift, to a focus on the individual in relationship to the market with less state social policies, constructs poor people as needy victims rather than citizens entitled to rights. (Ibid, 2005).

To contextualize, the 1988 Brazilian Constitution legally guaranteed democracy and improved the quality of life for many citizens (Bohn, 2011; Zucco and Power, 2013; Bohn, 2013). However, the transition to democracy was based on the mistaken image of homogenous poor communities (Goirand, 2003; Drybread, 2009). These diverse communities have noticeable cleavages of race, class, gender and power dynamics (Lassalle and O'Dougherty, 1997). The legacy of authoritarianism created categories of people in rigid hierarchies based on their differences. Therefore the struggle for rights is a political struggle against the dominant culture of social authoritarianism. Urban popular movements make this vital connection between marginalized culture and politics that they express through their collective action (Dagnino, 2005). The political struggle also includes the creation of new rights; for example, the right to difference, such as ethnic, which broadens democracy. Furthermore this struggle for citizenship extends beyond the individual in relation to the state and law. Now social movements focus on the indi-

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vidual in relationship to society, particularly Afro-Brazilians, *caboclos* (Indigenous and European) and

cafuzos (Indigenous and African ancestry) and the discrimination in daily life. Pinheiro argues that new

rights are collective, in juxtaposition to the neo-liberal focus on the individual:

> New actors are claiming their social, economic, and cultural rights: women, racial minorities, rural workers, indigenous peoples and others. Their claims are mostly in terms of collective rights, as the defence of individual rights is no longer sufficient (Pinheiro, pg. 280).

(b) Capoeira as Expression of Gendered Cultural Citizenship

Kia Lilly Caldwell explores how through Capoeira collective rights are being asserted. She utilizes the personal narratives of two Afro-Brazilian women's struggles for social equality as examples of

social critique (Caldwell, 2009, pgs. 55-56) Valdete da Silva Cordeiro, a 56 year-old community organizer from Belo Horizonte is a leader and activist in her *favela* Alto Vera Cruz. She eloquently articulates:

> I insist on working on the issue of culture in order to show the outside society . . .because our community is marginalized. They think that here in Vera Cruz there are only marginal people, that there are only criminals. So with culture, with dance with Capoeira . . . we are showing that here there are not only marginal elements. (Valdete da Silva Cordeiro, quoted in Caldwell, 2009, 55)

This clearly demonstrates, from the perspective of a mature Afro-Brazilian women activist, Capoeira is a

central element in the grassroots struggles for cultural citizenshi This is of particular note as Capoeira is

often associated with young, racialized and marginalized males and historically women were excluded

from many aspects of Capoeira. However, as I argue in this chapter, young marginalized Afro-Indigenous women and men in solidarity with feminist values of equality, are participating in Capoeira in

growing numbers and this, in turn, is transforming the discourse of cultural citizenship to highlight gendered cultural citizenship and how gender, race and class intersect in daily struggles for social justice in

North East Brazil.

Section Four
Critique of Two Children/Youth Laws in Brazil

Street involved and homeless children encompass poor children who live at home and often work

on the street to earn extra income for their families and children and youth who live entirely on the

streets (Drybread, 2009). This thesis discusses both vulnerable children and youth living at home and

street kids and youth. Often the two categories blur together as marginalized children and youth move

between living in private homes, participating in public state run programs and living on the street. In

this case the term street involved and homeless children and youth is used to capture the blurred bound-

aries of space, social status and culture of postcolonial social actors who live a life of border crossing

(Gupta & Ferguson, 1992, 7).

Christina Sharpe theorizes that marginalized people creating art and culture can rupture tradi-

tional practices of democratic citizenship that grounded in a history of colonialization, slavery and vio-

lence. Capoeira artists understand democracy in a specific way that is based on the claim to cultural citi-

zenship for marginalized and excluded people. This pushes the dialogue beyond the sovereign state and

challenges the boundaries of state power that exclude or include oppressed people as legitimate/illegiti-

mate citizens. As Sharpe illuminates:

> . . . positioned by the law and circumstance as one allowed access to certain relative
> freedoms . . . . .the disavowal of oppression and the displacement onto other bodies of
> the shame of having been positioned outside. . . the nation that re-creates oppression as
> freedom for some bodies (as, for example separate development) discursively re-cre-
> ates itself as free (Sharpe, 2010, pgs. 108-109).

The quote highlights the dangers of post-slavery nations that embrace the relative freedom of former

slaves as examples of how post-colonial injustices are inverted as liberatory for all people, but are in re-

ality "Monstrous Intimacies" (Ibid). In Brazil the post-colonial state has been grounded in the myth of

racial democracy, which highlights Sharpe's theories. State rhetoric emphasizes the cultural consump-

tion and commodification of race to further demonstrate inclusion, participation and social-economic improvement. This is clear in the state's message of culture for tourism and performance to create employment and stimulate the economy (Da Costa, 2010, 374). Through this example it is clear that multiculturalism can be utilized to obscure structural racism and systemic power imbalances.

The structural discrimination of institutionalized racism and gross power inequality is clearly demonstrated in Brazilian discourses and practices around rights for vulnerable children in the 1990s. A pervasive contemporary view, in the middle and upper classes and perpetuated in the media, portrays youth living in *favelas*, as a potential risk to elite society and needing to be prevented from entering a life of crime (Butler, 2008, 306). This contested perspective of youth, based on the Minor's Code, Law 17.943-A, 1927-1990, which legally entrenched constructions of vulnerable youth as dangerous individuals, to be discussed further in this chapter, contains a fragmented concept of citizenship (Butler, 2008, 307).

Street involved children and youth participation in more recent state programs featuring Capoeira is often cited in development discourse as empowering in contrast to previous internment in state institutions (Butler, 2008, 311). However, these programs are often constructed as creating productive members of society who do not pose a threat to the social order. The question then becomes, empowerment for whom? (Butler, 2008, 307) Values and goals that lie behind such current participatory programs must be critically examined, from the perspective of street involved and homeless youth. This chapter examines two Brazilian laws: Law 10.639 (2003), *O Código de Menores/*Minors' Code, Law 17.943-A (1927-1990) and the *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente*/Children and Adolescents Act (ECA) to analyze how progressive changes in state legislation had unforeseen and tragic consequences for street involved and homeless youth. The next section examines three case studies of *Grupo Capoeria Madeira de Lei, Grupo Capoeira Canoa Grande* and *Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil /*Program to

Eradicate Child Labor (PETI) that explore themes of the positive contributions of street involved and homeless youth to democracy, citizenship and human rights in North-East Brazil. The last section explores new visions for Capoeira, cultural activism and feminism through examining the programs of "Capoeira for Street Kids / Capoeira para Crianças de Rua" and "Hip-Hop Rescues Kids / Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças". Moving forward, I illustrate connections between Capoeira and Hip Hop as cultural activism for social change in Brazil. A summary of Chapter Three "Peaceful Protest, Police Brutality and Feminist Spaces: Hip Hop Artist Activists Transforming Brazil" concludes this Chapter and looks towards deepening the themes of Chapters One and Two.

(a) *O Código de Menores*/Minors' Code, *Decreto*/Decree 17.943, (1927-1979)

The long history of state sponsored violence against impoverished Afro-Indigenous children and youth is predicated on the *O Código de Menores*/Minors' Code, 17.943, 1927-1979. The Minors' Code is evidence of state construction of race and class based systemic oppression. The very term *de menor*/minor is still widespread in Brazil and is as reflective of the deep inequality of how different types of childhood are labeled and discriminated against in social relations. The law placed the state in the powerful position of removing and segregating children and youth of poor families, who were overwhelmingly Afro-Brazilian, labeled as being in 'irregular situations' as orphans, abandoned, street minors or young criminals. A minor from the end of the 19th century was marked as immoral, with little schooling and various diseases and as one who worked on the street to survive (Rizzini, 1996). Adults relied heavily on medical and psychological diagnosis of individual 'pathologies' which led to the common assumption the minors were to blame for their behaviour and not the environment circumstances nor adults that raised them. This key point demonstrates a central precursor to neo-liberal multiculturalism concept of individual behaviour as deficient which de-legitimized street kids' claim of systemic discrimination and prejudice. This illustrates the Brazilian historical legal precedent and practice of institutionalized racism

and class discrimination of young people that has been reproduced consistently in contemporary times, despite social reform legislation (Butler, 2008, 303; Drybread, 2009, pgs. 336, 337).

(b) *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente*/Children and Adolescents Act (ECA), Law 8.069, (1990)

Considered to be a central achievement of the transition to egalitarian democracy from military dictatorships in Brazil, the *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente*/Children and Adolescents Act (ECA), Law 8.069 1990 is held up as one of most progressive pieces of children's rights legislation in the world. The statue, 267 sections long, defines rights of Brazilian children and the obligation that the state and families have to towards all youth within Brazil's borders, who are under 18 years of age. The act is based on the principle that all children and youth are entitled to additional measures of social and legal protection, in addition to being subjects of universal human rights (Drybread, 2009, 332; Butler, 2008, 303).

The stark contrast of the ECA perspective, of youth as subjects of rights, as opposed to the repressive Minors' Code which criminalized poor racialized young people as potential threats to the white bourgeoisie ruling social order, was in part due to the rise of Liberation Theology in the 1970s in Latin America. This grassroots movement of the Catholic Church combined religion with raising political consciousness of marginalized poor Afro-Latinos (Butler, 2008, 303). This had a lasting impact and many social movements including the emergence of popular education, founded on Brazilian social educator Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2014)*,* as an alternative to colonizing state education that was not representing the everyday needs and lives of the majority of Brazil's people (Butler, 2008, 304). New ways of working with street involved and homeless youth, as *Educadores Sociais de Rua* (Street Social Educator)*,* greatly influenced the formation of many NGOs and grassroots cultural activism groups in Capoeira which in turn had a large role in the creation of the ECA.

(c) Foundations of ECA

However, increasingly many advocates who work with children and youth on the street, have expressed that it impossible to take a kid off the streets as they grow up too fast and become 'rotten' on the streets (Drybread, 2009, 343). This represents how activists who work with children and youth on the street often have a perspective that has many negative implications for street kids. This is partially based on the growing inequalities and socials tensions of: chronic unemployment in much of the 1980s and 90s that led to many kids working outside the home to support their families and insufficient state resources to treat the addiction to cola (glue) that most street kids relied on to alleviate hunger pains (Ibid). In addition, many organizations who publicly state they work with street kids, actually work with poor children in relatively stable homes. This is done to ensure the continuation of international funding support who are concerned with 'saving' street kids as it is more marketable in a neo-liberal context to position individuals as the problem rather than examining systematic oppression that creates the context for streets kids' precarious social position. It is also a sad legacy of the construction of how childhood and youth has been historically and culturally constructed in both the Minors Code (1927-1990) and re-produced by contemporary ideals of white middle class elites.

The undercurrent of blaming street kids for their vulnerable lives has long historical roots that are reproduced through social relations in contemporary times. For example, many of the ECA's early supporters, overlooked the possibility of the statute having negative consequences. Middle and upper class supporters assumed that all Brazilians have the same experience of childhood; they did not seem to realize that, in the late 20th century, Brazil childhood as they understood it, was a luxury available only to the higher classes. Few poor families were able to offer the same opportunities for youth as the time of innocence, play and formal education as middle and upper class Brazilians assumed. Most economi-cally challenged children were required to take on mature responsibilities at an early age; their lives

were not in line with an idealized concept of universal childhood that was the foundation for recognizing rights of all Brazilian youth (Ibid). The lack of critical reflection about how childhood is experienced very differently across race, class and gender in specific socio-historical moments would have serious repercussions for street involved and homeless youth engaging in mobilization for social justice.

By mid 1990s, neo-liberal reforms emphasized deepening structural inequalities that limited activists hopes for radical social transformation. In order to meet market demands and provide evidence of social and political development, government and civil society had reverted to the historical practice of removing political and social recognition from unproductive and disobedient persons (Ibid). In fact the combination of participation of street kids, who were the generally outspoken, confident and politically knowledgeable youth, in campaigns for children's rights and welfare (a first in Brazilian history) increased the perception of middle and upper class Brazilians of the youth as un-childlike and thus undeserving of children's rights. The intelligence and collective voice of street kids was threatening to philanthropic adults who were concerned that extending rights to informed youth would challenge the historical precedent of the vastly unequal privileges the middle and upper class exploited with regards to their own rights and citizenshi

Section Five
Capoeira as Catalyst for Social Justice : Three Case Studies

The three case studies presented here are relevant to my research because they demonstrate Capoeira as a grassroots form of cultural activism for social change. First, Capoeira is examined as a form of social change that is analyzed using the Social Determinants of Health. I demonstrate how through the three Capoeira case studies of Mestre Bambu, Mestre Relâmpago and PETI provide evidence of improving the the Social Determinants of Health. Second, is shown to be a form of decolonizing research methodology. Third, Capoeira is demonstrated to be a form of cultural citizenshi

Capoeira as a grassroots struggle for social justice contributes to better material conditions and improved life opportunities for street involved and homeless youth in Recife. In this Chapter I will examine Capoeira as an example of accomplishing some of the indicators that are recognized by both the WHO, Canadian and Brazilian governments. Mestre Bambu and Mestre Relâmpago both provide evidence of: increasing income and social status through employment as Capoeira teachers of classes and workshops, performing, and traveling; improving social support networks by meeting diverse people at Capoeira classes and performances; providing opportunities to become educated in Afro-Indigenous history through Capoeira; access to safer social and physical environments through Capoeira; greater sense of self-esteem and willingness to practice self-care; empowerment of young girls and women in Capoeira; greater opportunities for young children to be a part of communities that promote peace through Capoeira; transforming aspects of discrimination against women in the arts and more broadly society; and, valourizing marginalized knowledges as integral parts of Brazilian culture.

The three case studies in this sections of Capoeira in Recife can be conceptualized as a unique form of postcolonial research methodology. First, all case studies are challenging Eurocentric constructions of 'the Other' (non-European, formerly colonized) and reconstruct a body of knowledge that promotes social change. Second, Capoeira is historically situated and deeply informed by diverse Afro-Indigenous Brazilian and other marginalized groups' knowledge systems. Third, the ontological assumptions of Capoeira are that there exist multiple realities shaped by diverse human experiences influenced by the environment, the cosmos and living and non-living things.

Grassroots Afro-Indigenous Capoeira groups in Recife are creating decolonizing forms of knowledge and legitimately exercising their legal rights as cultural citizens. Through Capoeiea as a catalyst for collective social change, youth in the city of Recife are critically challenging traditional paradigms of citizenship and asserting their right to participate in the redefinition of democracy and human

rights by denouncing injustice. Case studies in this section demonstrate that marginalized young people are critically engaging in demanding social justice from a state that is formally democratic, but has retained many historical features of authoritarism, clientelism and privileges the elite sectors of Brazilian society in accessing social, political, economic and cultural rights.

(a) *Grupo Capoeira Madeira de Lei*, **Mestre Bambu**

> I have students who have murdered others, who have exchanged gunfire with police, young boys addicted to sniffing glue, involved in drug trafficking . . . Many times my academy becomes a youth hostel. They come, sleep here in the academy. I put mattresses and they also sleep in chairs, on tables, wherever they have space. My wife and I work together to make a big soup (Mestre Bambu, Recife, 2014).

There are spaces of resistance, created by street involved and homeless youth mobilizing for social change in Brazil, that critically challenge the deep historical inequality of engaging in mobilization for social justice with the state and community organizations. *Grupo Capoeira Madeira de Lei*, founded by Edgar Rodrigues, better known as Mestre Bambu, in Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil is dedicated to substantive work with children and youth who live primarily on the street. This incredible organization provides numerous leadership opportunities for street kids to gain long term skills, opportunities for employment, and fosters citizenship through cultural activism. This is based on street kids who identified these as goals they would like to reach for themselves. Mestre Bambu clearly articulates how *Grupo Capoeira Madeira de Lei* goals are reflective of the vulnerable street youth who participate in Capoeira. Mestre Bambu articulates:

> The majority of my students were in situations of high danger. I have students who have murdered others, who have exchanged gunfire with police, young boys addicted to sniffing glue, involved in drug trafficking. Many people think street kids are marginal and delinquent. I have a vision to change this image of street kids. Our work is to teach street kids skills through Capoeira, teach kindness, how to treat each other with care. I teach them to not become involved in drugs or criminality, to respect each other. Capoeria gives youth visibility, a reason to evolve and live with dignity. Youth tell me they feel that their lives are transformed into citizens who positively contribute to society through the practice of Capoeira (Mestre Bambu, Recife, 2014).

I was honoured to participate in Capoeira classes from 2012-2014 and gained valuable opportunity to observe young Capoeiristas in Mestre Bambu's classes. I was fortunate to interview Mestre Bambu and gain insight into how his personal story motivates and guides his work with street involved and homeless youth. He generously shared his experiences with students after class to encourage them to be active citizens and reach for their goals. Mestre Bambu wakes up at at 3am to go to his job as a bus driver until 3pm, six days a week. After work he teaches capoeira classes to street involved and homeless kids and youth from 4-6 and 7-9pm. In addition, he hosts special events in the city of Recife in ten vulnerable neighbourhoods filled with violence, drug trafficking, and high rates of murder from gun violence. Through interviewing Mestre Bambu I learned of the roots of his incredible dedication to vulnerable youth in Recife:

> I work with Capoeira to rescue children and people of our community. I teach discipline, respect, what is right and wrong and how to overcome the challenges of daily life in our community. I was 10 years old when I began Capoeira in 1978 and I have experienced many situations: I lived on the streets, fighting, making a mess, being a *malandro*. My first Capoeira Master rescued me. My objective is to continue his work and rescue young people in the community through Capoeira (Mestre Bambu, Recife, 2014).

This grassroots community organization offers all classes and events completely free of charge to participants. Community building is a strong tradition within the Capoeira community in Brazil which has roots in the history of diverse enslaved peoples working together for freedom. Many Capoeira groups, organizations and teachers offer free classes as a form of community building to strengthen social organizing for basic material resources. Mestre Bambu uses his salary as a bus driver to financially support all aspects of the organization and often is successful in gaining small in-kind donations from local businesses. His organization is focused on alleviating hunger and arranging emergency shelter for street involved and homeless young people in his community. As Mestre Bambu elucidates:

> Many times my academy becomes a youth hostel. They come, sleep here in the academy. I put mattresses and they also sleep in chairs, on tables, wherever they have

space. My wife and I work together to make a big sou I go shopping and buy lots of bananas and we make smoothies for everybody. I always know someone at the local bakery and when I hold community events, they sponsor us. They give us 50 or 100 french bread buns. We all have a big meal here at the academy (Ibid).

Mestre Bambu provides much more than martial arts training, socialization skills and basic needs. He goes to businesses and finds his young marginalized Afro-Indigenous Capoeira students formal employment. Although Mestre Bambu laments the lack of official registration with the government as a NGO, the work he accomplishes provides life changing opportunities for vulnerable youth. Mestre Bambu elaborates:

We are not officially registered as a NGO, but I am in the process of registering. Independent of registration or not we work as a NGO in practice. I teach classes free of charge to anyone who wants to learn Capoeira. I go to businesses to find out if they have job vacancies and if I can put one of my Capoeira students into the job. This is how I have arranged many jobs: security guards, doormen at buildings, bus driver's assistant. All of this is supported by my motivation to teach a pedagogy to take young people from the streets. Youth arrive at my academy and after they have respect for themselves and improved self-esteem, I arrange jobs for them. Through Capoeira they learn job skills that makes them feel like they are truly valuable citizens (Ibid).

