Hawaii, having an increasingly multi-ethnic population, is represented as being a racial paradise. Hip hop, being a global meeting ground for racially diverse youth, is also represented as beyond the trappings of racism. It might be surprising, then, that Hawaiian hip hop can be implicated in the reproduction of racism.

Raymond Codrington claims "hip-hop is a critical space that illuminates social relations and political identities. Hip hop reflects the position of many youth, especially those at the lower rungs of global regimes of power" (Codrington 139). Considering this value of hip hop I utilize Critical Race theory to understand how Local Hawai'i hip hop youth are negotiating those social relations and political identities

Theory

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) focuses on race and racism in American history and culture. An outgrowth of Critical Legal Studies, CRT exposes the complicity of law in upholding white supremacy. CRT also historicizes the suffering and struggle of minorities, and attempts to rectify the systematic maintenance of social domination and subordination. It is an antithetical knowledge that revokes common understandings of racism, and that provides a theoretical vocabulary for the "practice of progressive racial politics in contemporary America" (Crenshaw et. al 1995: xxvii). CRT revokes the neutrality of politics, law, scholarship, the myth of a color-blind society, and the rarity of racism.

Most critical race theories, like Delgado and Stefancic's (2001), are based on a few central tenets. The first tenet is that racism is an ordinary and common aspect of society, and is a daily experience for people of color. Second, racism serves a purpose; a large portion of society, both whites and persons of color have an incentive to reproduce it. Another important tenet of

CRT is that race is a social construct, not an objective, fixed reality, and because race is a product of social thought and relations, “dominant society racializes different minority groups at different times, in response to shifting needs” (Delgado & Stefancic 2001: 8). The varying histories of race contributes to the notion of intersectionality and anti-essentialism; that is, any individual will not necessarily reflect the unitary racial history or identity. Racialized identities are always conflicting, overlapping, and interlocking with gender, class, sexuality, immigration status and personal history. These realities suggest that people of color have a unique perspective of reality that is different from dominant societies.

Since racism is a daily experience, CRT investigates how racism is reproduced in greater systems of oppression and the common discourse of society and culture, and attempts to locate and expose the white supremacist rhetoric of power embedded within institutions, education, and popular culture (Akom 2008). In his study of the burden of acting white, A.A. Akom (2008) offers an important history of critical racial studies, and its Du Boisian foundations.

Akom divides critical race theory and its subfield, critical white studies, into three waves. The first wave began with W.E.B. DuBois' work, which “provided a scathing critique of white supremacy, white invisibility, and the ways that white racial power masks as race neutrality and universality” (Akom 2008: 249). The invisible hegemony of whiteness causes *double-consciousness* in the African American psyche. Black identity in white-dominated society is torn between two selves—”the subjective, self-determined, agential Self and the objectified, exoticized, excluded Other” (Akom 2008: 250). Du Bois realized the twoness of African American's came from their need to be fully cognizant of white cultural frameworks. White

Americans, on the other hand, need no understanding of people of color. For African Americans, twoness is a necessary strategy for navigating the institutional barriers beset by whites to limit Black access. DuBois's work exposed these mechanisms of white racial privilege (Akom 2008: 251).

Second-wave studies studies attempt to abolish whiteness as a seat of domination, redefine whiteness as a confluence of race, class and other social relations, and rethink class, culture, and gender to create new cross-racial alliances. Scholars examine the cultural production of whiteness and the maintenance of legitimate, legalized white privilege. Institutional arrangements, ideological beliefs, mass-mediated images, and state practices all demand racialized performance. Relying on DuBoisian notions of twoness, the burden of acting white falls squarely on the backs of people of color. This important area of research highlights how whiteness is "learned, internalized, privileged, institutionally reproduced, [and] performed" by not-yet-white ethnics—that is studying the contemporary transformation of becoming white (Akom: 252).

The third wave, which Akom (2008) recommends CRT explore, further problematizes whiteness. Akom suggests that whiteness is a wholly constructed and ever-changing race like Black, Latino, or Asian. However as a race, whiteness is standardized as the correct identity to adopt and strive toward. Akom (2008: 259) asks, "how is whiteness continuing to expand in the United States and beyond and [how is it]*incorporating ethnics* of multiracial, Asian, Mexicans and other Latinos of non-European heritage?" Utilizing the tenets of CRT, Akom "examines how cultural practices and discursive strategies are employed by white people, *as well as people of*

color, as they struggle to reconstitute, support, and maintain forms of white supremacy" (Akom 2008: 259, my emphasis).

Another major contribution of Akom's (2008) work, is the inclusion of popular culture. By focusing solely on the political economy of greater society, previous waves of study ignored the reproduction of racism in mass media, popular thought, and the household. To rectify this blind spot, Akom analyses white appropriation of hip hop, and the identity politics of colorblind rap.

Hip Hop & Racism

Hip hop is an important site of educational practice with possible pedagogical virtues. As it becomes a global language of distinction, hip hop also becomes a popular form of resistance to white supremacist ideologies (Osumare, 2007; Alim 2011). When hip hop centralizes Black cultural expression, it revokes dominant white public space (Rose 1994, Hill 1999). Thus, when hip hop normalizes African American language and language ideology, it marks whiteness as abnormal (Cutler 2007). Cutler (2009) suggests that hip hop creates a double-consciousness in white practitioners. She says, "It is Whites who are forced to see themselves through the eyes of Black people and who must try to measure up to the standards of authenticity, achievement and knowledge established by the collective of [African American] individuals who lead the Hip Hop Nation" (Cutler 2003: 212; Cutler 2007: 10). H. Samy Alim (2011) also highlights the creative ways African Americans have countered marginalization. Like Cutler (2009), he lauds the imposed DuBoisian double-consciousness on non-African American emcees. He finds the experience of seeing one's self through the eyes of the Other as contributing to multiple identifications within the social world (Alim 2011:127).

Akom (2008), however, has less hope for the double-consciousness instilled in white appropriators of hip hop. As he differentiates between identity and identification, Akom (2008) reminds us that whites invest into hip hop only so far as it benefits them. In identity migration, white youth distance themselves from white-supremacist practices, while at the same time benefiting from white privilege.

> Whites become widely represented and in-tune to important racial narratives about social justice (as well as consumerism and commodification) while at the same time cloaking white supremacy in a new form of invisibility that aids its ability to aggressively solidify its privilege and advantage. (Akom 2008: 255)

This appropriation often takes place through a White color-blindness that further hides racist ideologies (Rodriguez 2006). Color-blindness obscures institutional arrangements, reproduces inequalities, and defends the racial status quo.

Moreover, in creating double-consciousness for non-African Americans, hip hop can re-inscribe dominant, hegemonic discourses of race, ethnicity, and citizenship (Alim et. al 2010). Although, hip hop overturns white public spaces and centralizes black language ideology, it does so at the expense of Asians and Latinos (Alim 2011: 127). African Americans are at the top of a new racial hierarchy (Alim et. al 2010), and draw on hegemonic ideologies of race and language to defeat their opponents. They can make racial jokes and call direct attention to White (Culter 2003), Latino, and Asian ethnicity; while non-African American emcees are disallowed mentioning blackness (Alim et. al 2010). Black emcees racialize others, and control the meaning of race, while Non-African Americans are simply the marginalized recipients of the dominant language. To remain participants, non-black emcees must uphold their marginalization, and accept their role as Other (Alim 2011:127). Thus, the existence of double-consciousness for whites does little to end white-privilege, but does well to re-inscribe marginalization of non-African Americans.

Global Hip Hop Identity

Another important, and well validated perspective of hip hop looks outside the United States. Beyond forms of white appropriation and the marginalization of minorities within the United States, hip hop outside the US is a multiethnic, multi-linguistic global phenomenon (Basu & Lemelle 2006; Mitchell 2002; Alim et. al 2009). As a "postmodern "nation" with an international reach, a fluid capacity to cross borders, and a reluctance to adhere to the geopolitical givens of the present," hip hop is an important site of cultural production, and a powerful tool for reworking local youth identities (Alim & Pennycook 2007: 90).

Work on global variation is therefore an important step in extending hip hop scholarship (Alim 2009; Alim et. al 2009). By foregrounding agency, studies show the inextricable links between language and identity (Ibrahim, 1999; Cutler, 1999). By centralizing language in their inquiries, Scholars opens up levels of significance in terms of language choice, style, and discrimination (Alim and Pennycook 2007). Because language itself is the ongoing social and political process of identification; it is by linguistic and rhetorical choices that agents build their identity (Alim 2009, Bucholtz & Hall 2005). In global studies, hip hop is not a hegemonic force crushing global markets; instead, it is a mobile "cultural matrix" to which local agents attune their attention and identity via language (Alim 2009). In language, artists "manipulate, (re) appropriate, and sometimes (re)create stylistic resources through a process of stylistic remixing to construct themselves as members of the Global Hip Hop Nation" (Alim 2009: 114).