Mestre Bambu emphasizes how through collective social struggle former street involved and homeless youth can create spaces of grassroots resistance and create new rights as cultural citizens. This is globally significant as many of Mestre Bambu's former students are now teaching Capoeira all over the world, "I have taught many Capoeira Teachers and Masters who are now in Germany, Austria, Sweden and Canada." (Ibid) The dream to travel and teach Capoeira is the motivation for many impoverished Afro-Indigenous youth who aspire to improve their material conditions and have a better quality of life.

The systemic violence of neo-liberal globalization in relationship to Capoeira must be examined. Employment opportunities for impoverished Capoeira teachers abroad seems like a golden ticket that promises good income, opportunities to travel and a way out of the cycle of poverty. However, in practice the commodification and consumption of Capoeira in the capitalist marketplace often transforms the

art form to a essentialized stereotype reproducing racist, classist and sexist discourses of an exotic and tropical Brazil. The touristic image of beautiful beaches, semi-nude mixed race women in tiny bikinis and an endless Carnival atmosphere is propagated by a state that financially benefits from the commodification of culture. As with the myth of racial democracy, the reality of polluted beaches, impoverished communities, government corruption, drug trafficking, police violence and an increase in child sex workers who cater to tourists, is obscured and made invisible by the rhetoric of Brazil as a paradise. In turn, this serves to mask the extreme poverty of the majority of the population in Brazil.

(b) *Grupo Capoeira Canoa Grande, Mestre Relâmpago*

Capoeira is freedom of expression (Mestre Relâmpago in Gophert, 2011).

As this chapter argues, the case of Mestre Relâmpago, an Afro-Brazilian Capoeira Master, teacher and community cultural activist who founded *Grupo Capoeira Canoa Grande,* highlights there are very real and dangerous consequences for acting outside of the state constructed repressive discrimination against Afro-Brazilian people. In 1998, Mestre Relâmpago was just Ricardo, a 18 year old former street youth who was dedicated to training Capoeira and teaching street kids. He was also deeply prophetic about his future as he was constantly threatened with death. He desired a better future not only for himself, but wanted to reduce street kids so they would not have to endure the multiple traumas he experienced that tragically would also end his life. Mestre Relâmpago eloquently reflects on how through Capoeira he gained the opportunity for an education and how the art improved his quality of life:

> When I began Capoeira, it opened many doors of opportunity. I started to study and think about the future. Not only my future, but the future of all street children. I didn't want the same, for the street children, I didn't want the same things that happened to me (Ricardo Veira Do Nascimento, Mestre Relâmpago, 18 years old, 1998, in Gophert, 2011).

The lived experiences of Mestre Relâmpago, reflect the prejudice and discrimination of the vast inequity in racial and class power with parallels to the state construction of *maladragem* and *malandro* that framed many impoverished Afro-Indigenous people as less than human. Through Mestre Relâmpago's generosity of spirit, with street involved and homeless youth in Brazil and in the face of great personal adversity, he dared to defy the repressive social hierarchy of white Brazilian elites. Mestre Relâmpago was kidnapped at gunpoint by the state military police and disappearing in March 2009. This tragedy urgently tells of the very real life threatening consequences of critically challenging the deep historical inequality by engaging in mobilization for social justice. His adoptive mother, who rescued him as an infant when his birth mother abandoned him in a old shoe box at the garbage dump, speaks of her son's abduction and the deep respect community members had for him:

> It was March 15, 2009 at 1:30am. A black car, just 20 meters from my son's home, took him. My neighbours all called me and told me the police took my son. I went to many police stations in Igarassu, Paulista and then returned to Igarassu to search for him. Until now the police have done nothing to find him. We need information. He was so good. He worked in PETI (Federal Brazilian Program called The Program to Eradicate Child Labor) with children. The entire community loved him and the community needs him. He rescued street children, he made them food to eat, he got them Capoeira pants and t-shirts to wear. I want so much to find him, even if he is dead. I think it is absurd that a person can just disappear in the world. He never did any harm to anyone. Everyone is worried and asking for him. But we do not know how to answer. We do not know. I wait for justice. But the police and justice department here does nothing. But I wait for the justice of Heaven (Mother of Mestre Relâmpago, in Gophert 2011).

Mestre Relâmpago's work exposed how neo-liberal multiculturalism and capitalist consumption of 'ethnic' cultures is endemic in Brazil. The trend of neo-liberal globalization of the commodification and consumption of Capoeira as cultural industry by mainly white elite officials, who construct the Capoeira teacher Mestre Relâmpago as racialized, hypermasculinzed and roguish, demonstrates how a former street youth is critically challenging the deep historical inequality of engaging in mobilization for social justice with the state. In 2007 Mestre Relâmpago planned a large successful community Capoeira

event that cost thousands of dollars. He asked the local government many times to donate to support the event, as it was a demonstration of Afro-Indigenous culture and heritage. However, he was never given any response to his requests. When the event was complete local officials suddenly appeared at and demanded public recognition, for organizing the event, because they offered to contribute about 20 dollars. This type of political game playing is common throughout Brazil with its history of clientelism, corporatism and social authoritarianism. However, even in the face of negative political consequences Mestre Relâmpago politely refused the money to demonstrate that Capoeira, Afro-Indigenous culture and his work was not a commodity to be consumed, but a cultural right to citizenship (Gophert, 2006).

Mestre Relâmpago was challenging the government to see Afro-Indigenous culture in a different way, not as a commodified 'exotic' performance, but as a fundamental right to maintain space and share his work in a town where the politicization of Afro-Indigenous culture and anti-racism activism was severely circumscribed by a repressive state bureaucracy (Embora da Costa, 2010, 385). This concrete example of social justice community work as a *Educadore Sociais de Rua* (Street Social Educator) in Capoeira disrupts the power and reproduction of racist narratives and practices to construct alternative futures that transform racial hierarchies and political representation. Thus calling for a historical and contextual understanding of how Brazil's notions of racial democracy have produced particular inequalities and exclusion, despite forms of inclusion and mixture. Mestre Relâmpago's actions of asserting his cultural rights to citizenship challenged ongoing state attempts to reproduce commodification, depoliticization and instrumentalization of culture for capital accumulation in the market (Embora da Costa, 2010, 392). However, the significance of his actions were more profound and had far deeper reaching transformational potential for the historical construction of race and class in Brazil. The life work of one man, Mestre Relâmpago, has ruptured and radicalized the reality of the city of Igarassu and state of Pernambuco, Brazil. As one of his young students articulates:

Ricardo (Mestre Relâmpago) created a very important Capoeira movement in Igarassu. There was a time when his work and Capoeira was not valued. But, he defined the history of this city. He rescued many street children that could have been using drugs. He never charged one penny from those kids (Mestre Relâmpago's Student, in Gophert, 2011).

The meagre minimum wage of state paid income of $330/month Mestre Relâmpago earned as a Capoeira teacher in 5 public schools, was used to create a community food kitchen in his house for hungry kids. He tirelessly advocated for impoverished families to get access to basic state services and publicly denounced corrupt local politicians. This generosity led to him often going hungry to feed his students, as he believed and practiced that children should always eat first (Gophert, 2006). Thus, rights were grounded in struggles of daily practices and the demands of an active social subject created new social relations of cultural citizenshi

More than neo-liberalism, the very backbone of Capoeira philosophy and practice of *malandragem* and *malandro* (discussed earlier in this chapter) were being critically examined by Mestre Relâmpago's work. Specifically, *malandragem* was used as a form of cultural agency, to confront societal constraints ranging from gruelling underpaid jobs to extreme poverty and violence. Mestre Relâmpago refused to bend the rules and take advantage of others in the interest of self-preservation, historically stereotypical behaviours associated with *malandragem* and marginalized Afro-Brazilians. He rejected the historical and cultural *malandro*, a lower class trickster and hustler who depends on *maladragem* to survive (Wesolowski, 2012, 86). This demonstrates the role of white, elite Brazilians in systemic reproduction of vast inequality in society predicated on racial, class and gender discrimination and their comfort with the *malandragem* and *malandro* stereotypes to reproduce inequalities through rigid social hierarchies. Mestre Relâmpago's actions also challenged fellow community members to confront their internalized oppression of the contested and contradictory methods for dealing with extreme poverty and violence that are believed to be a 'natural' part of daily life for the poor (Gophert, 2006, 2011).

The political consciousness of an entire community was made visible by Mestre Relâmpago's work, as articulated by the his young female Afro-Indigenous Capoeira students in the PETI program through their continuing struggles for mobilizations towards a more inclusive future of social justice.

(c) *Grupo Capoeira Canoa Grande, Mestre Relâmpago - Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil/***Program to Eradicate Child Labor (PETI)**

> I liked Capoeira so much and until today it is in my heart. We have had to stop a little because of the situation with Mestre Relâmpago (his disappearance in 2009). He taught me many important things: What is good, what is wrong, what is right. He never gave up on us. Never. (Suelly, 12 years old, in Gophert, 2011)

PETI, under the *Ministério de Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome* (Ministry of Social Development and Combating Hunger), is an initiative of the Federal government that is an income transfer to families in extreme poverty and is also implemented in many community public schools. In 2005 PETI was integrated with the *Bolsa Familia* Program. The aim of PETI is to to remove children 7-14 years from work considered dangerous and/or degrading. Families in extreme poverty of less than 1/2 the minimum wage (less than $100/month total family income) are targeted to receive an income transfer, based on level of income, age of children and how many are in public school. The goal is for children to remain in school, which is promoted through children's participation in cultural activities provided in the schools, for example Capoeira classes (*Ministério do Trabalho e Emprego*, Ministry of Work and Employment). The benefit amount of the PETI income transfer is based on families with monthly incomes, between $35-100 (Canadian dollars). The maximum benefit amount for the most impoverished families is a total of $97 dollars. This is based on a family with 5 children between 7-14 and two youth between 16 and 17 years old, who are attending public school (*Ministério de Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome*). However, one must also consider the income transfer from the *Bolsa Familia* program. Taking the same family composition and level of extreme poverty from the PETI income transfer above, 2 adults and 5 children, the maximum benefit from *Bolsa Familia* is an additional $ 133/

month. (Caixa Economica, Brazilian Bank).Thus, the combined total of income from two adults ($70), PETI maximum benefit ($97) and *Bolsa Familia* ($133) equals $300/ month for a family of 7 people. While this is a measurable increase in monthly income for the impoverished, $ 300/month is the equivalent of less than one minimum wage. Clearly, for a family of seven people $300 dollars a month does not cover even the most basic needs. To compare with cost of living the *Folha Pernambuco*, the city of Recife's major daily newspaper reported that in 2013 basic needs cost $1330/month per person (Folha de Pernambuco, January 10, 2014).

The social assistance payments of PETI, including incentives for children remaining in school and a food security program are greatly valued by the community in Tres Ladeiras, Igarasu, PE, Brazil. Três Ladeiras is framed with beautiful rolling green hills, but access to the neighbourhood was restricted to an twice daily mini bus for school employees only. Residents sometimes had a school bus take them to the main area of Igarassu, but it was once or twice a week. The students and families main concern in this pastoral setting was hunger and violence from the giant sugarcane plantation owners armed guards, that surrounds three quarters of Três Ladeiras.

PETI offers students a hot homemade lunch every school day and cultural arts to encourage students to stay in school. Students regularly go days without adequate nutrition and the school meals are essential to their physical well being. Hunger is the major problem of the community, students particularly suffer on weekends and holiday periods, as the schools are either closed or only offer a small snack. The majority of students rely on eating at school as their only source of food. (Gophert, 2006). Due to the extreme economic poverty that characterizes the region, many students leave school by 6 or 7 years old to work and supplement the family income.

Despite the benefits, there were also significant challenges with the PETI program in Três Ladeiras, Igarassu. A central challenge was that the Capoeira teacher, Mestre Relâmpago, worked at four

other public schools for PETI and was dependent on the meager monthly minimum wage for the majority of his income. This was not only to provide for him, but also to buy food for his students in the main community of Igarassu who lived in precarious situations of daily threats of gun violence and drug trafficking. The state repression was both explicit and implicit. Local government officials who administrated *Programma de Eradicacao de Trabalhar Infantil* (PETI) were blatantly racist, treating Mestre Relâmpago as an incompetent child, speaking to him in a belittling manner. I witnessed the abrupt change in tone of voice and choice of words when the officials were speaking to him and then to me. Mestre Relâmpago explained how local government officials often made racist remarks towards him related to his physical appearance and intellectual ability as inferior. For example, when Mestre Relâmpago inquired about how to incorporate as a charitable organization with the government he was told the process was easy for most, but for 'wild jungle people' like him it would never be possible (Gophert, 2006). This profoundly derogatory language, which many race scholars (bell hooks, 1981, 2004; Crenshaw, 1993) have long deconstructed as deeply racist, as the individual is being compared to less evolved, less developed and less than human. In fact, the process to become properly registered as a non-profit was explained to me in three very different ways by government officials who worked in the same municipal office. The bureaucratic process was extremely complicated and the steps involved changed almost daily. In addition, government employees were almost always unavailable and required an ever changing array of difficult to obtain documents to execute the ever changing steps of the process. These challenges demonstrate the considerable state resistance to Afro-Brazilian demands for inclusion and representation as citizens (Emboaba Da Costa, 2010 pg. 384).

In the face of institutionalized racism and class discrimination, Mestre Relâmpago was dedicated to teaching his young female students in the PETI program. I was fortunate to have participated in Capoeira classes that had about thirty Afro/Indigenous Brazilian students from 5-13years old and about

85% girls. Interestingly, this differs considerably from the historical context of young women staying at home responsible for family duties. Quite remarkably the girls in the PETI program challenged Western conceptions of racialized women as objects of study or as passive victims of oppression, as they expressed strong opinions about how Capoeira was an integral part of their identity as Afro/Indigenous Brazilians and were proud to be involved in the program. During my fieldwork I interviewed a young woman, Renata, who was university educated and lived in Igarassu. Renata characterized the region as devaluing women as only being productive as wives and mothers:

> Women here in the NorthEast are completely placed in ancient times. Women's only place is as a housewife and mother. For people who come from another place, more evolved in women's rights, this is curious. In other places women and men's roles are more evolved. I am a young women and I have been formally employed, I have studied at university (Renata, Igarassu, 2014).

Through practicing Capoeira young women in PETI were affirming their own value as contributing to Brazilian culture, rather than traditional roles inside the home. Many young girls articulated they received many beneficial elements from Capoeira that increased their sense of individual and collective well being as strong female leaders in the class and their community. Suelly, a young Afro-Indigenous Brazilian girl expressed a profound sense of loss at the disappearance of Mestre Relâmpago and how Capoeira had touched her life:

> I was in the PETI program and Mestre Relâmpago arrived and started to teach us as his students. I wanted only to to train and train and train Capoeira. I liked Capoeira so much and until today it is in my heart. We have had to stop a little because of the situation with Mestre Relâmpago (his disappearance in 2009). He taught me many important things: What is good, what is wrong, what is right. He never gave up on us. Never (Suelly, 12 years old, in Gophert, 2011).

Although Mestre Relâmpago met with a tragic and violent end, his life is forever immortalized in the young girls he taught through his academy and at the 5 public schools in the PETI program. His dedication to cultural activism through Capoeira transformed the lives of young women in Igarassu from traditional sexist roles in the home to empowered young female leaders in their communities. Mestre

Relâmpago and his unique pedagogy of Capoeira created a new path for young women in Igarassu: as cultural citizens with human rights who are transforming democracy.

(d) Capoeira Case Studies: Struggling for Social Change

The three case studies presented here demonstrate that Capoeira, as a grassroots form of cultural activism for social change in Recife, is evidence of improving the Social Determinants of Health, a form of decolonizing research methodology and a form of cultural citizenshi Case studies of Mestre Bambu. Mestre Relâmpago and PETI, covering seven interviews in this chapter, draw connections between race, class and structural violence. Through Capoeira, Afro-Indigenous youth articulate their cultural roots and are transforming the deep structural inequalities that mark their daily lives. Capoeira as social activism in Recife addresses improving the Social Determinants of Health, acts as a form of decolonizing methodology, and is a expression of cultural citizenshi Marginalized young people who engage in Capeoira for social justice in Recife are demanding visibility through critiquing the myth of racial democracy through engaging in cultural citizenshi Overall, the inspiring work of the the Capoeira artists featured in this chapter are a catalyst for social equality: specifically the re-distribution of wealth, freedom from violence and access to basic services for communities living in poverty in NorthEast Brazil. In particular, I look forward to implementing my program "Capoeira for Street Kids" in Recife for 2015.

Section Six - Chapter 2 Conclusion
New Vision: Capoeira, Cultural Activism and Feminist Values

In conclusion, the paradoxical nature of Capoeira as a catalyst for collective social change has been demonstrated historically, culturally and legally in this chapter. Street involved and homeless children and youth are critically challenging the deep historical inequality of engaging in mobilization for social justice with the state and NGOs, but face systemic oppression in multiple forms. An encouraging area for the future is the increasing number and quality of participation of young marginalized Afro-Indigenous girls and women in Capoeira and transforming gendered cultural citizenship discourse and

practice. As more young women train with greater proficiency and begin to teach Capoeira, the struggle

for social justice has more potential for inclusive collective social change as evidenced in the articulate

and intelligent young women I have had the honour of working with in Brazil and Canada for the last

ten years. This chapter demonstrates my argument that Capoeira is a catalyst for collective social change

and that marginalized young people in the cities of Recife and Igarassu, in Pernambuco, Brazil, are chal-

lenging and rupturing deep historical inequality with the state. Through the case studies of Mestre Bam-

bu and Mestre Relâmpago I explore how marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife are gaining bet-

ter access to basic services (adequate shelter, food), employment and education.

**(a) Looking Towards Chapter Three: Artist Activists Challenging and Resisting Systemic Inequali-
ty Through Hip Hop in Recife**

The next chapter on Hip Hop, "Peaceful Protest, Police Brutality and Feminist Spaces: Hip Hop

Artist Activists Transforming Brazil" further explores the program I co-founded "Hip-Hop Rescues Kids

/ Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças" as a form of decolonizing methodology and practice. I explore how Hip

Hop in Recife is a powerful catalyst for social change through documenting fourteen case studies illus-

trating how Hip Hop cultural activism, imbued with feminist values, is transforming communities.

Chapter Three continues many themes from Chapter Two that emphasize that Afro-Indigenous street in-

volved and homeless youth are critically engaging with democracy, human rights and citizenship in

Brazil. I demonstrate how young Afro-Indigenous people challenge and resist systemic inequality

through cultural activism in Northeast Brazil. Youth are critically rejecting the injustice of vastly un-

equal access to basic services of food, housing, health care and education; police brutality and drug traf-

fickers violence; and the lack of ability to exercise political rights in Brazil. First, I explore how the in-

tersections of race, gender and class are impacting community organizing and the impact on political

and social transformation, specifically for freedom from violence. In the urban area of Recife, many

communities are ravaged by economic poverty, gun violence, drug trafficking and crime. I illuminate

that young Afro-Indigenous people are militant activists who protest systemic violence through Hip Hop as a tool for social change and are transforming their basic material conditions. Second, I illustrate, through fieldwork case studies, that Hip Hop in Recife provides the opportunity to transform the lives of street involved and homeless youth, rescuing them from a life of crime and drugs.

Chapter Three
Peaceful Protest, Police Brutality and Feminist Spaces: Hip Hop Artist Activists Transforming Brazil

> Hip Hop is a daily fight, every day is a march, a manifestation, an occupation. I am painting, fighting, to occupy public spaces: for me, for you, for other women that I do not know. I believe as women we must discover our mission: One for all (Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce, 28 years old, *Cajueiro Seco,* Recife, 2014).

> I will aways fight for my rights and the rights of people who are suffering. I feel pain in my body, hunger, but I am fighting to be alive. If we join together all the artists and protest on the streets for the rights of the people. I mean the people in the communities rising up together with all the artists. The powerful here, the governors, the deputies, Dilma, our President: if we all join together and try to speak to her, without violence, I think we could transform Brazil with peace (Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

This chapter is dedicated to Artist Activist and Hip Hop Art Educator, Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, together we can change the world.

Chapter Three continues to investigate how marginalized young Afro-Indigenous people are critically engaging in cultural activism in Northeast Brazil. I examine how through community organizing in Hip Hop, youth are creating a movement for social justice that is impacting human rights, citizenship and democracy in Brazil. Young people are challenging the historical injustice of vastly unequal access to basic services of food, housing, health care and education; police brutality and drug traffickers violence; and the lack of ability to exercise political rights in Brazil. First, I seek to discover how the intersections of race, gender and class are impacting collective organizing within communities and what this means for political and social transformation, specifically for freedom from violence. In the urban centre of Recife, many neighbourhoods are ravaged by economic poverty, gun violence, drug trafficking and crime. I argue that young Afro-Indigenous people are engaging in Hip Hop as a tool for social change and are transforming their basic material conditions. Second, I demonstrate, through fieldwork case studies, that Hip Hop in Recife provides life changing opportunities for street involved and homeless youth, rescuing them from a life of crime and drugs.

To clarify and connect to Chapter One, the life changing opportunities that improve basic material conditions can be understood through Social Determinants of Health including: increasing income and social status through employment as teachers of classes and workshops, performing, and traveling; improving social support networks by meeting diverse people at classes and performances; providing opportunities to become educated in Afro-Indigenous history through the arts and returning to formal studies; access to safer social and physical environments through the arts, moving to a more tranquil neighbourhood, making basic improvements to their dwellings; greater sense of self-esteem and willingness to practice self-care; increased access to quality health care and medicine; empowerment of young girls and women in Capoeira and Hip Hop; greater opportunities for young children to be a part of communities that promote peace through the arts; transforming aspects of discrimination against women in the arts and more broadly society; and, valourizing marginalized knowledges as integral parts of Brazilian culture.

Grassroots Afro-Indigenous youth Hip Hop artists and groups in Brazil are creating decolonizing forms of knowledge and legitimately exercising their legal rights as cultural citizens. Through Hip Hop as a catalyst for collective social change, youth in the city of Recife are critically challenging traditional paradigms of citizenship and asserting their right to participate in the redefinition of democracy and human rights by denouncing injustice. Individual cases of Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce, Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, Hip Hop Social Educators of *Zona Norte,* Recife and the artists and activists of the social movement *Ocupe Estelita,* Recife, demonstrate that marginalized young people are critically engaging in demanding social justice from a state that is formally democratic, but has retained many historical features of authoritarism, clientelism and privileges the elite sectors of Brazilian society in accessing social, political, economic and cultural rights.

To examine Hip Hop spaces in Recife that engage with critical dialogues of power, violence, race, gender and class I draw on feminist post colonial theories of Himani Bannerji, Benedita da Silva, and Marie Battiste. I continue the analysis of the previous chapter to deepen the deconstruction of subject formation, cultural citizenship and the transformative power of cultural art forms as sites for decolonizing knowledge production and the history of state violence in Brazil. As with the previous chapter, my analysis is informed by over 40 fieldwork interviews I completed in 2014 and archival research in the state of Pernambuco, Northeast Brazil.

Hip Hop is a genre that is comprised of rapping/MCing, breakdancing, graffiti art and DJing. As was discussed in detail in the first chapter, the four elements of Hip Hop are often expressions of marginalized youth's daily lived experiences. In the USA Hip Hop has become a major commercial form of entertainment that has transformed the lives of many Hip Hop artists from inner city poverty to fame and has been greatly criticized for reinforcing unequal capitalist accumulation and perpetuating an asymmetrical power structure. There are parallels between American and Brazilian Hip Hop in the philosophies of critical dialogue regarding blackness, poverty, violence, power, resistance and capitalist accumulation (Pardue, 2007, 264). However in the *favelas* of Brazil there is a very different manifestation of the multi-faceted art form. Historically and contextually specific cultural expressions shape the meaning of Hip Hop in Brazil with a specific trajectory. This is based on the transition to democracy in Brazil; the living conditions of people in poverty and extreme poverty; police brutality and drug traffickers' violence and the resistance and activism of young Afro-Brazilian people living in conditions circumscribed by growing up in a war zone, where no one regards them to be inhabiting a formal state of war. Therefore the psycho-social impacts of the normalization and internalization of violence, as an inevitable part of daily life, has a deep impact on *favela* residents (Pieterse, 2010, 430).

The production of knowledge is further deconstructed in this chapter. To extend Anzaldúa's theorizing from last chapter, the journey towards collecting fragmented aspects of oneself, thus becoming a fully integrated person, is the starting point for any project of social change and collective action (Keating, 2000). Delving deep into how the frontiers of personal meaning and multiple subjective truths fit within broader historical and social contexts of the state, the economy and history can be a painful and reflective process. The many elements of who we are, as individuals, is further complicated by social relations of power and domination, particular historical and cultural contexts, and the process of discovering our roles in re-producing and resisting oppression. The ways that our identities are divided in separate categories of race, gender and class (also sexuality, age, nationality, ability etc.) is a form of violence that seeks to obscure the complex reality of intersecting identities.

In the deconstructing of identity, difference and social/material context Himani Bannerji's collection of essays in *Thinking Through: Essays on Feminism, Marxism, and Anti-Racism* (Bannerji, 1995), reveals theoretical insights on post-colonialism, racism and feminism. Bannerji seamlessly bridges the segmentation of race, gender and class and contributes to bringing communities together, to examine oppressions in relationship to each other. Artificial binaries that serve to segregate aspects of ourselves and create a hierarchy of oppressions, rated on pain and suffering, are firmly rejected.

Essentialism and cultural reductionism are examined as flawed methods of analysis as both homogenize and infer incorrect assumptions. By taking experiences out of context and removing historical social and material relations, both essentialism and cultural reductionism purport to speak to a static subject that is reduced to a sum of experiences. The danger here is that the complex, intersecting relationships, that contour individuals and communities lives, are left unexamined. This is problematic as is obscures the historical social relations and champions identity politics, which often relies on limited concepts of experience, that are isolated from collective social change.

In Bannerji's essay, "The Passion of Naming: Identity, Difference and Politics of Class" (Ibid), difference is described as a recognition of the self in relation to others, and historical context is key to unpacking meaning. Colonial subjects were generally ascribed racially different characteristics versus the colonizer and became the "other" in the eyes of their oppressors. Difference in the context of capitalist relations of international division of labor and power essentialized caricatures through reification, by the dominant colonial negative stereotypes of the "other". Hegemonic power twists and negates subjectivities of colonial subjects that effectively obscures authentic agency and enforces a rigid understanding of difference as anything deviating from the colonizers' dominant discourse. This has real and serious implications for collective organizing for social change (Ibid). As any rejection of the oppressors' reality and experiences is framed as different and therefore wrong, it is imperative for oppressed groups to work towards the formation of an identity that is imbued with the power of naming their own experiences and articulating their own truths.

Section 1: Case Study One
Militant Black Feminist Hip Hop Leader in Recife: Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce

> Hip Hop is a daily fight, every day is a march, a manifestation, an occupation. I am painting, fighting, to occupy public spaces: for me, for you, for other women that I do not know. I believe as women we must discover our mission: One for all (Gabriela 'Gabi' Bruce, 28 years old, *Cajueiro Seco,* Recife, 2014).

In my fieldwork I was honoured to interview a pioneer and leader in the Black feminist Hip Hop movement in Recife. Gabriela "Gabi" Bruce is a multi-talented artist who specializes in creating graffiti art representing young Afro-Indigenous women. Gabi graciously invited me to her home, a wonderful artistic space enveloped in multicoloured walls, gorgeous paintings done by her and her partner and the aroma of soothing herbal tea. It was raining and windy outside, but listening to Gabi discuss her feminist Hip Hop militancy, the atmosphere was suffused with bright and animated energy. Gabi spoke for more than two hours about her journey to self-discovery as a young, Afro-Indigenous woman in the Northeast

of Brazil. She detailed her childhood experiences in the neighbourhood of *Arruda*, Recife, as being shy and discriminated against, even by her own family because of her appearance. Describing her mother's part of the family as racist, she explains how this had a profound impact on her self-development, self-esteem and how she identified as a black woman:

> I knew but I did not recognize myself as a black woman. I thought I could be black, but I am not so dark thus I thought I am not a black woman. The things I live are what I think. Here in our home I say, 'This space is my new family.' I say this because my mother's family is white and they are racist, really racist. I will tell you things that happened in my childhood made a great impression on me. My sister is really blonde and has green eyes. I was always the ugly one, the mute and silent one. Many things were wrong with me: too skinny, no breasts, the one with no bum (Gabi, 2014).

Gabi's lived experiences speak to Bannerji's theoretical analysis of how dominant colonial negative stereotypes of the "other" are oppressive (Bannerji, 1995). Not only was Gabi discriminated against because of her skin color, but because her body did not fit the racist stereotype of what a black woman should look like. In Gabi's experience, racist stereotypes were reproduced through her early family interactions. The deeply personal and raw wound of being rejected and somehow 'wrong' because of her physical appearance provided profound motivation to explore her identity, name her own experiences and express her truth. As Bannerji describes, this process of self-exploration of the oppressed is vital to social change.

Gabi's personal experiences as a young girl motivated her to participate in a pioneering Afro-Indigenous female lead Hip Hop group, *Coletivo Rosas Urbanos* (The Urban Roses Collective), in her neighbourhood of *Arruda* in *Zona Norte,* Recife. She describes these early experiences as empowering and liberating:

> For me the *Coletivo Rosas Urbanos* was the only group that was truly a group of women in Hip Ho They did things together, they were not women who stayed sitting down waiting for an event to go and dance or create graffiti. They were women who organized events for women. It was a collective, a Hip Hop school in the neighbourhood of *Arruda*. It was truly a space of empowerment (Gabi, 2014).

(a) The Re-Construction of Black Feminism

> Feminism is a great movement, but I can't sum up the struggles of black women with just one word, it is not enough (Gabi, 2014).

Gabi's formative experiences participating in Hip Hop spaces that were created and led by Afro-Indigenous women were the basis of her feminist development. She discovered her voice had value and meaning, despite being raised in a family where she felt discriminated against. Bannerji expands on this in the essays "But Who Speaks for Us?" and "Re: Turning the Gaze" (Bannerji, 1995). Specifically, Bannerji is interested in the construction of feminist knowledge. Bannerji explores exploding the concept of 'difference' as a socially constructed form of dominance of the white upper middle class feminists. As it becomes clear if a woman or group of women are different, what is the basis for measuring this? The marker for this evaluation is white Western feminists experiences as the standard and anything else is labelled as 'different'. Additionally, the politics of 'difference' also hides the social relations and reduces experience into a static concept of 'identity' (Ibid, 1995, 73). Bannerji advocates for social analysis starting from an 'authentic subjectivity' and experience. This calls for social actors who both produce and implement this knowledge, in a fused praxis, that articulates the situated experiences of non-white women. Bannerji's analysis comes to life through Gabi's testimony of her lived experiences and the complexities of feminism, racism and class discrimination:

> I am a feminist and I fight against sexism and against racism too. Because I know the difficulties of a white woman, who is rich and university educated are not the same difficulties of a black woman, who is poor and never had the opportunity to study or studied in the public education system which is of very poor quality. As a matter of survival, she must start to work very young and she cannot finish her studies. I can not put all of this in the same package and say all of this is feminism. This is why many women in the black feminist movement have given u Feminism is a great movement, but I can't sum up the struggles of black women with just one word, it is not enough (Gabi, 2014).

(b) Post-Colonial Feminist Analysis of Internalized Racism in Hip Hop

> Hip Hop is a black movement and there are many people who do not know they are black. It is because black woman is used as a pejorative word. I say no! (Gabi, 2014).

Gabi discusses some of the contradictions within the Hip Hop movement that inspired her critical engagement with Afro-Indigenous feminism as a tool to deconstruct and examine the realities of oppression. Gabi denounces the sexism she encountered in Hip Hop as a young girl, expressing how many women also reproduce the gender bias through lack of solidarity as women. She reflects that women who are perceived as sexy by men in Hip Hip are encouraged and included. Generally, these are women who also do not engage in critical feminist analysis. Gabi further analyzes the Hip Hop movement to be racist and many young black artists are exploited by white producers and event organizers. Through Gabi's radical Afro-Indigenous feminist analysis she insists Hip Hop needs to protest injustice against women, black people and the exploitation of children:

> The first contact I had with Hip Hip was through men. It is really common to see the reproduction of sexism with us women. For example, the is no solidarity in Hip Ho I do not feel welcome in spaces that are completely dominated by men, by sexist and macho men. However, if a women is sexy, she is really well received. But if she does not have a nice bum, then the guys don't like her. The men will find defects in all her Hip Hop art, they will say her art is bad. In addition, Hip Hop is a black movement and there are many people who do not know they are black. It is because black woman is used as a pejorative word. I say no! The Hip Hop movement is not sexist. It is men who are a part of the Hip Hop movement who are sexist. We see the exploration by the white people, people who have a tiny amount of knowledge of the Hip Hop movement and they exploit black people. This is the reproduction of slavery. I want to know what is Hip Hop in the state of Pernambuco doing to fight for the end of violence against women? Nothing. What is Hip Hop doing for the end of violence against black people? Nothing. What is Hip Hop? What is the origin of the movement? Many people don't know how to answer (Gabi, 2014).

(c) Feminist Hip Hop Art: Fighting for Safe Public Spaces for All Girls and Women

"There are many people who always want to have sex with very young girls. But I will always say to people, "Young girls are children and having sex with them is pedophilia: it is a crime." (Gabi, 2014)

The art that Gabi creates is purposeful with feminist intentions that critically analyzes gender, race and class from an Afro-Brazilian perspective. Gabi strives to strategically engage with the public to address female sexuality, girl's exploitation and racism through critical dialogue through her art. Her motivation is to provoke the general public to discuss issues that are considered private and reclaim spaces for women. She explains her political art work:

> For me it is important to paint strategically, with feminist intentions. For example, I painted a place in Recife with the simple question: "Does your wife orgasm?" When I finished painting a couple were looking at me and the husband said, "Logically, my wife orgasms." I said to him, "Do you think so? Are you sure?" He then looked at his wife with doubt in his eyes because suddenly he was not sure. He spoke to me, a stranger he had never seen in his life, rather than to his wife. For me that is very interesting. There was another graffiti I did about young girls that said, " Do you know that a young girl is just a child?" There are many people who always want to have sex with very young girls. But I will always say to people, "Young girls are children and having sex with them is pedophilia: it is a crime (Gabi, 2014).

The strength and dedication to creating safe public spaces for women and girls is exemplified through Gabi's Hip Hop art. She insists on speaking out and noted many times she is not welcome in many spaces because people do not want to hear her. Discussing the racism of Black History Month, which is in November in Brazil, Gabi asserts that Afro-Brazilians are an integral part of society and have many unsung heroines and heroes. As I wrote in the previous chapter on Capoeira, the historical figures of Zumbi and Dandara are celebrated during the month of November. However, Gabi questions this and demands to know where are the other black people in Brazilian history. Continuing to push to boundaries of race, gender and class, Gabi argues:

> My skin color is a racial question. Some people want me to speak, but do not want to listen to me. There are many spaces where people are snobs, because I am a woman, I am a young black women. For those who do not like me, you must listen to me. This is a form of empowerment for me. Inside Hip Hop it is a daily fight, every day is a

march, a manifestation, an occupation. People only want to do graffiti of black women and men during black history month in November. Why can I only speak of blackness in the month of November? Why are are only Zumbi and Dandara discussed? Are there no more black people to discuss? (Gabi, 2014)

(d) Two Afro-Indigenous Black Feminist Hip Hop Collectives: *Flores Crew* and *Flores do Brasil*

We have something in the *Flores Crew* that is very important, "Who decides and when? We do!" We are a black feminist collective and it is important who decides things for us. We do as black women (Gabi, 2014).

Gabi continues to examine the roots of Afro-Brazilian women's oppression. She expresses how through her work in the two collectives *Flores Crew* (Flowers Crew) and *Flores do Brasil* (Flowers of Brazil), both Afro-Indigenous Feminist Hip Hop organizations Gabi co-founded, that all women need to work together to deconstruct how intersections of race, gender and social class impact women different-ly. She connects the capitalism of the World Cup Soccer of 2014 in Brazil to the exploitation of black female bodies. This is significant because later in this chapter, Benedita da Silva, a pioneer in Afro-Brazilian women's feminism and the first female black Brazilian politician in many senior positions within the Brazilian government, emphasizes how capitalism in Brazil is racist, sexist and based on the subjugation of Afro-Brazilian women. Thus, Gabi's analysis is astute feminist political science that is contemporary and reflective of national Afro-Brazilian feminist leaders. Gabi draws from a solid theo-retical and practical framework when she asserts:

Historically, we have always suffered. Black women never had the option to choose, including having children. We were raped. And then we were pregnant and often forced to have abortions. Or we had to raise the children of our rapists or have an ille-gal abortion. We never had autonomy even over our own bodies. No one ever asked us if we wanted to samba in the streets. This is what is selling now in the World Cu It should not be, there should not be selling any images of women. Not of white women, not of Indigenous women (Gabi, 2014).

Speaking to the differences between women, Gabi also acknowledges that exploitation of all women is unacceptable. Her articulation of black women's struggles is connected, yet distinct from all women's struggle for equality. However, the stark lack of strong black women in public spaces, particu-

larly Hip Hop and the feminist movement is deeply embedded in the history of slavery and colonization.

These statements are reinforced later in this chapter through Benedita da Silva's critical engagement

with race, gender and class as rooted in the historical framework of racism in Brazil. Gabi's powerful

prose highlights the stark gaps in black Brazilian women's lived experiences. These gaps are questions

of human rights, democracy and racism:

> The figure of the Black women, you see many productions inside feminist spaces and inside the world of Hip Hop, as a pejorative thing. I hear many guys on the street, when they want to belittle their black wife say, 'Look what a stupid black woman.' Because it is so rooted, to be a black person is bad, a negative thing. No one says what a stupid white woman. These are all racial questions of human rights, democracy. I see in our state and in Brazil we are not on the agenda (Gabi, 2014).

However, through Gabi's work, she is determined to make a shift in society. Gabi insists on

working for the benefit of all women. In her current work in the *Flores Coletivo,* Gabi articulates how

she is fighting for the rights of all women, independent of whether the women like her personally or not.

She has made a political choice to shape the reality of social justice for women in general. This is signif-

icant as Gabi identifies many specific challenges that Afro-Brazilian women face, yet she recognizes

that until diverse women are working together for greater equality, human rights progress is limited.