Alim & Pennycook (2007) suggest that hip hop is always both local and global. Hip hop as a cultural import gains relevance to the lives of youth by becoming local. Hip hop as language use is subject to interpretation by local language and language ideologies (Alim & Pennycook 2007: 92).

Theoretical Breakdown

These conceptions of hip hop as double-consciousness, and hip hop as cultural matrix utilize contending ideologies of identity construction. The idea that hip hop creates a double-consciousness assumes that identity is imbued through the experiences of emcees. While the idea of a global cultural-matrix and the process of identification through linguistic and cultural resources assumes identity is something self-constructed by agents in a particular local, social milieu. Hip hop identity construction seems to follow US—Global divisions; as if emcees within the states are subject to pressures of inevitable hegemonic racialization, while emcees outside the US are free to construct their own unproblematic variation, without the trappings of US racist discourse.

At least in the majority of studies of Global hip hop, scholars narrate hip hop as the weapon against larger political, economic, and hegemonic forces (Basu & Lemelle 2006; Mitchell 2002; Alim et. al 2009). While studies in the US, like Akom's (2008) white appropriation, Rodriguez's (2006) color-blind hip hop, and Alim, Young, and Carris's (2010) study of African American dominance over Asian and Latino emcees have moved to what Stuart Hall (1999) calls the "nasty down below."

Perhaps because the particular history of race inside the US, hip hop is under different pressures. Perhaps, outside the United States' racist borders, hip hop is not implicated in these kinds of civil struggles. In fact, immigrant groups have shown resistance to American hip hop's racial categories (Cutler 2008; Ibrahim 1999). Perhaps it is just the US. However, this solution is hardly compelling.

Considering hip hop as a non-hegemonic, mobile cultural matrix being made relevant by local languages and language ideologies, future studies of hip hop must also account for local

issues of marginalization, or domination that infiltrates hip hop from below. If we hope to include agency in identity formation, as well as focus on the structural and cultural reproduction of racism in the manner of CRT, we must rectify the varying discourses of hip hop identity construction as both global and local. Moreover, considering the importance of discourse and power (Foucault, 1981), we must carefully negotiate our own theoretical frameworks, boundaries of study, and regimes of truth with the local so as not to create a monolithic and limiting understanding of either hip hop, identity or racism.

In this study, I will point to one way a not-so-American version of hip hop can access underlying racist ideologies, and institutionalize the marginalization of minorities. In Hawaii, the dominant Local Asian and Pacific Islander community has accessed a particular brand of ethnic humor, as well as a form of color-blindness to create what I, the Haole outsider, would call a very racist hip hop.

Data

Hawaiʻi

The hip hop community in Hawaii has existed for over 30 years. Due to the state's low population of African Americans and differential ethnic history, Hawaiʻi offers a unique variation of hip hop. Despite Hawaiʻi's long history and interesting demography, it has received only minimal attention from hip hop scholars (Osumare, 2007; Imada, 2006). Osumare (2007) offers a compelling reason for studying in Hawaiʻi.

> By virtue of Hawaiʻi's (colonial) history with the U.S mainland and its unique geographic position as crossroads between East and West, the 50th state offers a particularly complex example of globalization of hip hop culture. Hawaiʻi floats geographically and culturally in the North Pacific, connecting Asia, Polynesia and Micronesia, and the Americas in historical and contemporary ways. Particularly as a gateway to the Pacific Rim—the mid-way point between the United States mainland and Asia—Hawaiʻi is an interesting composite of Native Hawaiian, American and Asian cultures (Osumare 2007: 105).

Studies of hip hop in Hawai‘i, then, must factor in this colonial history, as well as the resultant composite of identity, linguistic and discursive resources.

The particular composite, multi-ethnic population of Hawai‘i is the result of important historical pressures in plantation labor, and the purposeful mixture of varying ethnicities for exploitative purposes (Takaki 1983). Simply, plantation management provoked antagonistic relations between ethnicities to limit the possibility of collusion and concerted action between workers. This history has led to a very complex society, which is both praised and critiqued for its multi-racial social code (Adams 1934; Okamura 1998; Kay-Trask 2000).