Thus, Gabi advocates for a more inclusive feminist social justice and demands women come together to

make decisions:

> We have something in the *Flores Coletivo* that is very important, 'Who decides and when? We do!' We are a black feminist collective and it is important who decides things for us. We do as black women. One for all. Something we always say inside the collective is: 'For me, for us, for others.' I don't want to know if you agree with my clothing, my thoughts, my hair, if you don't like me. I am painting, fighting, to occupy public spaces: for me, for you, for other women that I do not know. I believe as women we must discover our mission: One for all. The *Flores Do Brasil* is another project with two friends, Karen Valentim and Marcely CelyFeliz. We have created an agenda that analyzes questions of black and indigenous women. If the black woman has no voice, the indigenous woman is completely silent, without a mouth, not able to speak at all. This is the theme we examine in our graffiti art (Gabi, 2014).

It is central to connect Gabi's feminist Hip Hop activism to the broader political landscape in Brazil. This demonstrates that Gabi's work is of national importance and connects the themes of race, class and gender to a broader political struggle for social justice. As I noted earlier, Benedita da Silva is a central figure in Brazilian politics. The complexity of race, gender and class from an Afro-Brazilian women's perspective in Brazil is astutely analyzed by Bendita da Silva, a pioneer of Afro-Brazilian feminism and the first Afro-Brazilian woman to hold many major political positions. In 1982 Benedita was the first Afro-Brazilian woman to hold a seat on the City Council of Rio de Janeiro City. She was elected a Congresswoman twice, in 1994 elected to the Senate, then Vice-Governor of the State. In 2003, Benedita was designated by former President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, to the post of the Ministry of Social Welfare, deploying social policies. Then in 2007 she was Secretary of State for Social Assistance and Human Rights in the State of Rio de Janeiro. In 2010 she was elected again to the Federal Chamber (da Silva, website).

Through Benedita's activism and struggles against racism and apartheid she has consistently worked to raise the profile of how race is an essential tool of analysis. She illuminates that no political parties in Brazil make race a central point of reference, even those that purport to work in solidarity with marginalized groups. Benedita notes that social class is always the focus of political debates on inequality, which she directly challenges as disguising racism. She traces her examination of race to slavery and colonialism. Benedita asks why were slaves in Brazil black and indigenous? As slaves came from various social classes, she argues that their enslavement cannot be attributed solely to economic poverty, but rather to the color of their skin. She asserts that Brazilian capitalism is founded on racism, specifically the exploitation of black women (da Silva, 1999).

Much as Gabi, in my fieldwork interviews, critiques the Hip-Hop movement for sexism and racism, Benedita critiques politics for failing to perceive the ethnic and gender differences in labor-capi-

tal relations. This is significant because both women are discussing how they are resisting the gender and racial oppression they face in their worlds. Benedita asserts that her struggle is to strive to democratize the state with public policies in the interests of the black population, specifically impoverished black women. She also notes that despite being a Senator she has experienced racism in multiple forms: in public spaces she has been excluded by being sent through the servants entrance at the legislature and searched by the police when she was driving a luxury car. Bendita connects her being a black women and moving through public spaces in ways that challenge the status quo (Ibid).

This is important as Benedita's analysis of race reflects not only Gabi's and Afro-Brazilian women in Hip Hip, but also many of my fieldwork interviews perspectives on the roots of social inequality stemming from racism. A major intellectual force in Hip Hop Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas spoke eloquently, and was quoted in the previous chapter on Capoeira, about the impacts of slavery on modern society in Brazil. Leandro's analysis is examined in the next case study of his life and work that reflects his dedication to passing his knowledge to street involved and homeless kids and youth on the streets of Recife.

Section 2
The Inequality of Democracy in Brazil: Drug Traffickers, Police Repression and the Rising Up of Militant Hip Hop Social Activism

As discussed at length in the previous chapter, the transition to democracy is Brazil has been fraught with many contradictory tensions. Multiple electoral political parties, freedom of expression and fundamental rights to housing, education and health are enshrined in the 1988 Constitution, widely perceived as a key institutional and legally legitimate document guaranteeing democracy in Brazil. However, the living conditions for the majority of Brazilians living in poverty and extreme poverty worsened considerably for a number of years after the shift to democracy (Goirand, 2003, 226). Although there have been some infrastructural improvements, such as improving access to electricity, paving roads and

an increased number of public phone booths, many Brazilians' civil and political rights have not been fully recognized and respected nor have they been able to fully use them. Simultaneously, community collective organizing became radicalized in response to the ongoing state violence rooted in the military dictatorship (1964-85). The contemporary forms of state violence include vestiges from the dictatorship such as police brutality and more recent developments of complex networks of corruption with drug traffickers and the increasing inability of state institutions to protect Brazilians living in poverty (Arias, 2006, 194).

As the case study of Gabi clearly demonstrates, young Brazilians who were raised and live in economically challenged neighborhoods or *favelas*, are not passive victims in the face of state and drug related repression and violence. Further case studies of Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, Hip Hop Artists from *Zona Norte*, Recife and Hip Hop and Community activists at *Ocupe Estrelita* reveal an argument in contrast to literature that claims an incomplete picture of drug traffickers and their complex relationship to the state and community members. Literature has characterized this in four main ways, which reflect attempts to classify and understand the political economy of Brazilian *favelas*.

(a) Community Response to the Violence of Drug Traffickers and Police

First, drug traffickers are often characterized as providing essential services to *favela* residents that an indifferent state has failed to provide (Perlman, 2010); second, drug traffickers have been presented as an alternative structure of power to a unsuccessful state (Goldstein, 2003); third, the history of patron-client relations in Brazil has been portrayed as the foundation of relationships between *favela* residents and criminals elites (Misse, 2006); finally, the relationships are portrayed as having created complex networks connecting criminals and the state to engage in clientelism with *favela* residents (Arias, 2006). However, I argue that through an examination of youth agency, demonstrated through their collective organizing in cultural resistance of Hip Hop to state repression and drug traffickers violence,

youth political activism is being asserted and discourses and practices of citizenship are transformed. As noted in the previous chapter on Capoeira, and further demonstrated in this chapter on Hip Hop, young people are demanding social rights, in the context of cultural citizenship and by critiquing the myth of racial democracy in Brazil.

To review from last chapter, a central concept that is being critiqued by youth in both Capoeira and Hip Hop is the myth of racial democracy in Brazil. There are two areas that are being problematized. First, the argument that racial mixing in Brazil has created a racial harmony and equality among races. Secondly, the essentializing of Afro-Brazilian culture as frozen in the past, as exemplified in tradition African based art forms, for example how the state commodifies static and folkloricized versions of Capoeira and Samba (Emboaba Da Costa, 2012; Pardue, 2007). However, both of these are far from the truth, as many Afro-Brazilians face a disproportionate amount of police violence, social and economic structural injustice and contemporary Hip Hop discourse emphasizes being 'black' is modern and dynamic (Ibid).

(b) Two Cases of Hip Hop Social Movements in the South of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro: MV Bill and Afro Reggae

Police brutality is a nation wide epidemic in Brazil that is centred on race, class and gender. The intimate connections between police violence against young Afro-Brazilian men and child drug traffickers is critically analyzed by two famous cases of a Hip Hop artist and a collective, both from the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro: MV Bill and the group Afro Reggae. The former is a Hip Hop rapper, documentarist, writer and a social activist who was appointed a Citizen of the World by the UN in 2004. MV Bill was born and still lives in *Cidade de Deus,* the Brazilian *favela* that became internationally famous due to the film of the same name (Meirelles, 2002). Deeply critical of the structural violence in Brazil, MV Bill speaks openly on the complex negotiations of race, power, class and sexuality. In his documentary film, *Falcão - Meninos do Tráfico* (MV Bill, 2006) and best selling books (MV Bill with Celso Athayde and

Luis Eduardo Soares, 2005; MV Bill 2006), he presents the young people involved in the drug trade in Brazilian *favelas* as youth who are dreaming of a better life for their families, but are faced with a lack of life opportunities. The youth who sell drugs become subjects in his film and critically discuss the role of the police as being central to the continuation of the drug trade. One youth states that without the drug trade the police would not receive their pay offs and thus would only make their salary, which is quite low. Therefore the police are in some ways dependent on the drug trade to improve their standard of living (MV Bill, 2006).

The collective of Afro Reggae was formed in 1993, in direct response to escalating police brutality and drug traffickers violence in *favelas* in Rio de Janeiro. A group of youth began with a locally written and printed newsletter about Afro-Brazilian music called *Afro Reggae Noticias* and became increasingly radicalized after a number of incidents of extreme violence in their *favela* of *Vigario Geral*. Police went into the community in the middle of the day and murdered 21 innocent residents, mainly Afro-Brazilians in their homes and on the streets. This is now referred to as the Massacre in *Vigario Geral* and is thought to be a retaliation for the murder of four white Brazilian police officers by drug traffickers the day before. Of the thirty white police suspects of the Massacre, only five were ever convicted. This was not the first example of police violence in Rio, a few weeks previously the police shot eight Afro-Brazilian street kids, while they were sleeping next to *Candelaria* church. (Neate and Platt, 2007) These incidents of extreme police violence were the basis for the social justice work of Afro Reggae. Both MV Bill and Afro Reggae are two famous examples of how through Hip Hop violence and poverty is being transformed within communities. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, the relationship between police repression, drug traffickers and poverty stricken communities, is also the deep motivation for many young Afro-Indigenous artists who are activists and are transforming Recife through Hip Hop as a social movement for justice and equality.

Founding members of the group were convinced the police violence was grounded in class and race power dynamics of inequality and were determined to develop the potential of Afro-Brazilian community youth through cultural practices. In addition, the founders saw that many youth were becoming active with the drug traffickers and reproducing the violence within their community. In fact, many founding members were former drug traffickers themselves and therefore had a profound understanding of what attracted youth to becoming involved. As one founder eloquently describes:

> So imagine you are young, black and poor . . . Then a trafficker gives you a gun and the first time you experience life as an agent is with a weapon. When you point the gun at someone you produce a reaction in your victim and, in doing so, you become a person, you appear, you become visible (Ibid, 132).

Afro Reggae is intent on providing social rights, which is clearly demonstrated in their diverse programs in the arts that are utilized to provide health care tips to *favela* residents. For example, *Barraca da Saude*, which distributes information about STDS/AIDS, hygiene, diseases in general, breast feeding, baby care and condoms in *Morro do Cantagalo* and *Lapa*. Through music and culture Afro Reggae are critically deconstructing the myth of racial democracy and demanding cultural citizenship for *favela* residents.

(c) Cultural Citizenship and Social Movements: Social Change Through Hip Hop

This brings us to two more key concepts and practices from the last chapter, cultural citizenship and social movements, which have become increasingly common reference points in Latin America since the 1980s. These movements for social justice include diverse groups such as women, Afro-Brazilians, gay and lesbians, and urban and rural workers around issues such as housing, health, education and access to food and clean water (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998). Social movements offer a unique view of politics because they create new forms of organization and representation between daily life and formal institutions. They are often ambiguous and contradictory and their creation is deeply historical and culturally situated. Therefore, social movements are not merely responses to crises at certain times,

nor do they only demand resources or increased political rights. The deep interconnectedness of movements and states demonstrates the blurring of the boundaries between the two. This is in contrast to earlier literature on social movements that depicts distinct and separate spheres for political actors (Rubin, 2003, pgs. 106-108).

Social movements place strong emphasis on citizenship's cultural dimensions that moves beyond legal rights. By redefining what is means to be an active and participating social citizen and how through transforming cultural practices, issues of inequality and exclusion which are rooted in the regions history of social authoritarianism, can be addressed in a deeper and more substantial way (Dagnino, 2003). The assertion of poor Brazilian's civil liberties to exercise their legal rights can be clearly seen in youth Hip Ho Through an examination of the significant critique of power, race, sexuality and class; Hip Hop is a vehicle for articulating diverse perspectives in a public way that demands recognition (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar, 1998).

(d) Police Repression, Death Squads and Assassination: Daily Realities of Recife

Recife is known as one of the most dangerous cities in the world, in 2009 over 3,500 people were murdered in a city of about 3,000,000. That means about 10 people per day were murdered. Many of the killings are done by Death Squads, who are mainly police officers. They murder predominately marginalized youth and street kids and justify it by claiming they are getting rid of undesirables. The head of the police homicide unit in Recife estimates Death Squads are responsible for about a third of all murders. To further specify whom is targeted, of the 3000 murders, 600 were street children. The classic position for murder victims is being forced to kneel and then shot in the head or being set on fire and burned to death. Death squads operate with impunity and often are involved in drug trafficking. Death Squads are lucrative businesses: the price to have someone killed by the Death Squads varies by how important and prominent the person is (Kittel and Williams, 2010).

The justification of killing by Death Squad members echoes Martha Huggins, a scholar who researches police impunity before and after the military dictatorships in Brazil. Huggins cites that police officers often explain their actions of torture as being a part of their moral obligation for justice (Huggins, 2000). This is further reinforced by popular opinion that the justice system is flawed and lengthy, as many charges never go to court and when they do can take up to ten years to process. When politicians give public speeches, the state's official position on responsibility for police officer's actions is brutally clear: In 2009, the Secretary of Security for the state of Pernambuco said that if the police officer is off duty and they murder someone, then the state has no responsibility (Kittel and Williams, 2010). It is important to note that many police officers disagree with the Death Squads and seek to protect those targeted by them.

Section 3: Case Study Two
From Police Brutality to Community Leader in Hip Hop Activism: Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas

> I want to show we may be poor, but we have knowledge to protest for our rights, our rights to be human beings. We are all human beings. We must have equality (Leandro, *Arruda*, Recife, 2014).

A shining example of a former street youth who has transformed the landscape of his community in Recife, through Hip Hip, is Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas. Strikingly handsome, with a muscular athletic frame, Leandro is a professional athlete and educator in multiple sports of skateboarding, surfing and breakdance. Together we are dedicated to rescuing street children through Capoeira and Hip Ho Leandro generously shared many hours with me detailing his lived experiences, his goals, hopes and dreams for a better Brazil. However, Leandro's childhood was fraught with economic poverty and he struggled to remain safe in a community filled with drug trafficking and incredible levels of police brutality.

When Leandro was just 12 years old, his 14 year old brother was murdered by young drug traffickers, stripped nude and left on the side of a public road to drive fear into the hearts of his family and community members. That same night, Leandro was in his front yard, when he witnessed a Death

Squad, coming down the alley towards his house. Leandro described seeing a group of eight-twelve men, wearing all black clothing and face masks, carrying machine guns. This is also the standard uniform of GATI, a special tactical unit of the police force. Leandro and I have witnessed GATI officers forcing unarmed community youth in unmarked police vans, in broad daylight. Leandro explained the police beat the youth inside the vehicle, take them to a nearby forested area, torture and murder them. This is a regular occurrence is his community. The youth are then claimed to have ties to drugs. Although this is often false, this justifies the murder in the eyes of the police.

During that night many years ago, when Leandro saw the Death Squad moving towards him, like liquid shadows from a nightmare, he immediately dropped flat against the concrete ground to hide. Holding his breathe and careful not to move a muscle, he watched as the group of assassins passed in front of his house and explosively knocked down the door of the house just across the way. Still fearing for his life, he remained lying on the cold, hard ground for a very long time:

> I stayed completely still for a very long time. I will never forget that night of pure terror. Watching the Death Squad coming closer and closer to me. I could hear them murdering the family next door. Why? They just got the wrong house. Because they were looking for my brother who had been murdered that same day. My brother, who was left abandoned on the ground in broad daylight. They stole all of his clothing, his wallet, everything. It was me that found him. I found him lying face down in a pool of his own blood. My big brother who I looked up to and loved so much (Leandro, 2014).

The devastation, shock and horror of that day remains a dull and throbbing memory for Leandro. It is demonstrated in this case study that Leandro's experiences with police violence are a central aspect of inequality in Brazil. Leandro clearly demonstrates how young people's collective action, in the form of Hip Hop activism, is asserting a social critique of the repressive state, the violence of drug traffickers and articulating their right to exercise cultural citizenshi It has been illuminated that many social movements in Brazil do not reject political institutions and the state, but argue for radical transformation of practice that moves beyond legal inclusion (Dagnino, 2003). This is somewhat consistent with the work

of Leandro, but lacks a contextual perspective that is deeply embedded in the daily lives of *favela* residents in Recife. The deep structural violence of police and drug traffickers has various layers of meaning. In many ways the rhetoric of violence in turned upside down by drug traffickers who often utilize language of democratic citizenship and social justice, in the form of rights, to describe and justify their illegal actions (Holston, 2009, 16; Blair, 2012). This is in contrast to the police who often justify their violent actions with language of moral obligation and professional duty (Huggins, 2000, 75; Blair, 2012).

In addition, residents of *favelas* are mobilizing for citizenship not through struggles of labor, as European social theory presents. Grassroots protest through illegal residence building and land conflict reflect historical abuses of the law and have resulted in outrage of the Brazilian poor against the quality of Brazilian citizenship (Holston, 2009, pgs. 26, 28). These complex factors present specific contextual elements that make the struggles of Leandro a model of collective youth political activism that critically engages in dialogue with the state, drug traffickers and *favela* residents to move beyond the binary of rejecting or transforming the state in Brazil.

Leandro is protesting the vast inequality demonstrated through the impunity of police brutality, drug traffickers' violence, poor quality of public services such as health care. In the previous chapter I discussed the perspectives of two police officers about the lack of human rights in Brazil. Their searing testimony is amplified by Leandro's experiences as a young, impoverished, Afro-Indigenous male: the intersections of race, class and gender that make up the group murdered at the highest rate in Brazil. Leandro identifies a great cause of systemic violence and inequality in Brazil due to the police impunity:

> The police are a huge problem. Police here in my neighbourhood are like criminals. Because when they arrive everybody is scared. I have been scared many times. Because the police here, they treat people in the lower middle class and low class with very aggressive behaviour. They treat us like we are not human beings. Every one is scared of the police repression. The police will throw any youth against the wall and assault them. When police arrive everybody goes running. Police have a lot of preju-

dice against poor Afro-Brazilians and they have the power of their badges and guns. For example, if a police officer murders someone, he will be sent to a special police holding. But a poor person, for the smallest infraction, will go to prison. I know a police officer who has murdered many, many people in my neighbourhood. For a long time the other police just ignored it. Then, after many years they asked him to take an administrative leave. That was all, no charges, no jail. I think he is still on the police salary (Leandro, 2014).

Leandro continues by discussing how the police are racist and the importance of protest through art:

I try to stay far from police because I know they are very racist. They especially hate certain styles of clothing, tattoos and Afro hair styles. They will frisk me very aggressively, but I always protest. When I was young I was very scared of the police. But today I will speak the truth. One day I was working on the street, dancing with my friends at the traffic lights for money. The police arrived and they only took the Afro-Brazilians dancers. We were in a really nice neighbourhood and I said to the police, "I have never seen you stop and frisk a white Brazilian, who studies at an expensive college, walking with nice clothes. Why?" The police could not answer. We do not have money, we can't pay for a lawyer, we are from the low class and I want to break this prejudice. I want to show we may be poor, but we have knowledge to protest for our rights, our rights to be human beings. We are all human beings. We all have thoughts, lungs, hearts. We must have equality (Leandro, 2014).

(a) From Groceries to Guns: The Protest of Daily Life

(b)

I was lucky they only humiliated me. I was lucky they did not murder me (Leandro, *Chão de Estrela*, Recife, 2014).

My experiences with Leandro in Brazil are evocative of his testimony. During 2013 Leandro and I were walking on the sidewalk, next to a major street, and close to our home in Recife. It was in the neighbourhood Leandro grew up in and he knew most of the people. It was Sunday morning, I was just getting over a bad stomach flu and the sun was shining brightly. As it was incredibly hot and humid, Leandro took off his shirt and tucked it into his shorts. This exposed his shoulder tattoo of the four elements of Hip Hop: a DJ turntable, a BBoy breakdancing, a graffiti spray can and a microphone for ra His beautiful curly hair was in an Afro style and bounced slightly when he walked. I was wearing a light skirt to my knees, flop flops and a tank to We were walking slowly, holding hands, on our way to go grocery shopping.

Suddenly, a car swerved onto the sidewalk in front of us, screeched to a stop and blocked our path. The car doors flew open and three of the scariest, meanest and largest men I had ever seen sprung out and thrust very large guns in our faces. It was like a horror movie on fast forward had come to life all around us. I just remember thinking calmly, "We are going to die here, right on this sidewalk." I also instinctively prayed, "Please don't let them hurt Leandro." I did not even think about myself, because I knew the police tend to target young Afro-Brazilian men. Then, the three men grabbed us like we were sacks of garbage, roughly shoved us into the back of the car and took off driving like banshees straight out of hell. There were no police badges or uniforms, I had no idea who they were, but they seemed like crazy monsters. Once we arrived at the police station it dawned on me they might be officers. I was shaking, but not from fear, from anger. We had done nothing wrong!

Once inside the station they pulled up Leandro's name on the computer and saw it was clean, without any criminal activity. While this was happening, a young and impeccably dressed man, with a beautiful new solid gold watch and light pink Ralph Lauren business shirt joined us. He said he was the deputy of police and they suspected Leandro had a gun. I had been in shock and silent until that point, but with this ridiculous accusation I quickly snapped to attention. I was livid with rage. I proclaimed in Portuguese, "How could Leandro have a gun when he is only wearing shorts and flip flops? This is absurd! He has no charges against him, I am a Canadian citizen and his wife. We live in this neighbourhood and were going grocery shopping! What is wrong with you!?!" I even surprised myself with my tirade. In a moment everything changed: the police were apologizing and offering to give us a ride back to the grocery store. Leandro describes how this experience is reflective of his daily life:

> The police officers wanted to show that the police in Brazil also stop and frisk foreigners. Because they knew you, Hilary were a foreigner. They wanted to show off. But when they saw I am a Brazilian citizen and I have a clean record they changed. They started to treat us more gently and smile at us. But I felt they were prejudiced because I am Afro-Indigenous Brazilian and you are white. They thought I was offering you drugs and I was a criminal. Also, when the police deputy came in, they changed. But

the first moments they were aggressive and brutal with us. They were crazy screaming at me to pull up my shirt, when I was not wearing a shirt! I have had many experiences like this: Once I was riding my bike and the police ordered me to lie on the ground. They insisted I had drugs on me, but I did not. I had to do what they said because they could easily put drugs on me and then arrest me. So I lay on the ground and they rolled up some newspaper like a giant cigarette and made me smoke it. At the same time one of them walked on my back. I had bruises for a long time. I was lucky they only humiliated me. I was lucky they did not murder me (Leandro, 2014).

Incredibly, despite Leandro's personal experiences of police brutality, impunity and analysis of systemic violence against impoverished, young Afro-Indigenous people he asserts that equality is important for all people, including police:

I believe that the police also deserve equality. But because of the power they have, to use a weapon, they often think they are different. They do not think they are equal to everyone. Because they have the power to kill who they want. This transforms a person to believe they are above the law and more than a regular human being (Leandro, 2014).

(b) Rescuing Children, Citizenship Rights and Democracy: Hip Hop as a Social Justice Movement

Our great function in Hip Hop is to be militant and fight for our rights. Change is in democracy, union of the people (Leandro, 2014).

Much as in the previous chapter's case studies of Mestre Relâmpago and Mestre Bambu, these formative experiences with violence, impunity and terror profoundly motivated Leandro to create a different life for himself and the children and youth in his community:

Art, specifically Hip Hop rescued me. Because I have seen the dark side is no way to live. My family too, my older brother was involved in crime and died very young. I saw that art could rescue me and expand my thoughts. Art could bring me new knowledge of another type of life. Shit, today I can see that I have a great responsibility with children here in Brazil, because they are drowning in systemic violence. My great function is to save them from this world of drowning and show them that Hip Hop has a social side. In the future they can gain a great knowledge for the rest of their lives through Hip Hop (Leandro, 2014).

The culturally and regionally specific knowledge that Leandro describes is generated by marginalized community members who practice Hip Ho Leandro's analysis of Hip Hop has many parallels to

the previous chapter where Capoeira was demonstrated to be a social movement and form of cultural citizenship. Through Hip Hop Leandro argues that human rights are transformed as marginalized communities organize to fight for their rights:

> I think our great responsibility as Hip Hop artists and Social Educators is to open children's minds to the positive side, not the negative side. Our great function in Hip Hop is to be militant and fight for our rights. I think that Hip Hop can show with dance and rap that we can improve opportunities for youth, for example better employment options. We can show the richness of the periphery, the *favelas*. It is not only crime, prostitution and drugs. We have a lot of richness, behind all of this. Society only shows the negative side of the *favela* on television. But behind that there are the genuine heroes who want to improve life and make a great change in Brazil. Together we must fight for human rights, for equality, for a better Brazil that has more opportunities for youth, that takes kids from the wrong path, from drugs, from crime (Leandro, 2014).

Leandro continues to explain how through democracy, union and peace are the solutions to the suffering, inequality and violence he experiences in Brazil. His insightful political analysis is reflective of Benedita da Silva's emphasis on democracy for greater equality for impoverished Afro-Brazilians:

> I think it is something really crazy Hilary. Because where people are the most in need is where people suffer the most. The people who have enough hide. The cars, the big houses all closed and full of security cameras. The people who are on the streets are fighting for their rights, but they do not have a 'checkmate' strategy to change Brazil. Many people think change will come in violence, in robbery, murder, crime. But change is in democracy, union of the people (Leandro, 2014).

Citizenship, democracy and humility are analyzed as being important to counter the destruction and suffering of capitalism and inequality. Leandro's analysis is further connected to Bendita da Silva's argument that capitalism in Brazil is grounded in racism. His words also reflect his Afro-Indigenous heritage and reverence for the land. In addition, Gloria Anzadula's theorizing from the previous chapter, of how nature, plants and animals embody spirituality and knowledge are echoed in Leandro's political theorizing:

> Citizenship and humility is respect for all people. With simplicity and education we must strive to preserve the environment, respect nature and all spaces that exist. Respect for the Earth is the most important. Men are destroying everything because of capitalism and inequality. Capitalism is everything that involves money. A capitalist is

a person that only thinks of money. Everything this person has he wants to exchange for money, not for knowledge, not for humility. Capitalism was created by man and is destroying the Earth. However, democracy is when you see this inequality and protest for all people to be equal. This is important because everything is equal for all, rights for all and opportunities for all. This we almost do not have. I see that we do not have much democracy here in Brazil (Leandro, 2014).

(c) Inequality, Health Care and Death: The State's Failure to Protect it's Citizens

Health care here is murder (Leandro, 2014).

Another example of the inequality of Brazil is the health care system. Leandro explains how there exists a great difference between the public health care of clinics in impoverished communities and the new centralized emergency units, *Unidade de Pronto Atendimento*, UPA (Emergency Response Unit). I also personally experienced the great disparity between the public health care and the private system. I became very ill in 2013 in *Arruda*, Recife, Brazil. I lost over 15 kg in month and could not keep any food or liquids down. When I went to the neighbourhood health clinic I was given a blood test, fluids through an IV and painkillers. The doctor told me I just needed to drink water and rest. I instinctively knew I was seriously ill as I could barely walk. I looked on the internet and self-diagnosed myself. Luckily for me at the pharmacies in Brazil prescription drugs are available without a prescription from a doctor. I got the medicine and was better the next day. However, Leandro's mother had a tragically different experience:

> It is vital that you have good health. Because, my God in Heaven, if you do not have health here in Brazil, you must be really careful. You will suffer because health care here is murder. I say this because the health care killed my mother. I took her to two neighbourhood health clinics and they gave her blood tests and said she was fine, totally healthy. But at night she would moan in agony with pain. I finally got my friend to take us to UPA in his car. The doctors were in shock. They told me my mother had over 10 serious illnesses: diabetes, high blood pressure and many more. That day she looked deep into my eyes and told me she loved me. The next day she died there. Health care here is no good. I will say it again and again. There is a big sign in my neighbourhood in *Arruda* that says, "In 120 days the new UPA will be ready." The work has been stopped for three months and nothing has changed. The community health clinic says they will build another UPA too, but I see nothing. I only see people dying here. Health care here in Brazil is misery (Leandro, 2014).

(d) Hip Hop as Decolonizing Methodology: The Program 'Hip-Hop Rescues Kids / Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças'

My art is not any kind of art. My art is a protest (Leandro, 2014).

The deep pain from losing his brother and mother have informed Leandro's self expression through his art as a form of daily protest to improve democracy in Brazil. He discusses his connection to spirituality which informs every aspect of his life:

> I am feeling in my own skin what truly is happening here in Brazil. It happened with me, with my family. I know there is a revolt inside of me. It is not physical, it is a spiritual form, a thought. I am thinking, debating really with myself. Trying to find the way to change Brazil. The way I have found is to always keep protesting. When the positive changes happens I will be old, very old. But I will see the change and I will know it is because I am always fighting, through my art. My art is not any kind of art. My art is a protest (Leandro, 2014).

These connections to Afro-Indigenous traditions are embedded in spirituality and a great respect for women which are the central element's in Leandro's work. This is rooted in his cultural heritage as an Afro-Indigenous Brazilian:

> I only had a little contact with my grandmother on my father's side, but she passed many good energies to me: a deep spirituality. She was a wise and silent woman, she spoke with her eyes. I felt a wonderful energy from her. Her religion was African, the religion of Candomble, which is related to our regional dance and music styles of maracatu and afoxe. I do not have much knowledge of this, but it is a religion of orixas that represent various parts of the Earth. My grandmother was a descendent of slaves, she was at the very end of formal slavery. She died when she was almost 100 years old (Leandro, 2014).

Leandro explains how his Afro-Indigenous culture infuses Hip Hop with a distinct flavour in Northeast Brazil:

> There are many excellent regional styles that exist in the Northeast: frevo, maracatu, xaxado, coco, ciranda that can be infused with Hip Ho Breakdance is a mix of all types of dance (Leandro, 2014).

Leandro is describing a decolonizing methodology grounded in a fusion of culturally and regionally specific music and dance styles that mix with Hip Ho Leandro's analysis is important because it re-

flects how art can decolonize spaces, structural violence can be revealed and new knowledge is created by those who were formerly silent and marginalized. The concepts of decolonizing education and cognitive imperialism are deconstructed by Marie Battiste, an First Nations Canadian scholar. Marie is a graduate of Harvard University (M.Ed.) and Stanford University (Ed.D), and writes extensively on cognitive imperialism and the decolonization of indigenous education. Battiste's article, "Indigenous Knowledge: Foundations for First Nations" (Battiste, 2004) and her conference presentation "Discourses of Difference: Cognitive Imperialism, Culturalism and Diversity" (Ibid, 2004) illuminate that cognitive imperialism is when cultural appropriation of Indigenous knowledge occurs and Eurocentric forms of thoughts are valorized and legitimized as the only truth. Success is framed as assimilation to dominant values and norms which results in contradictory identities and ambivalent self-concept.

Battiste asserts that post-colonial research methodology and practice are forms of reconstruction, through complex and contested scholarship, that look to the past for analyzing the inequities in the present. Post-colonial practices are tools to analyze structural violence and are viewed as liberation from colonial imposition removing brutal oppression and domination (Ibid, 2004). Battiste emphasizes the importance of the creation of new discourses and attitudes of diversity as the norm. The resulting dialogue negotiates healing through real human responses to dehumanizing history and constructs new knowledge based on voices of silenced and marginalized. Histories are reclaimed through the arts and oral traditions. Thus the new narratives require new ethics of research that embrace respectful dialogue and collaboration.

Leandro illuminates how the arts is an important form of self expression to tell his daily experiences through telling his story, the arts have been an escape from crime.:

> I have various arts in my blood. I am a break dancer, I juggle and sometimes do Capoeira. I like to rap, surf and skateboard. In this moment I really like music, because in music I can hear my thoughts. When I speak people understand me. People only listen when you open your mouth. If you stay silent no one will know your thoughts and

what your are feeling inside your body, what you are seeing. Because you see so much richness and you have nothing. So you run to the artistic side because it is the only way to leave crime, the wrong things (Leandro, 2014).

Leandro is quite humble in his accomplishments, but his successes are important and worthy of distinction. Recently, Leandro has been featured in national films, television commercials and has won two municipal skateboard championships. In addition, he and I have co-founded a program called Hip-Hop Rescues Kids*/ Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças* in Recife. Our vision is to rescue the children and youth that live on the streets and sniff glue through the culture and art of Hip-Ho Our desire is to improve the social equality in Northeastern Brazil. Our willingness is to expand opportunities for positive thinking, create safe spaces for artistic expression and encourage social justice through the arts. In November of 2014 we were selected for funding from the Brazilian government, FUNARTE, Ministry of Culture, Cultural Award in Hip Hop (https://www.facebook.com/hiphop.resgata).

Section 4: Case Study Three
The Heart of Hip Hop: *Zona Norte*, Recife

I have my dream, I am focused on it. We all deserve to dream (Esmeralda 14 years old, *Chão de Estrela, Zona Norte,* Recife).

Recife is a city marked with visually intense class, race and gender divisions. Even World Cup Soccer 2014 tourist material, designed to entice wealthy internationals with charming descriptions, is somewhat at a loss for the standard flowery and romantic phrasing, "Unpolished yet flush with a bygone air of colonial refinement, gritty Recife is the Northeast's cradle of culture and the capital of Pernambu-co state." (American Airlines, June 2014, 78) It a simultaneously tragic, ironic and almost hilarious note, the "Where to Shop" highlights only one must see location for tourists, "Recife's *Casa da Cultura,* housed in a former colonial prison, is like shopping for regional wares in a museum." (Ibid) What does it say about a city when the most appealing touristic highlight is a former prison? It is indicative of the his-tory of slavery and colonialism that very much impacts present day Recife. Many central public spaces,

such as the *Praca Do Diario,* which is now filled with child prostitutes, young mothers using crack co-caine and small children bathing in public fountains, was formerly where slaves were publicly tortured, bought and sold (Prefeitura da Cidade, Recife, 2014).

All areas of the city are replete with young Afro-Indigenous street kids sleeping in the streets. Passing them silently in the night, like jungle cats, are the luxury imported cars, driven by Afro-Indigenous chauffeurs, with Afro-Indigenous nannies in the back seat to attend to the white Brazilian children equipped with the latest tablet computers. These cars almost seem to float above the streets, with windows that are always shut tight, tinted dark black and doors that only open in secure, gated underground parking structures with armed guards, to provide no contact with the abject poverty and suffering of the streets above.

The city of Recife is often described by residents as having three 'zones'. The best known is Recife *Antigo,* or the centre of the city which is the hub of commercial activity and nightlife. With many streets paved in cobblestones, buildings can date back to 16th century Dutch colonial architecture. Secondly, the *Zona Sul* or South Zone comprises some of the most expensive neighbourhoods including the luxury beachfront properties of *Boa Viagem* (Good Travels) as well as some of the most dangerous *favelas*. However, it is *Zona Norte* that sprawls open like a wound, with seemingly endless slashes of *favelas*, poverty, suffering and misery. There are also pockets of relative wealth such as *Jaqueira, Espinheiros,* and *Gracas,* that provide locations for Hip Hop artists to work, dancing on the streets at the traffic lights, for much needed income to support themselves and their families. However, the majority of this area, which is comprised of more than twenty neighbourhoods, are *favelas*. Some have obvious names like *Linha do Tiro* (The Line of Bullet Shots) to hopeful *Arruda* (Rue, a traditional healing herb) ironic *Chão de Estrella* (Floor of the Star), which is one of the most dangerous areas in Recife for drug

trafficking, police brutality and murder. With an average of one murder per day, *Chão de Estrela* is also where Leandro and I live and work.

Zona Norte, which we call home, is also an area of a great wealth of incredible young Afro-Indigenous Brazilian Hip Hop artists who we collaborate on projects, such as: Elan 'Okado', who rose from poverty and drug trafficking to become one of the top twenty break dancers in Brazil; Viviane Souza, a young female Journalist who co-directed a documentary on Hip Hop; Guga, who advocates for helping others through Hip Hop; Filipe 'Norcola', who kicked his glue sniffing addiction through Hip Hop; Lucas, who is 15 years old and has already founded and produces a large and successful monthly community hip hop event targeted at street kids; Maurício De Moraes Noronha who raps about the social responsibility to address the issues of poverty; Luis 'Pardal', a father to twins and a Hip Hop Social Educator who escaped drugs through teaching street kids. These amazing young people have achieved great community transformation through Hip Ho

(a)   Child Drug Trafficker to Top Twenty Breakdancer in Brazil: Elan 'Okado'

> Break dance and God opened many doors for me. I was given the chance to teach classes, to leave behind the life of crime (Okado, Chão de Estrela, Recife, 2014).

Through my fieldwork research, I was honoured to have the opportunity to interview these talented and dedicated artists. All are determined to develop the potential of Afro-Brazilian community youth through cultural practices. In addition, many were youth who had become drug traffickers and reproduced violence within their own community. For example, Okado who now competes in international break dance competitions, such as Red Bull BC One, was a former child drug trafficker. He therefore has a profound understanding of the systemic violence and poverty that forces children to becoming involved in drug trafficking. During a break from his rigorous Hip Hop training schedule, Okado described his precarious childhood when at 11 years old he was the oldest child in the house, with four younger siblings and a ill mother to care for:

I started to break dance when I was 11 years old. I had the idea to go to the Santa Cruz soccer field and pick up the empty beer cans to sell at the recycling depot. I felt disturbed as I picked up garbage. My family was always very low income. I had to raise more money because my mom got really sick and I was the oldest of many siblings. I had started break dancing but I was not making any money from that. I left school to sell drugs, there was no other option (Okado, 2014).

Okado's powerful observation about the lack of opportunity for people in *favelas* is reinforced by interviews I accomplished with two white Afro-Brazilian women, a judge and public defense lawyer for children and youth rights. While waiting at the airport for my flight back to Canada, I noticed a new addition to the airport, a Minor's Bureau with legal counsel for the defence of child and youth rights. While looking at the various signs that were about children and youth, human rights and the World Cup I noticed two ladies sitting on a bench. Striking up a conversation with them, I was excited to discover they worked at this new legal counsel that specialized in protecting children and youth.

At 44 years old, Ana Maria Borba is in an important phase of her career, she was recently appointed to the position of judge with *Tribunal de Justiça do Estado de Pernambuco* (The Justice Tribunal of the State of Pernambuco). Ana Maria reflected the analysis of the police officer Fabio from the previous chapter when she succinctly states, "Human rights are rudimentary here." Further reflection was provided by Tereza Joacy, who at 78 years old has over fifty-five years of experience as a public defender and recently became a member of city council:

> I am a public defender. I have a special function to defend needy people, who do not have financial resources to pay a lawyer. Here in Pernambuco we must improve. In my case I work with abject poverty. Many of my clients do not have addresses, they live in *favelas* in houses made out of cardboard. Jobs do not exist so they pick up garbage on the streets. They have to go to the world of crime, principally drugs, to earn money to survive (Tereza Joacy, Recife, 2014).