The progeny of uprooted, relocated plantation workers constitute the current generation of “Local” hip hop youth. In Hawai‘i, there are not just indigenous groups like Sudden Rush (Osumare, 2007; Imada, 2006), but also multi-ethnic, multi-lingual groups like Prolific Unknowns, Angry Locals, and the Broke Mokes. Their hip hop draws on ancestral languages, Hawai‘i Creole English, African American English and communicative practices of the Island.

In Hawai‘i, the construction of Local identity is a process of inclusion and exclusion based on the shared knowledge of mostly non-white, primarily Asian Pacific Islander, working-class identities (Labrador 2009). Local identity is a constantly shifting complex of indexed bodies, cultural identities, linguistic affiliations, and political positioning. Labrador’s 2009 analysis of Hawai‘i defines the process by which Locals create and employ shared knowledge, mock voice, and other socio-linguistic means to systematically marginalize particular groups. In the following section, I examine how local identity is similarly reproduced and employed in hip hop, how hip hop is appropriated, and how ultimately double-consciousness fails.

The Battle

Geneva Smitherman links the hip hop battle directly to the Black Oral Tradition. She claims the "dis" of signifying and sounding constitutes a verbal game, played with ritualized insults. In the tradition, disses were purely ceremonial and safe (Smitherman 2000:223). In duels, the audience took a central role by laughing, judging, and pushing for more creative disses. Shared knowledge was central in ritual insult (Labov 1972). Participants generally knew each other, and insults were not literally true (Labov 1972). Kochman (1989) later refuted the proposed rule that personal insult was disallowed, but it was the responsibility of the recipient to ignore or return any personal insults. Although, even forty years ago rules were bending (Smitherman 2000:225). Today, hip hop employs a similar verbal duel called battlin' (Alim 2006: 63).

Rap battles employ traditional tactics of dissin', soundin', and signifyin'. The well studied emcee battle (Alim 2009; Alim et. al 2010; Cutler 2007) is undoubtably an outgrowth of the Black Oral Tradition (Rickford & Rickford 2000). Like *The Dozens*, a hip hop battle is about bold, creative language, audience evaluation, and shared knowledge. In hip hop, verbal dueling gains central importance as the realm of competitive discourse. Players wage their right to define themselves, and ante for respect, reverence and sometimes, money. A complete battle consists of two rappers facing each other over three rounds of rhymed verses full of disrespectful attacks, jokes, and boasts. The battles are between two interlocutors, but are judged by the audience. A perfectly executed rhyme, humorous boast, or the most despicable and rotten derision results in uproarious laughter, cheer and crowd encouragement.

The Tiki

On November 21st, 2010, I attended the album release party for a group of Local hip hop artists. The six hour event was held at a bar in Waikiki, and was open to friends, family, and the public. Tickets were fifteen dollars, and included a copy of the album. The main event was preceded by other local Emcees, DJs, Breakers, and a series of competitive rap battles.

The most anticipated battle of the night, between a Local and Mainlander, had a $1,000 prize at stake. The battle was between rappers Illoko Moko and Lil' Hold-Up. Illoko is a very popular Filipino local artist, as well as a member of the headlining group. Hold-Up is African American, and mostly a stranger to the scene. At midnight they took the stage, turned off the mics, and called the crowd to surround them. After a short introduction by the hosts and plenty of flashes of the ten Benjamins, the battle began. However, by the end of the first round, the battle was plainly decided. The outsider's half-stepped and half-hearted freestyle rhymes were no competition for Illoko's home-team advantage and substantial written lyrical skill. The battle was a massacre, and the crowd loved every minute of it.

To win the battle, Illoko employed two rhetorical strategies. Race and local knowledge became the pertinent themes of the battle. First, to gain the favor of his audience, Illoko relied heavily on pidgin words from various Asian and Pacific Islander languages. Also by regularly indexing shared local cultural knowledge, Illoko turned his rhymes into a chain of in-group maneuvers. Of the accumulated 100 bars delivered by Illoko, 35 contained esoteric local references.