After I turned off the tape recorder and the official interview was over, Tereza also added that many of her recent clients have been young child drug traffickers, 10-12 years old. She noted that it is a tragic

cycle of poverty that traps many young people and forces them to sell drugs as they have no other options to earn an income.

However, there are rays of hope. Okado explains how through break dance he was able to have many opportunities, including how older Hip Hop youth taught him to read and write. Okado's life has changed dramatically and he is dedicated, much as Leandro, to improving the conditions of his community through his art of Hip Ho Currently he is part of two Hip Hop groups and is determined to show the strengths of Northeastern culture to the world:

> Break dance and God opened many doors for me. I was given the chance to teach classes, to leave behind the life of crime. I never finished my studies, but thank God I know how to read and write. I learned with older Hip Hop youth, they taught me. I think that that same way I changed my life, many people in the community can be helped. My community helped me and I will always help all of them. I am in two Hip Hop groups: "PE Original Style" and "*Sou da Favela*" (I Am From the Favela). The names are important because here in the state of Pernambuco (PE) we have a unique regional style. I also aim to show the positive side of the *favela*, not the negative side presented in the media. We are citizens who work hard, men and women, creating culture, kids playing soccer and flying kites (Okado, 2014).

Okado's dedication to providing alternatives for youth in his community and have since become involved in many social programs that create spaces to improve *favela* youth's self-esteem who deserve respect as citizens. He works in various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Recife: *Favela News* an alternative media source and *Cores Do Amanha* (Colors of Tomorrow), a group of artists that work as Art Educators with vulnerable children and youth. Through participants in Hip Hop, Okado and the youth he works with are asserting their citizenship by exercising their cultural capacities to consciously reflect on how to practically address structural injustices. The young people are articulating that they need a space to talk about their challenges, feel connected and express themselves.

(b) From *Favela* to a Masters Degree in Journalism: Viviane 'Vivi' Souza
Co-Director of Hip Hop Documentary *A Hip Hop da Marginalidade e Opportunidade* (Hip Hop from Marginalization to Opportunity)

> Hip Hop has the capacity to transform people, to rescue them from marginality and violence (Vivi, *Chão de Estrela*, Recife, 2014).

As Leandro and Elan 'Okado' have both identified the importance of alternative media sources to showcase the cultural richness of the *favela*, a prime example of a young female community journalist is Viviane "Vivi" Souza. Born and raised in *Chão de Estrela*, Vivi has completed her Bachelor's degree in Publicity and is currently working on her Master's in Journalism. She co-directed a documentary about the positive strengths of Hip Hop in the peripheries or *favelas* called, *A Hip Hop da Marginalidade e Opportunidade* (Hip Hop from Marginalization to Opportunity) (Souza et al., 2013). Vivi interviewed Gabi, from earlier in this chapter, and many other central figures in Hip Hop through Recife. She reflects on her goals for the documentary and the power of Hip Hop to transform lives:

> There exists a lot of discrimination in society against the people in Hip Ho The discrimination is against the style of clothing, also lack of formal education and that the artists live in the periphery. My goal of making the documentary was to show that Hip Hop has the capacity to transform people, to rescue them from marginality and violence. Many of my friends have escaped drugs, now they teach classes and work. Some work dancing on the streets, others have done commercials and improved their lives through art. My projects are always about my community. There are many Hip Hop events in our community organized by residents that are peaceful and help rescue street kids (Vivi, Recife, 2014)

(c) Helping Others through Hip Hop to Change the History of Recife: Guga and Filipe 'Norcola'

> I will never stop fighting for Hip Ho I will not let the discrimination and prejudice stop me. I will use it as a source of inspiration to change our history here in Recife (Norcola, *Parque Jaqueira*, Recife, 2014).

Through Vivi, Okado, and Leandro's stories it is clear that Hip Hop does provide an escape from drugs and crime. This is further demonstrated by many young Hip Hop artists in *Zona Norte* that have formed a community that meets in the *Parque Jaqueira* (Jackfruit Park) every day to train, exchange ideas, discuss community challenges and go to dance on the streets together. The park is a beautiful

landscaped area with a running track that curves gracefully through ancient Baobab trees, lush flower gardens and outdoor fitness equipment. It is an interesting juxtaposition of class, race and gender divisions that often are almost segregated in many parts of the city. In this idillic setting wealthy white Brazilian's jog peacefully through the manicured grounds and at the centre there is a little orange house that is the meeting point for Afro-Indigenous Hip Hop artists, many who live in economic poverty. Almost daily two close friends, Guga and Filipe 'Norcola', can be found teaching each other intricate break dance movements, discussing their communities and going to work at the traffic lights for much needed income. Guga's analysis is evocative of Camilia's testimony from the previous chapter about being part of a broader community working together for social change. He emphasizes the importance of community in helping people through art:

> There are many people involved in drugs. We must have the conscience to rescue them with dance, graffiti, DJing. We are many, we are not alone. People need others to help them. Hip Hop is life. When you see someone enters the traffic lights to dance or creating graffiti on a wall, this is gratifying for us. This is not vandalism, it is for us to earn an income that we really need (Guga, Recife, 2014).

Filipe 'Norcola' further examines how his life was transformed through Hip Hop from a street kid addicted to sniffing glue to a young Hip Hop artist dedicated to changing the history of Recife:

> Together we are fighting to improve things because human rights are really weak. For example, my life was radically changed through Hip Ho I was a street kid. I sniffed glue and I only lived on the streets. When I saw break dance I fell in love with it. I identified with the movements and wanted to change my life. The guys who were dancing really helped me. If it was not for Hip Hop I do not think I would be here. I will never stop fighting for Hip Ho I will not let the discrimination and prejudice stop me. I will use it as a source of inspiration to change our history here in Recife (Norcola, Recife, 2014).

(d) Fourteen Years Old and Founder of Hip Hop Event '*Batalha do Terminal*': Lucas Sang

> What was my objective? To catch the kid's attention, the ones that are in the community, the *favela*, to show that they too are a part of our culture's growth (Lucas, *Parque Jaqueira*, Recife, 2014).

While I was at the *Parque Jaqueira* I noticed another young Hip Hop artist, Lucas Sang, who last year at just 14 years old founded and now organizes the very successful monthly neighbourhood Hip Hop event called *Batalha do Terminal* (Battle at the Terminal) which attracts between 100-200 youth, in the community of *Agua Fria* (Cold Water). As Filipe 'Norcola' described how discrimination inspired him to effect social change, Lucas explains how racism has affected his work:

> Our culture also has a lot of prejudice, a lot of racism. Many times people see a person wearing Hip Hop clothing and think this person is a thief, a drug addict. This is just ignorance. I am always here to show our culture's positive side. I am always here to help, to answer questions. Whenever people have doubts, I am here to explain (Lucas, Recife, 2014).

His drive to facilitate understanding, to break down racism and prejudice inspired Lucas to start organizing community events. Lucas explains his motivations to reach out and help young children in poverty in his community through Hip Hop:

> I started to organize *Batalha do Terminal* last year in 2013. In December I did the first one in the neighbourhood of *Cajueiro* (Cashew Tree). What was my objective? To catch the kid's attention, the ones that are in the community, the *favela*, to show that they too are a part of our culture's growth. For the kids to get out of the world of drugs. To create a positive side for them to choose. My objective was for the people who are really from the community, the *favelas* to start to improve the *favelas*. Today there are many Hip Hop events in the centre of the city, really big with lots of people. But my objective was to start from the bottom to the to For the young people to evolve and live well. Now I do the *Batalha do Terminal* in *Agua Fria*. We have a battle of improvised rap MC's, a battle of breakdance. Lots of people are participating. I feel so gratified to see our community evolving well. What I love to see the most is young kids, in the middle of the event yelling, I think their raps are so cool (Lucas, 2014).

Lucas, similar to Leandro, explains how rap can open a person's mind to new ideas. He also notes that Hip Hop artists who dance at the traffic lights also are gaining valuable skills for future employment. Much as other Hip Hop artists, he connects unfinished formal education to poverty and lack of opportunity:

> A MC, a person who sings rap music, has an open mind to exchange new ideas. There are many people who work at the traffic lights who have much more capacity to do an interview for a job than many who have finished their formal studies. Many people do

not finish their studies, why? Lack of opportunity. But if you stop and speak to these people, you will see they are very intelligent. This is all through culture (Lucas, 2014).

(e) Socially Conscious Rapper and Graffiti Artist: Maurício De Moraes Noronha

Creativity is the voice of the excluded (Maurício De Moraes Noronha, Recife Antigo, Recife, 2014).

As Lucas has described, a key method in Hip Hop to effect social change is to describe lived experiences through improvised rap lyrics. Maurício De Moraes Noronha, a Hip Hop graffiti artist and rapper eloquently explains:

Creativity is the voice of the excluded. The voice of the person who is not represented on television or radio. People have the necessity to express themselves. When you look at a child that does not know how to speak yet, there is a great willingness to express as a human being. A small part of a rap, I wrote about our social responsibility, says, "Inequality in the country of Carnival. It is always your fault when a child is forced to sleep on the street (Mauricio, Recife, 2014).

(f) From Drugs to Community Hip Hop Leader for Social Change: Luis Pardal

Through Hip Hop, rap music lyrics, people can know the history of politics and when it is time to vote, they will make informed choices (Luis Pardal, Alta da Santa Terezinha, Recife, 2014).

Similar to all testimonies featured in this chapter have demonstrated, Luis Pardal asserts that art and culture are a vital part of democracy. Pardal, a father to twins, teaches breakdance, graffiti and skateboarding to needy children with the international Hip Hop program for peace, *Guerreiros Sem Armas* (Warriors Without Weapons) and the local *Zona Norte* artistic collective, *Movimento Eco Cultural* (Eco-Cultural Movement) in a vulnerable socio-economic community of *Alta Da Santa Terezinha*. He describes the systemic violence of rampant crime and drug trafficking in communities that lack government assistance for basic services. Specifically, rap lyrics serve to transmit knowledge and consciousness to the general public about their rights and how to transform their lives:

Art and culture are extremely influential for people. Democracy today, you know on television, politicians always make social proposals. However, when they win they never implement them in the neediest communities. It is a marketing strategy and for

me it distorts democracy. Our work is to understand our rights. Through Hip Hop people can know the history of politics and when it is time to vote, they will make informed choices. This is done through rap lyrics that sing our reality. They speak about current politics and society. This alerts people to become more conscious. This is social change I believe (Luis, Recife, 2014)

Pardal also attributes his personal transformation to Hip Ho He describes how he was involved in drugs and crime, but through listening to rap lyrics that described escaping from that lifestyle he became inspired to overcome:

> I am grateful from the bottom of my heart to Hip Ho It transformed my life. Because in the past I lived a life of drugs and crime. But through rap I was able to become conscious of my lifestyle. When I heard people rapping about struggling to have a good life, I saw I could overcome and succeed in life (Luis, 2014).

Section 5: Case Study Four
*Ocupe Estelita***: Youth Social Movement Fighting for Democratic Urbanization in Recife**

> I would like to share one more thought, something I have really learned through my time here at *Estelita:* We want democracy, truly horizontal distribution of power and decision making (Ednaldo, 20 years old, *Ocupe Estelita,* Recife, 2014).

As demonstrated throughout the previous chapter on Capoeira and this chapter on Hip Hop, vast and pervasive inequality, in multiple intersecting areas of grossly unequal access to basic material conditions of food, housing and health care; police brutality and drug traffickers violence; and the lack of ability for communities living in poverty to exercise their political rights, exists throughout Brazil and specifically in the city of Recife. Young Afro-Indigenous artists, in Capoeira and Hip Hop, are mobilizing for community development that is transforming citizenship, human rights and democracy in Brazil. Through cultural activism, young community leaders are gaining access to basic material conditions, opportunities to express their lived experiences and to improve their quality of life. However, the grassroots movement involves many more collectives of artists and street involved and homeless kids fighting for democracy in Recife. A brilliant example of protest through the arts is *Ocupe Estelita* (Occupy *Estelita*), an incredible social movement dedicated to democratize the urbanization of public spaces in Re-

cife. When I was in Recife for fieldwork interviews in 2014 I was fortunate to visit *Ocupe Estelita* and interview many of the phenomenal multidisciplinary young artists, who faced intense state sponsored violence, for their brave actions.

Although the movement has no specific leader and is a horizontal organization that encourages public participation, the main group I encountered at the site was comprised of fifty to sixty young Afro-Indigenous artists and street involved and homeless kids and youth, mainly from 10-25 years old. There are also lawyers, architects, sociologists, professors, engineers, students, doctors, journalists and many more who make up the movement. Numerous community workshops, often facilitated by young Hip Hop artists, involve marginalized youth in critical dialogue related to the state, every day violence and Afro-Brazilian culture. Their mobilization, over the last three years, is inspired by advocating for the rights of all citizens to take part in urban planning regarding *O Projeto Novo Recife* (The New Recife Project). *O Projeto Novo Recife* is a closed project, without public consultation that is led by the government in partnership with private condominium developers (http://www.novorecife.com.br/). Their plan is to take over the historic site, the *Cais José Estelita* (*José Estelita* Pier), and build luxury condos in a gated community. *Ocupe Estelita* is peacefully standing up to the elitist and exclusionary development model, through occupying the *Cais José Estelita* for more than four months in 2014, and believes in democratic and inclusive urban growth. *Ocupe Estelita* is supported by various national and international academics and organizations, including a visit from scholar Professor David Harvey. Professor Harvey is the Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), who advocates for the idea of 'right to the city' through collective participation in shaping urbanization (Harvey, 2008).

(a) Musical Events as Political Action to Liberate Public Spaces - Co-Founder of *Som Na Rural* Roger Renor

> For example, *Som Na Rural* musical events: we have never seen our work as a show, but rather a political action. We want to liberate public spaces for all people, not close public spaces for businesses, famous people or the rich (Roger Renor, Recife Antigo, 2014).

When I first arrived at *Ocupe Estelita,* it was a balmy Sunday evening and there were hundreds of people enjoying one of many free outdoor Hip Hop concerts, the most well known being *Criolo Doi-do,* a nationally famous rap artist (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ8xl_BGSWQ). The concerts were organized by *Som Na Rural,* an eclectic group of artists, television producers and musicians. I had the opportunity to meet with one of *Som Na Rural's* founders, Roger, who eloquently explained the importance of *Ocupe Estelita* for increasing safety in all public urban spaces*:*

> What is happening at *Ocupe Estelita,* is an occupation led by artists. The people have the consciousness as artists to be visible in public spaces. There was a time when the streets of *Ocupe Estelita* were very dangerous because it was abandoned and there were no people on the streets. If you would walk there alone, it was a very insecure place. But, when people occupy the streets we are all safer. We are our own security. For example, *Som Na Rural* musical events: we have never seen our work as a show, but rather a political action. We want to liberate public spaces for all people; not close public spaces for businesses, famous people or the rich (Roger, Recife Antigo, 2014).

(b) Popular Education Pedagogy, Democracy and Street Kids: Juliana

> We use the pedagogy of Popular Education, for the people and by the people, rather than in formal academies or schools where the teachers are always in an expert position. Here the kids also teach us a great deal. This is important because these kids are from the community, they cannot pay for a private school, a good quality school. This is a question of democracy, education for all rather than segregated by class (Juliana, 20 years old, *Ocupe Estelia,* Recife, 2014).

After the concert I went through the very large site and saw many young people in tents, camping out to occupy the space. There were more than a hundred tents, an improvised community kitchen that accepted food donations and had volunteers making free food for anyone who was hungry, and lots of laughing and dancing. The energy was overwhelmingly positive and peaceful, and I noticed many

young women and children creating art and hugging. I quickly met a young woman, Juliana, who had been peacefully occupying the space for over two weeks. As she explained her role in the occupation I was deeply impressed with her critical analysis of deconstructing race, gender and class divisions through 'Popular Education'. This concept and practice was developed by the famous Brazilian educator born in Recife, Paulo Friere (Freire, 1970, 1973):

> I am here as an Art Educator. I work with children here in the occupation. The kids live just behind this area, many in improvised homes. We work with the question of art, specifically painting, and how to address the challenges of the city. For example, I have done various activities about how to conceptualize this space like a miniature city, how do we want this space to be used? We think about how to feed everyone and how to educate our minds. We use the pedagogy of Popular Education, for the people and by the people, rather than in formal academies or schools where the teachers are always in an expert position. Here the kids also teach us a great deal. This is important because these kids are from the community, they cannot pay for a private school, a good quality school. This is a question of democracy, education for all rather than segregated by class (Juliana, 2014).

(c) Breakdance versus Oppression: Hip Hop Cultural Citizenship Transforming *Favelas* - Artist Activist and Community Leader Iori Barrios

> It is always like this, when someone wants social change and the system does not agree, the population is oppressed along with everyone who embraces the cause. Through break dance I try to change kid's minds, to escape the negativity of the *favelas* (Iori Barrios, 23 years old, *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

The next morning I had returned home and was getting ready to take the family dog, *Raposa* (Fox) for a walk, when the disturbing news coverage of state sponsored violence at *Ocupe Estelita* flashed across the television with lightning speed. The most aggressive level of the military riot police, *Choque* (Shock), with grenade launchers and armoured tanks, had stormed the occupation at dawn and brutally forced the young occupants out. Young pregnant women were screaming through tear gas, street kids had gaping wounds from being shot at close range with rubber bullets and tents were being set on fire. Those images remain frozen in my brain, like an apocalyptic horror sprung to life. I instinctively snuggled *Raposa* closer to me and took a deep breathe. I was devastated for my dear friends and all the

young people who had courageously resisted the police and refused to leave. What I did not know then was that I would return to *Ocupe Estelita* many more times and find the community resilient and fighting for all our rights to be safe in public spaces.

A few days later a close friend, wildly popular with the artistic community, militant Hip Hop Social Activist and Community Art Educator, Iori Barrios, insisted it was safe to return to *Ocupe Estelita*. Armed with only my tape recorder and camera, I plunged into the night. After the brutal police repression, the occupation was forced out of the vast open space and was on the fringes of the *Cais José Estelita*. This re-location was perhaps a blessing in disguise as it meant increased visibility, protesters were now close to a major road, where many cars that passed honked their support. The community had quickly developed workshops about political rights, evacuation protocol and safety procedures to alert protesters to police presence. The atmosphere was a mixture of creativity, militant protest and gentle caring. I was instantly filled with awe, respect and in love with the passion and dedication of these young artists who were risking their lives to improve the safety of public spaces for us all.

I quickly found Iori and he was eager to discuss the importance being a part of *Ocupe Estelita*, as a young Afro-Indigenous Brazilian citizen and Hip Hop artist speaking out against police brutality and oppression:

> First of all turn off your television and live in reality. Because many people think that here, at *Estelita*, there is only a group of homeless people. But it is on the contrary, many are university students, people who work within the system and at the same time are embracing the cause of *Estelita*. It is always like this, when someone wants social change and the system does not agree, the population is oppressed along with everyone who embraces the cause. It was not only people in the streets who were oppressed, but students, people who work, citizens who pay their taxes. The police destroyed the heart of the movement. Now we have only sixty-eight people here, but we had many more. There were amazing people, many different art educators. But they all fled, because no one wants to get hit with a rubber bullet, tear gas or a grenade (Iori Barrios, 23 years old, *Occupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

Iori continued to explain connections between capitalism, failure of the state to provide basic services

and the importance of art educators who teach Popular Education through Hip Hop for street involved

and homeless kids:

> Hip Hop is really valued as a form of Popular Education because street kids do not
> have a good quality of education. This is reflective of systemic violence and inequality,
> education for the poor is not good quality here in Recife. Many young kids turn to
> drugs, to prostitution and other crimes. Our government invests more in soccer than
> education or health care. This leaves kids without medicine and without anything to
> do. They must do something to generate income, because everyone needs to survive.
> They are also on the street because they have suffered abuse at home. They run away
> to find a refuge with their friends on the streets. Through break dance I try to change
> kid's minds, to escape the negativity of the *favelas* (Iori, 2014).

Just as Iori was finished speaking, a group of young street kids came rushing over to us, all talk-

ing at once. They were mainly young boys, between the ages of 10-14 years old. As I stood up to go to

my next interview, I heard Iori embracing his multi-faceted role as security, educator and surrogate big

brother, calming the groups of kids by assuring them he was there to help them. I looked back over my

shoulder and in an instant he had transformed the situation, with all the kids laughing and huddled close

to him. A giant smile flashed across my face, my spirits were energized and I was ready for the next ad-

venture of the night.

**(d) Vulnerable Children, Art and Public Space: The Fight for Equality and Rights -
Seventeen year old Indigenous Feminist Leader Maria Augusta**

> We have noticed a great change in the children for the positive through art education.
> The majority of children here do not have a home, they lack knowledge of their rights
> to education and health care. While these kids have practically nothing, there are oth-
> ers who have so much money with everything they need (Maria Augusta, 17 years old,
> *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

I was greatly honoured to have the opportunity to continue interviewing courageous young social

activists. A major force in Indigenous feminism and key member of *Ocupe Estelita*, yet only 17 years

old and standing perhaps 5 feet 2 inches, is Maria 'India' Augusta. She graciously shared her insights

about inequality and how collective art education, in collaboration with street involved and homeless youth, was transforming human rights:

> Not only myself, but many people here in *Ocupe Estelita,* we started working with many of the children who live in the community with painting. You can see the reflection of what the children are living through their paintings. They paint what they live and also what they want to live. We also have many diverse workshops in kite making, juggling, musical instruments. We have noticed a great change in the children for the positive through art education. The majority of children here do not have a home, they lack knowledge of their rights to education and health care. While these kids have practically nothing, there are others who have so much money with everything they need (Maria, Recife, 2014).

Maria describes the evolution of *Ocupe Estelita,* how she became involved at just 14 years old:

> *Ocupe Estelita* has been a movement for three years, I have accompanied all the activities since the very beginning. For the first two years we had an event on Sundays in front of the *Cais José Estelita*, it was a festive and fun atmosphere we created. This year, the demolition inside the *Cais* started happening at night. When I found out I starting coming here at dawn to stay, along with a hundred people we mobilized, to stop the machines. We were able to stop the demolition and when the machines left we went in to occupy the space. However our purpose was much more than just to stop the demolition, we saw the public space was too large to be privatized. Especially when right next to it, many people have improvised homes they constructed. This space is public for all, not just for a small privileged percentage (Maria, Recife, 2014).

(e) Gentle Voice, Powerful Message: The Brave and Intellectual Words of A Street Youth - Fourteen year old Artist Activist, Adilson

> The government wants to destroy everything here to build fourteen buildings for rich people. They do not want this space for people who are poor. There are many people who live here, underneath the viaduct. They always sleep there. One day the police will rip us away. They will force all the residents here to leave (Adilson, 14 years old, *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

After we exchanged fierce hugs, a crowd of people surrounded Maria, eager to whisk her off to implement the next arts education worksho Full of positive energy, I saw Iori, standing with a beautiful young man, with a heartbreaking smile and eyes filled with sorrow. Iori explained this was Adilson, a 14 year old street youth who had been injured by the rubber bullets of the *Choque* riot police as he tried to flee the police assault at *Ocupe Estelita*. I was startled to see a huge, very deep and open red wound on

Adilson's leg and observed as he visibly struggled to walk with a pronounced hopping lim As we sat

down to talk, I was deeply humbled as he spoke with a soft voice full of kindness, of the police repres-

sion he encountered. During our interview and straight out of a children's story, a small kitten jumped

into his lap, and he held her with a compassionate grace that gave further credence to his gentle charac-

ter:

> I have been here at *Ocupe Estelita* since the beginning. A rubber bullet from the *Choque* struck my knee. I was on top of the viaduct and the *Choque* were right on top of me. I jumped from quite high up to escape but I fell in a bad way. I went to the hospital but they did not do anything. I understand urban rights, but in practice they do not seem to exist. The government wants to destroy everything here to build fourteen buildings for rich people. They do not want this space for people who are poor. There are many people who live here, underneath the viaduct. They always sleep there. One day the police will rip us away. They will force all the residents here to leave (Adilson, 14 years old, *Ocupe Estelita*, 2014).

The brave honesty of his words almost moved me to tears, but I struggled to remain composed through

our interview. After he gave me the most tender and featherlight hug, Adilson disappeared into the

community of tents, artists and hope. I silently prayed that his prophetic words would not come true, that

he would be safe and free to share his gentleness.

(f) Capitalism, Police Brutality, Citizenship: How Working Together is Changing Democracy in Recife - Cultural Activist, Performer and Human Rights Advocate Ednaldo

> I see that together, myself with other people, we are strong. But not with just any people, they must be people who want to fight for equality, for respect, for affection, for love (Ednaldo, 20 years old, *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife, 2014).

Lost in thought, I strolled through the grass, retracing my steps towards the community kitchen.

As I meandered around groups of people sitting on brightly coloured blankets making intricate jewelry

and playing with neighbourhood dogs and cats, ariel artists teaching trapeze workshops and live musical

jam sessions, I felt as if I was was in an utopian artistic paradise. I noticed a person just ahead waving at

me. Their radiant smiling face was so full of joy, I knew I had found my next interview. As soon as I said

'Hi' my new friend enveloped me in giant hug and proceeded to talk with great passion and excitement

about their work in transforming human rights and democracy through their role as an Art Educator. Ednaldo, a visually striking young Afro-Brazilian is a dancer, musician, actor and educator of the specific regional Northeast cultural forms of Afoxe, Maracatu and many more. He graciously discussed his work:

> I am an Art Educator in the popular dances here in the Northeast, specifically from the state of Pernambuco. I am also a musician as a drummer, a singer and actor in theatre. In the community I work a lot with the question of human rights. I work with artistic groups, dance companies from the community to rescue youth at risk (Ednaldo, Recife, 2014).

Ednaldo had a scholarly analysis of the connections between police brutality and capitalism:

> The government often censors certain ideas to dominate communities and keep people ignorant. In this manner, the government and the state are able to further their interests through manipulation. Thus, the working class will continue to serve the rich. For example, here at *Ocupe Estelita*, the luxury condominiums they want to build here, on public land, will favor the rich. At this moment we are in this area because we were aggressively expelled by the *Choque* riot police, who also serve the rich. This land was sold to a group of capitalists, groups that want to enrich a few people that already are wealthy (Ednaldo, 2014).

Making more specific connections between capitalism, poor quality of public education and the lack of awareness of rights, Ednaldo demonstrated a keen sense of the linkages between transforming education and increasing knowledge of citizenship:

> Therefore the residents of our communities do not have a genuine sense of their rights because they are taught to be individualistic capitalists by the government. The government has power because of the lack of political awareness, which is not taught in classrooms of public schools. In fact, I believe public education is worsening because awareness of citizenship and rights are absent from public education. Today children and youth only learn addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. Why cannot they teach children how to multiply affection and respect? (Ednaldo, 2014)

Ednaldo concluded with a passionate political analysis that called for democracy in the form of horizontal distribution of power and decision making. He statements echoed many of the interviews documented in this chapter and in the last chapter, that working together collectively through cultural activism, is the way forward:

I had a moment that was very interesting to realize. I see that together, myself with other people, we are strong. But not with just any people, they must be people who want to fight for equality, for respect, for affection, for love. I only just met the people here at *Estelita*, I do not know their life stories, but we embrace each other. It is clear that in the way we speak to each other, the manner we look at each other that we have respect for each other. I would like to share one more thought, something I have really learned through my time here at *Estelita:* We want democracy, truly horizontal distribution of power and decision making. We all have strengths and we must respect them, that is our only demand. I can be an actor, writer, dancer. Everything I want, I know I can. We all contribute, working together sharing our time and space with each other. I think together we are a collective of respect, caring and love. It is humility that we need more of in the world (Ednaldo, 2014).

(g) *Ocupe Estelita* Conclusion - Raising Awareness of Public Spaces for All

In August 2014, the artist activists decided the further risk of police violence was imminent again. Together many of them decided to slowly close the occupation project. Although there were tears and some heavy hearts, overall the young people felt they had contributed to the goal of bringing together marginalized young artists and homeless people to peacefully protest for social equality. Ednaldo provided updates that *Ocupe Estelita* is now a movement to occupy the internet and stage large scale events at the site, and throughout the city, to continue raising awareness of the importance of public spaces for all. A recent event at *Cais José Estelita* on November 16, 2014 attracted six thousand people (http://www.ocupeestelita.com.br/seis-mil-pessoas-comparecem-ao-cais-jose-estelita/) to continue mobilizing support and collecting clothing, household items and non-perishable food for the impoverished families that continue to reside in the *Cais* (http://www.ocupeestelita.com.br/estelita-volta-ser-ocupado-domingo-16-de-novembro/).

Section 6: Chapter 3 Conclusion - Looking Towards the Future
Artist Activists Transforming Equality and Democracy in Recife

> I do not have any power alone to change Brazil. I have to join together with faith, with
> other people to fight social inequality in Brazil (Leandro, *Ocupe Estelita*, Recife,
> 2014).

In closing, I look to Leandro's brilliant analysis of how through daily struggle for survival, mar-

ginalized Afro-Indigenous artists' cultural activism for equality transforms democracy in Brazil. Lean-

dro's words are reflective of 95% of fieldwork interview responses:

> In everything I do, there is always one thousand percent of protest on top of what I am
> doing. This is because I have seen many terrible things and I have revolted. I do not
> have any power alone to change Brazil. I have to join together with faith, with other
> people to fight social inequality in Brazil. I have nothing, just a surfboard, a skate-
> board, and some old clothes. But I have so much inner strength to succeed in life. I
> will never give u I will aways fight for my rights and the rights of people who are suf-
> fering. I feel pain in my body, hunger, but I am fighting to be alive. If we join together
> all the artists and protest on the streets for the rights of the people. I mean the people in
> the communities rising up together with all the artists. The powerful here, the gover-
> nors, the deputies, Dilma, our President: if we all join together and try to speak to her,
> without violence, I think we could transform Brazil with peace (Leandro, Recife,
> 2014).

The four case studies of Gabi, Leandro, *Zona Norte* and *Ocupe Estelita,* covering over seventeen

interviews in this chapter, draw connections between gender, race, class and structural violence. Through

Hip Hop, Afro-Indigenous youth articulate their cultural roots and are transforming the deep structural

inequalities that mark their daily lives. Through expressing their lived experiences in Hip Hop as a de-

colonizing methodology, young people are demanding visibility through critiquing the myth of racial

democracy and engaging in cultural citizenshi Overall, the inspiring work of the young Afro-Indigenous

artist activists featured in this chapter is a catalyst for social equality: specifically the re-distribution of

wealth, freedom from violence and access to basic services for communities living in poverty in North-

East Brazil. In particular, Leandro and I look forward to implementing our program "Hip-Hop Rescues

Kids / *Hip-Hop Resgata Crianças*" in Recife for 2015. Working together with diverse communities, we

are committed to social justice and equality for all.

Chapter 4: Thesis Conclusion - 'Street Scholars' are the Heartbeat of the Academy

In conclusion, this thesis provides case studies of how marginalized youth are transforming their basic material conditions, through community organizing expressed through popular culture in Capoeira and Hip Ho Young people are critically engaging with concepts of human rights, democracy, and citizenshi Although many of the youth I interviewed did not have the opportunity to graduate high school, they provide astute political analysis of key concepts in the Social Sciences. Expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop positively contribute to the lives of marginalized people and their neighbourhoods.

Throughout the thesis I have articulated a series of questions that examine cultural resistance to inequality in Northeast Brazil. Through demonstrating how street involved and homeless Afro-Indigenous youth in Recife and Igarassu, Pernambuco, engage in Capoeira and Hip Hop as powerful catalysts for social change, I have shown how communities' material conditions are transformed and spatial segregation is challenged. The resistance to inequality is fundamental to daily survival and addresses basic human rights, not provided by the Brazilian state to marginalized communities. The systemic violence of the Brazilian state, in the legal system embodied in *O Código de Menores*/Minors' Code, *Decreto*/Decree 17.943, (1927-1979) and *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolecente*/Children and Adolescents Act (ECA), Law 8.069, (1990); police brutality in the form of institutionalized racism and targeted disappearances, torture and assassination; and the gnawing growl of constant hunger and extreme poverty of the majority of communities is evidence of institutionalized oppression and repression. I have provided evidence of significant resistance to the systemic inequality in Brazil. Through community organizing, as expressed through Capoeira and Hip Hop, basic material conditions are improved, including human rights, democracy and citizenshi The lives of poor and extremely poor people and their neighbourhoods are deeply impacted through the collective movements for social justice embedded in expressions of

Capoeira and Hip Hop in Pernambuco. Through my analysis of the Social Determinant of Health I demonstrate the specific ways that marginalized communities are able to gain better access to information and utilize i) basic services (adequate shelter, clean water, food, health care), ii) employment in various sectors, and iii) education through becoming literate and opportunities for future learning.

Indigenous post-colonial feminist values are major elements of the positive shift in communities ravaged by poverty, police and drug traffickers violence and institutionalized racism, sexism and classism. In this thesis I have explored how the construction of diverse knowledges, through Capoeira and Hip Hop as catalysts for social justice, are growing into more inclusive and critical collective movements. I expressed how my personal experiences as a young, feminist, street involved woman in Capoeira and Hip Hop in Canada and Brazil shaped my thesis. My dedication to my involvement in forms of cultural resistance to inequality are deeply rooted in my own her-story of trauma. Therefore, my research is a form of spiritual healing and conversation with street involved and homeless Afro-Indigenous young women and men, in solidarity with feminist values of equality and critiquing sexism, racism and classism as exclusionary forms of oppression. The young people I interviewed for my thesis fieldwork reflect how feminist values are central elements in the artist activists' protest for equality in Brazil. The results are not confined to theoretical analysis, the practical manifestations of cultural activism are grounded in daily lived experiences.

Through my research I demonstrate how grassroots cultural activism in civil society is producing social change. This thesis links to broad Social Sciences areas of inquiry, specifically to new forms of decolonizing knowledge production that critically interrogates inequality and poverty of 'marginalized peoples'. This thesis provides exciting new evidence of how marginalized youth are critically engaging in cultural activism and transforming citizenship, human rights and democracy in NorthEastern Brazil. It is important to study these areas as the divide between rich an poor is increasing rapidly both within na-

tions and transnationally. Brazil is of central significance as it has been identified as an emerging global power and yet most of the population live on a tiny minimum wage. The economic divide is discussed in this thesis as a form of systemic violence and institutionalized oppression. This is not unique to Brazil, but has international implications as wealth distribution is structurally unequal in nations around the world. I hope to employ a transnational approach for further research, to draw comparisons globally regarding how how struggles for equality are produced globally.

Through my case studies I examine how marginalized young people in NorthEastern Brazil are challenging the post-colonial context of vastly unequal access to food, housing, health care and education; police brutality and drug traffickers' violence; and the lack of ability to exercise political rights in Brazil. I demonstrate that through collective organizing within communities, political and social transformation is achieved, specifically in progress towards freedom from violence. Young Afro-Indigenous people are engaging in Capoeira and Hip Hop as a tool for social change which is analyzed in this thesis by utilizing the Social Determinants of Health. Through fieldwork case studies, I provide evidence of the life changing opportunities for marginalized youth that are accomplished through cultural activism in Capoeira and Hip Ho

My literature review was shaped by questions I asked from a post-colonial feminist research perspective. These questions included: What are my assumptions, prejudices, stereotypes that informed the literature review? How does the literature and theories reviewed portray me as a researcher? What are the gaps in the literature? What tools does the literature provide to analyze my fieldwork research? Through the process of using theoretical tools to ground my work, my fieldwork research was illuminated by a body of academic scholarship in the Social Sciences. I was able to analyze my fieldwork data through a a process of peering through the lens of concepts, theories and methodologies.

This thesis documents methodological research innovations in the areas of decolonizing methodology, construction of knowledge and narratives. The two programs "Capoeira for Street Kids" and "Hip Hop Rescues Kids", which are discussed throughout this thesis and in more detail below, are examples of unique forms of decolonizing methodology in cultural activism. Both programs demonstrate that through constructing knowledge grounded in narratives of street involved and homeless youth, new forms of knowledge production are being created. Specifically, both expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop in Recife are forms of unique de-colonizing methodologies. For example, the case study of Leandro in Chapter 3 explores how he grounds his cultural activism in a fusion of NorthEast Brazilian culturally and regionally specific music and dance styles that mix with Hip Ho Leandro's analysis is of central importance because he reflects how art can decolonize spaces, structural violence can be revealed and new knowledge is created by those who were formerly silent and marginalized. This represents an exciting area for continued research, as marginalized voices are constructing their own forms of knowledge in an unique decolonizing methodology.

As a feminist scholar activist, a concept I introduce in Chapter One, I also engage in creating a form of decolonizing methodology in my research. Through writing in conversation with marginalized peoples, I am clear that 'our stories' only reflects experiences we have directly shared together. For example, in Chapter 3 I discuss how Leandro and I were taken by the police while walking down the street holding hands. While I draw broad connections between my lived experiences of poverty and violence and my research participants, I do not take any ownership of their narratives. Their voices and stories belong to them. I am attempting to share their narratives to demonstrate the value and importance of their work. I locate myself as writing in conversation with marginalized peoples, which acknowledges both my power and privilege as a Canadian academic researcher and feminist scholar activist and my research participants power and privilege as creators of decolonizing cultural activism, producers of

new narratives and knowledge that shifts the trajectory of formerly silent public spaces of systemic violence and reveals the complexities of Brazilian citizenship, human rights and democracy.

In sum, my research participants and I are constructing both our shared testimonies and their stories and narratives as important scholarship that is demanding a place in the academy. This work follows a rich tradition of the theorists explored in this thesis, as pioneers of carving out space in the 'ivory tower' of academia to reflect the diverse wealth of knowledges that are both valid scholarship and vital voices of knowledge production. Through my thesis, my research participants and I strive to create access points for diverse forms of knowledge in the academy. My work represents an attempt to reveal that the heartbeat of the 'ivory tower' of academia are 'street scholars'. This expresses the juxtaposition of the freedom that my research participants associate with street culture and being street involved, rather than being a, "slave to the system." (Leandro, 2014) Many of my research participants expressed they would rather go hungry, here I refer to chronic daily hunger, than participate in the re-production of systemic violence in a 'post'-colonial context. The term 'street scholar' also is imbued with transforming the academy's perception of who 'marginalized Afro-Indigenous youth' are. I strive to showcase 'street scholars' incredible vast production of knowledge, narratives, art as resistance, politics of art, activism, empowerment, poverty, urban indigenous rights, democracy, Brazilian politics and valourize the importance of Hip Hop and Capoeira as valuable and important areas of inquiry.