1 I will show this fucker my *mana*
2 for you hoales that's power
3 I will devour this coward
4 smash the side of your face for about a half an hour
5 till you get a BJ Penn cauliflower

In line 1, the Filipino emcee Illoko uses the Hawai‘ian word *Mana*, which he quickly defines for *haole* outsiders as power. He then references the disfigured ear of a highly esteemed, local Hawai‘ian mixed martial artist. The references Illoko uses continue, are not always explained, and become more esoteric. After each maneuver Illoko pauses to allow the crowds defining cheers and laughter subside. To question the masculinity of Hold-Up, Illoko suggests he wear a bracelet that says *Ku‘uipo* or sweetheart. Ku‘uipo bracelets are gifts given to lovers to show affection. Over the course of the battle, he called to neighborhoods around the islands to further connect with the different portions of the audience. He used Samoan, Hawaiian, and Filipino expletives to confuse and debilitate his opponent. Each time he employed a pidgin word or local reference the crowd cheered in support. By the second and third rounds, Illoko would pause before he capped his bar, point to the audience, and wait for them to resound the proper rhyme. Even Illoko's use of mock immigrant Filipino serves to uphold the positive self-image of Locals (Labrador 2009: 294), and simultaneously marginalize his opponent.

The other, more worrisome strategy Illoco employes is calling direct attention to Hold-Up's race. In 26 bars, Illoko attacks Blackness. He begins

```
1     I don't know if he's African American
2     maybe he's Jamaican
3     maybe he's from Nigeria
4     maybe he's Haitian
5     but to me you're just black
6     and I'm Hawaiian, Asian
7     but right about now
8     I'm about to get really fucking racist
```

At this the crowd cheers and laughs. Illoko follows this lumping of very different people under one color, with a litany of jokes pointing to just how dark the skin of Hold-Up is. Throughout the first two rounds, Illoko calls Hold-Up, Toby, Kunta Kinte, *Popolo* (Hawaiian word for a

Black person), Mr. Olopop (*Popolo* backwards), and a number of other names. Each time he references Hold-ups race, he further reduces his opponent. Once Illoko centralized Hold-Ups race, he represents Blackness in a number of ways.

```
1     yo yo he's black
2     cut him some slack
3     he doesn't deal drugs
4     he doesn't play sports
5     so all there was left was rap
6     and I know, I know
7     slavery is like four hundred years old
8     but you must feel like your ancestors
9     because your black ass is still getting owned
```

Illoko even suggests he will "rope up" his opponent, and have his son's friends smash his *Olos* (testicles) like piñatas (a Mexican tradition of smashing hanging, papier mâché animals). Illoko's attack of Hold-Up's race, especially his references to slavery, is accompanied with mock Southern African American English, and accompanied by the laughter of the audience. Even, Illoko's indexing of slavery and lynching causes little discomfort in the Local audience.

However, after two rounds of Illoko's race-focused rhymes, a member of the audience turned over a chair and shouted, "Fuck this shit man. Y'all keep makin' all the racist jokes, what the fuck is wrong with y'all niggas, man." His exclamation stopped the audience. After a moment of silence there was a rush of shouts between the audience, the angry individual, and the hosts. As the crowd erupted, the host took command of the microphone.

I offer the following transcription of the host's intervention as an example of how after two rounds of in-group maneuvers and ethnic humor, color-blindness becomes institutionalized in hip hop, and racism becomes an impossible category.

YT: Lil’ Hold-Up
CG: J-Fresh
AM(#):   Audience Members(Numbered)
H1:   Host 1
H2:   Host 2

1 Yt: Straight talk
2   I be the firs one
3   to take your face off=
4   [Table crashes]
5 CG: fuck this shit man
6   (kick back) on tha mother fucking racis jokes
7   fuck is wrong witch’all niggas man.=
8   [(   )
9 AM1:   [Ya he’s not Hawaiian
10 CG: fuck youz talkin[bout
11 H1:   [this is hip[(hop)
12   [{Begin 7s Crowd Rush})
13 AM2:   {this is battle}
14 H1:   {Hold up hol dup}
15 AM1:   {Hawaiians are never racist}
16 H1:   {yo itsa battle=}
17 H2:   {hey hey}
18   {no go outside there}
19   {chill out chill out chill out}
20   {its all good its all good}
21   {Crowd rush subsides}
22 H1:   ya leave em he’s good
23   thats the homie thats the homie J Fresh
24 H2   [it’s all good
25 H1:   let him go let him go
26   he’s speaking his mind
27   YO but straight up and down’
28   It’s a mother fucking battle.
29   On the real
30   nothing is holy in the battle=
31   it’s whoever got the most words
32   you say what you gotta do get it done
33   you give daps and its finished.
34   whats up with all this fucking [(censorship)] on it
35   [{crowd rush}]
36 H1:   that’s what I want to kno[w
37   [{crowd rush 1.5s}]
38 H1:   {>Yo hold up hold up<} <hold the FUCK up>
39   cause if you were LISening
40   and just listen to the lyrics
41   you probably hear something
42   when you get offended
43   <u>fuck</u> that bullshit