My goal is to demonstrate the integral value of the work being done by marginalized youth, through cultural activism of Capoeira and Hip Hop in NorthEastern Brazil. I found great allies in theorists of post-colonial, feminist, indigenous, systemic violence, critical race, marginalized youth, and urban grassroots movements. A gap I identified was that I could locate only minimal academic literature about the cultural activism of marginalized youth in NorthEast Brazil as contributing to democracy, citizenship and human rights. This presents an exciting avenue for new research, and informed my desire to

write this thesis. I choose to include lengthy quotes from my interviews because I strive to share the voices, stories, struggles and successes of what it means to be a street involved and homeless youth engaged in grassroots cultural activism in NorthEastern Brazil.

Future Research

I look towards my future research as developing new and unique research methodologies in collaboration with marginalized youth. I hope to be starting my PhD in September 2015 and I am proposing to further delve beneath the surface of academic literature concerning the production of forms of resistance to inequality through critically engaging with contestations and contradictions of dominant hegemonic narratives. I will continue to deconstruct subject formation; examine how cultural art forms challenge deeply ingrained forms of state violence embedded in colonialism and slavery; and, the grassroots sites of decolonizing knowledge production. Specific conceptual areas for future research are further examining the concept 'cultural citizenship' in Renato Rosaldo's work, the historical specificity of doing de-colonizing grassroots cultural activism in a post-colonial context embodied in the term 'Afro-Indigenous' and deconstructing my personal journey as a feminist scholar activist through the reflexivity of the 'politics of the gaze'. I propose to deepen my fieldwork in the cities of Recife and Olinda, PE, Brazil and expand through the state of Pernambuco, the NorthEast, Central and South of Brazil, Latin America and Canada. My extended fieldwork research will strive to address the following: First, what lessons can be learned through comparing community organizing (as expressed through popular culture and art) that transforms basic material conditions, including human rights, democracy, and citizenship within regional and international contexts? And second, how are poor and extremely poor people, who create connections between performance and politics, embodied in expressions of Capoeira and Hip Hop as sites of decolonizing knowledge production, transforming the regional and international contexts of the struggle for equality? I will further investigate how neighbourhoods are gaining better access to i)

basic services (adequate shelter, clean water, food, health care), ii) employment, and iii) education

through cultural activism embodied in Capoeira and Hip Ho However, I seek to peel back the layers of

knowledge production, that situates impoverished people as striving to only improve their basic material

conditions. This will reveal the sumptuous production of intellectual and academic scholarship by com-

munities, rich in political organizing and grassroots struggle, articulated through art, culture and per-

formance.

(a) "Capoeira for Street Kids" and "Hip Hop Rescues Kids" Programs as Catalysts for Social Change

As I discussed earlier in this thesis, a tangible result of my work with girls and women is the

"Capoeira for Street Kids" program. In addition, my partner Leandro 'Passoca' Freitas, and I co-founded

"Hip Hop Rescues Kids" program. Both programs were developed in collaboration with street involved

and homeless young women, and men in solidarity with feminist values of equality, valuing difference

and ending sexism. We have developed a four step program of: (i) Food and Shelter (ii) Learning

Capoeira and Hip Hop (iii) Apprenticeship (iv) Employment. Through working in collaboration with the

community in Recife, Brazil, for the past ten years, we have articulated goals to realize our four step

program that addresses significant gaps in essential services.

Since 2005 Leandro "Passoca" Freitas, my partner and a case study in this thesis, has been teach-

ing "Hip-Hop Rescues Kids" in the North Zone of Recife. Leandro is a former street involved youth and

credits Hip-Hop for saving his life. As a teenager he was involved in gangs, drug trafficking and crime.

However, when he began learning the four elements of Hip-Hop: break dance, DJing, MCing and graffi-

ti, his life changed for the positive. Leandro is now dedicated to rescuing street kids through passing on

his knowledge and inspiring a new generation of Hip-Hop artists.

From 2005-2012 I taught "Capoeira and Street Kids" in Alexandra Park, an inner city community

in Toronto. 98% of participants, and/or their parents, are social assistance recipients, mainly newcomer

young Muslim women from Eastern Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. I taught 60 students twice a week. Many of my students had regular contact with the justice system, the shelter system and mental health services. Additionally, I directly supervised over 30 community youth volunteers and international guest artists. I have been Artistic Director for 30 youth cultural arts education shows, with 100 young people performing, seen by over 5,000 people in Toronto. In Brazil in 2008, 2012-2014, I implemented my Capoeira program with pre-teen prostitutes; pregnant and young mothers using crack cocaine and community hip hop/art educators and social workers who are former street youth. I work in partnership with NGOs, the government and community groups regarding both funding and developing programming.

From my own lived experiences and through implementing the programs I know that the cycle of poverty creates hunger, the lack of employment forces youth to turn to drug trafficking as the only source of income.Thus, the first gap we aim to fill is family hunger, particularly in children. The second gap is skill building and self-esteem through Hip Hop and Capoeira classes. The third gap is income generating through youth apprenticeship and employment in social entrepreneurshi The fourth gap we aim to fulfil is the stark lack of libraries, internet and computer access. Currently, I am building capacity through developing crowd funding websites for public donations. The potential future funding will be used to rent or build a community art centre dedicated to street culture. The centre will feature classes in Hip Hop and Capoeira, a community food bank, free community internet access at computers, a community kitchen, a free library and a Hip Hop clothing store to generate further income for the programs and provide apprenticeship and employment opportunities for the community.

These two programs are tangible evidence of how cultural activism, in resistance to inequality, can transform communities living in poverty. These social changes are accomplished from within marginalized communities, both in identifying gaps in services and how to accomplish social justice that is specific to the regional context. Street involved and homeless youth artist activists in NorthEast Brazil

are invaluable warriors for peace, strengthening human rights, transforming citizenship and evolving democracy in Brazil. Together we can change the world.

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Endnotes

[1]   *Maracatu* is a style of performance that incorporates live music, singing, dance and specific folkloric costumes. Maracatu was created in Pernambuco NorthEastern Brazil. Maracatu, has two main types: *Maracatu de Nação* (Nation-style Maracatu also known as also known as *Maracatu de Baque Virado*) and *Maracatu Rural* (Rural-style Maracatu also know as *Maracatu de Baque Solto*). *Maracatu de Nação* is associated with Carnival (An annual festival throughout Brazil held between the Friday afternoon (51 days before Easter) and Ash Wednesday at noon, which marks the beginning of Lent, the forty-day period before Easter. There are four main centres of Carnival throughout Brazil: Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the South, Salvador and Recife in the North).

Maracatu de Nação music is linked to pre-colonial African traditions and is characterized by *alfaias* (large wooden rope-tuned drums), *gonguê* (a metal cowbell) *tarol* (a shallow snare drum), *caixa-de-guerra* (a deeper snare drum), *abê* (a gourd shaker enveloped in beads), and *mineiro* (a metal cylindrical shaker filled with metal shot or small dried seeds) (Ferrari, 2008). There is a choreographed performance, with elements of theatre, dance and elaborate costumes, that accompanies the live music and call and response singing. In Recife and neighbouring Olinda, Maracatu during Carnaval is performed in the streets. Maracatu is a deeply politicized performance, often with cross-gendered performers, at times in blackface, that alludes to the parading royal court, from colonization and slavery. Observers are encouraged to following behind the performance and thus becoming an extended and spontaneous element.

Maracatu Rural is rural manifestation that resembles a marching band or war procession linked to Indigenous practices, which takes place in the form of all night musical duels (*Sambada*) and also during Carnaval. It is characterized by a small ensemble with snare drum, *agogô* (double cowbell), and *cuica* (friction drum) (Ibid). For more on Maracatu see Ana Valeria Vicente, 2005, Larry Crook, 2009, Roseanna Borges de Medeiros, 2005.

[2]A Capoeira Roda is a circle formed by *Capoeiristas* (People who are practicioners of Capoeira) and Capoeira musical instruments. Each person in the roda claps their hands and sings a call and response Capoeira song in Brazilian Portuguese. Two *Capoeiristas* enter the roda and have a physical movement dialogue with their bodies, which is called "playing" Capoeira. The style, speed and rhythm of movements is determined by the musical instruments. The main instrument is a Berimbau, a single-stringed bow-shaped percussive instrument which dictates the style of the roda. The other main instruments are the *Atabaque*, a large staring hand drum and the *Pandeiro*, a Brazilian tambourine.

[3]   The term 'Afro-Indigenous' here is used to represent how the majority of my interviews self-identified (I did not ask regarding ethno-cultural background) as being of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous Brazilian heritage. For example, many would cite family members as being of Indigenous heritage and/or Afro-Brazilian. Their heritage was often an integral part of their resistance to inequality, for example, Gabi and Leandro in the Hip Hop Chapter. Furthermore, there has been academic done on the historical-specificity of the terms 'Afro-Brazilian' and 'Indigenous Brazilian' (see Beeson, 2009; Galinsky, 2002; Buvinić, Mazza, and Deutsch, eds., 2004). There is also work that examines the indigenization of Afro-Descendent claims for reparations. This indigenization constructed as grounded in how blackness as a political identity in Latin America was considering illegitimate. (Torres in Lenzerini (ed.), 2008   127; see also Telles, 2004; Andrews, 2004).

In Brazil the term 'Pardo' is used Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in the Brazilian censuses. However, none of my research participants used this term. Pardo refers to a race/skin colour category to describe mixed race Brazilians that may date back to colonialism. It is a problematic term as it draws on genetic and biological determinants that have been widely denounced as socially constructed forms of racism (Reiter, 2011, 2013). There is a burgeoning academic literature that examines the impact of the social construction of race in Brazil (see Mitchell and Wood, 1999; Alves 2012; Lebon, 2007). Exploring the complexities of the term Afro-Indigenous will be a part of my future research.

4 MCing is a foundational aspect of the multifaceted art form of Hip Ho MCing is a combination of improvised and written lyrics spoken or 'rapped', while one uses a microphone, expressing spoken word poetry. MCing lyrics often directly reflect the daily experiences of systemic oppression and discrimination racialized youth experience in Brazil. (Pardue, 2012).

5 DJing is also a core element of the multi-disciplinary art of Hip Ho DJing comprises of mixing musical rhythms, to form unique blends of beats and sounds, on a digital mixing board or record turntable. The musical rhythms are the beat MC's (MC is a reference to Master of Ceremony) use to rap their lyrics. Additionally, the music beats inform break dancers, known as BBoys and BGirls, in choreographing their physical movement vocabulary (Ibid).

[6]*Malandragem* is a core aspect of the interdisciplinary art forms of Capoeira and Hip Hop in Brazil. It is widely contested as either an essentialist concept that constructs systemically oppressed and racialized Brazilian men and women as acting with a combination of *malicia* (wicked and violent intentions or malicious actions) and *maldade* (negative intentions or actions) to navigate daily life. Constructed by the dominant elite as a form of manipulation to gain access to desired things or people, *malandragem* also has a spiritual and magical aspect that attributes supernatural powers to people who possess the knowledge and skill of using *malandragem* to obtain goals in a devious and dishonest manner. *Maladro/as* often engage in acts of *malandragem* as a core component of their daily behaviour (Downey, 2000). However, there are multiple interpretations of *malandragem* that develop a richer perspective of racialized communities in Brazil. Many cite the resistance aspects of *malandragem, maldade, malice* and *malandro/a* as being founts of socio-political collective organizing, in the guise of stereotypical behaviours, so as not to attract the attention of oppressors. Collective organizing, of racialized communities in Brazil, is widely documented as dating back over 500 years, when enslaved peoples came together to resist slavery using forms of resistance rooted in *malandragem* (Almedia, Downey, etc). Scholars have analyzed that collective organizing by racialized groups in North America has many similarities to those described here (Forde-Smith, 2010; hooks, 2012).

[7] *Malandro/as* are part of the core philosophies and practices of Capoeira, Hip Hop and more broadly Brazilian society. Constructed as having positive and negative attributes, *malandro/as,* was originally an adjective used to describe racialized and economically impoverished people in *favela* (see endnote 5) communities in Brazil. Currently, the term is used more broadly to describe any person who is involved in street-based activities that are either borderline illegal or have some questionable implications. The street-based activities are constructed by *malandro/as* as necessary for daily survival, and a fundamental component of resistance to state repression. State sponsored terror, in the form of indiscriminate police violence in *favelas* is a major form of state repression. A current example is in the *favela* of *Rocinha* on the periphery of Rio de Janeiro, where police death squads are murdering large numbers of innocent *favela* residents, including many children, with impunity. There is considerable controversy and enormous popular protest by hundreds of thousands of *favela* residents who are demanding justice for their communities, criminal prosecution of the police who are accused as the perpetrators of the crimes and adequate access to basic services that currently are not provided by the state (clean water supply, reliable electricity). (*Epoca*, 2014, www.epoca.com.br)

[8] *Favelas* are economically impoverished peripheries of urban centres (Goldstein, 2003).

[9]   *"*Frevo is a Brazilian artistic expression comprising music and dance, performed mainly during the Carnaval of Recife. Its quick frenetic and vigorous rhythm draws upon the fusion of musical genres such as marching music, Brazilian tango, square dance, polka and pieces of classical repertoire, performed by bands. The music is essentially urban, and like the accompanying dance, 'Passo', is vigorous and subversive." (UNESCO, Frevo, Performing Arts of the Carnival of Recife, http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00011&RL=00603) Many frevo dancers are trained in classical ballet and gymnastics.
      Afoxé is of Yoruba origin and some researchers believe it is a diverse form of Maracatu in Brazil. It is a art form that comprises of specific musical instruments, in particular large drums, live singing and dance choreography. *Afoxé* is considered the secular form of Candomblé (see endnote 10). In Pernambuco, Afoxé became widely popular with the Unified Black Movement in the late 70s. *Afoxé* is often used to raise black consciousness and freedom through music (Recife Guide, http://www.recifeguide.com/culture/afoxe.html). In Recife, every Tuesday there is a free outdoor cultural festival called *Terça Negra* with live performances by *Afoxé*. Often *Côco de Roda* groups and Capoeira Rodas will spontaneously form in the audience.
      Côco de Roda is a traditional Northeastern circle dance, with origins in the fusion of black culture with Indigenous peoples in Brazil. It is believed that the *Côco* came from the interior of Pernambuco, probably in the *Quilombo dos Palmares* and originated from the rhythm of the breaking of coconuts by slaves. The dancing and singing musical tradition, is a mode of transmission and maintenance of knowledge and popular tradition. However, due to it's origin in the oppressed and marginalized sectors of our society, *Côco* always suffered discrimination from the ruling classes. Thus, the spread and maintenance of *Côco* as cultural expression is a major form of resistance to inequality. (Côco de Roda: Origem e Resistência, http://averdade.org.br/2012/04/coco-de-roda-origem-e-resistencia/). The characteristic sound comes from five main instruments, *ganzá* (rattle), *surdo* (deep bass drum), *pandeiro* (tamborine), *triângulo* (triangle), and *sandália de madeira* (wooden clogs). People traditionally clap their hands rhythmically to add percussive sound.
      Ciranda is another traditional circle dance of Pernambuco . It originated specifically in the city of Itamaracá by fisherwomen who sang and danced, hoping it would bring luck from the sea. It is characterized by the formation of a large circle, usually on the beaches or places where the members dance to the sound of slow and repeated rhythms (Bibliotecária da Fundação Joaquim Nabuco , http://basilio.fundaj.gov.br/pesquisaescolar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=519&Itemid=182). The basic percussive instruments are the *zabumba* (bass drum), *tarol* (snare drum), o *ganzá* (rattle), and o *maracá* (maracas).

[10] The conversion to Canadian dollars, of the national Brazilian minimum wage, is approximate based on average exchange rates of about $1 Canadian dollar to R$ 2 Brazilian *Reais* in 2014. The national currency of Brazil is called *Reais*, pronounced HAY-I-ZZ.

[11] 'Cultural citizenship' is a concept that was developed in the 1980's in the United States to reflect a critique of the notion of the 'citizen'. The concept illuminates how through the struggles to expand citizenship, alternative analysis and paradigm shift is needed to express citizenship and social rights. Renato Rosaldo is considered to have developed the term to describe and analyze how new social movements have expanded citizens's rights from considerations of class to convey the multidimensional aspects of identity such as gender, race, sexuality, ecology and age. Rosaldo's contributions are important because his influenced the Social Sciences to include voices and perspectives of Latinos and other subordinated groups, rather than the exclusive focus on hegemony and agency. Thus, Rosaldo was a pioneer in examining historical specificity of marginalized groups which grounds rather abstract theoretical concepts of power and resistance in actual lived experiences (Flores and Benmayor, 2004, 17). Thus, further research on the term 'cultural citizenship' is an important for future scholarship.

[12] The interviews from 2005-2013 are briefly summarized in this chapter, but they are not included as fieldwork interviews in this thesis.

[13] Candomblé is a religion based on African beliefs widely believed to have been developed in Brazil. It is also practised in other countries, and has as many as two million followers. The religion is a mixture of traditional Yoruba, Fon and Bantu beliefs which originated from different regions in Africa. It has also incorporated some aspects of the Catholic faith over time and is called a syncretic religion. Enslaved Africans brought their beliefs with them when they were forced to go to Brazil during the slave trade. The name Candomblé means 'dance in honour of the gods'. Practitioners of Candomblé believe in one all powerful God called Oludumaré who is served by lesser deities called orixas. Candomblé practitioners believe that every person has their own individual orixa which controls his or her destiny and acts as a protector. Music and dance are important parts of Candomblé ceremonies. Specially choreographed dances are performed by worshippers to enable them to become possessed by the orixas. Candomblé is an oral tradition and therefore has no holy scriptures (BBC, http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/candomble/ataglance/glance.shtml).

     Women play a large role in Candomblé and many aspects of the music and beliefs are integrated with Capoeira. In fact, the cultural influence of Candomblé's women leaders led American anthropologist Ruth Landes to dub Salvador, Bahia in the North of Brazil, 'The City of Women' (Landes, 1947). The majority of the tradition's devotees are women; its leaders are known as Mães de Santo – Mothers of the Saint. These women are not only keepers of the wisdom of this largely oral tradition, but they are also outstanding references in the wider communities in which they live. They create and support social and environmental campaigns and causes; they write books and public policy; they are sought after wise women within their spiritual communities and throughout their regions (Yemanjá The Film, http://www.yemanjathefilm.com/the-documentary.html).

     African oriented cultural practices such as the musical style Samba, the martial art Capoeira and the Candomblé religion have for centuries been either negatively stereotyped or outright outlawed by Brazilian elites until it was discovered that these practices could be exploited in some way. Candomblé and Capoeira have both been used as means of tourist attractions while Samba was adapted as the national music as a means of uniting the nation and the vehicle for the promotion of the myth of a "racial democracy" (Black Women of Brazil http://blackwomenofbrazil.co/2013/11/06/its-not-religious-intolerance-and-is-indeed-racism-says-baba-during-roundtable-on-violence-against-the-sacred-spaces-of-african-oriented-religions-like-candomble/). As Candomblé is still highly discriminated against in general society, many practitioners of Capoeira often deny the connection between the practices. This both negates the spiritual aspects of Capoeira and makes invisible the strong role of women in both practices.

[14] "The Intangible Cultural Heritage comprises the living expressions and traditions that communities, groups and individuals around the world receive from their ancestors and pass on their knowledge to their descendants." http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brasilia/culture/world-heritage/intangible-heritage/

[15] As Rodrigo, a Hip Hop Social Educator explains, "I began by learning capoeira, frevo, ciranda, maracatu and break dance." (Rodrigo, 2014)