44 its a
45 what is this shit?
50 ((The Crowd shouts in unison)) BATTLE
51 H1: Yo if you <can't take this shit>
52 for real kine
53 if you can::not take this shit
54 ple:ese.
55 ((People in crowd point to the door.))
56 H2 Im not sayin any bad words (0.4)
57 but <u>leave</u>
58 itsa battle
59 an thats how it going down
60 Come back harder
61 If you say something back this side'
((he backs away from YT, moving closer to Osna))
62 nobody over'ere is gonna be like what the fucks up
(As he steps back toward YT while dipping his head)
63 cause itsa mothafuckin battle
((crowd cheers, someone shouts, Amen!))
64 so whyz it gotta come from the otha side.
65 can we keep it hip hop
66 please say Ya!
67 ((Crowd shouts)) <u>YAAAAAAA</u> {rush lasts 3s}
((Crowd talks while hosts reset, lasts 15s))
68 AM3: I love you man
69 H2: we got One more round guys
70 one more round
71 H1: Last one
72 hold it together
73 AM4: I love you man. You're my hero
74 AM5: You're my idol
((Hold-up takes center stage))
75 ((crowd hushes each other))
76 AM6: Respect the artist

Conclusions

In the first two rounds, Illokos employed in-group references and a systematic, "humorous" attack on African American race. This resulted in an explosive response from one audience member. The crowd was incensed To repair the situation, the host spoke to the crowd in a way made hip hop an institution of racism.

Considering the performance as audience design (Bell 1984), we realize the crowd controlled discourse more than the MCs, and through the democratic power of noise gave permission to racism. From our perspective today 'Racist' is a perfectly reasonable description of the even. However, describing the reality as racist, that night, was made impossible by the crowd. J-Fresh's condemnation was loudly sanctioned. We hear the crowd actively disallow the category of racism. The categorize "Racial" talk as only "battle" talk.

If we look at this ethnomethodologically, we realize that rules, behavior, and culture are all socially constructed and discursively understood. Much of the Host's and the Crowd's rhetorical work reflexively constructs the very context that it works out of; namely hip hop, battle, and racism. The battle and especially hip hop, are defined by the actions that occur in their name; yet the behaviors are conducted and explained by words like "battle" and "hip hop." These terms are meaningless outside the work done in that event's talk.

This event also reflects important issues of identity. In this event, the identity of the African American, which is often naturalized as the embodiment of hip hop, is contested by the crowd. Although Hold-Up and J-Fresh are African Americans at a hip hop event, and Hold-Up is rapping, their behavior is made to be not hip hop. They no longer count as hip hop, and are stripped of that identity. Membership is the consequence of discourse, not behavior or personal identification.

When the host de-racialized the activity through descriptions and gestures, and appealed to "Keep it hip hop," he and the crowd defined the color-blind qualifications of membership. He suggests the Local crowd's hip hop is outside race, outside racism, and therefore no longer just a black practice. This might suggest that J-Fresh's plea was the only "racist" talk of the event.

However, race and racism is of central importance to every laugh garnered by Illoko. See Labrador's (2009) article to highlight the contradictions of that humor.

With this data I find that defining hip hop as a non-hegemonic, mobile, cultural matrix certainly highlights the agency of global variations of hip hop, as well as the shifting contextual nature of language choices; however, it does not account for local hegemonic forces which will interfere with the liberating double-conscious inducing discourse that global hip hop carries. In this instance, the emcees in-group references, and one audience-member's cry that, "Hawaiian's can't be racist!" suggests that Local hip hop is certainly accessing local language ideology, that is Hawai'i's ethnic humor. But by simply defining hip hop as a cultural matrix we leave ourselves too much room to ignore both the power of local discourse, and the possible failure of the global hip hop resistance discourse. Any number of global and local ideologies are available to access. If we take seriously the dynamics of identity then, double-consciousness is not simply accessed, but something that must be made relevant. It is indexed as either important or not-important at any one event. Double-conscience is only as good as those who are policing it.

The role of hip hop as a tool for fighting larger socio-political institutions of oppression has been well studied; however, I think it is time, we understand how global hip hop can itself be a tool of local oppression. Hawai'i as a gateway model suggests the power of color-blindness, the differences between identification and identity, and the failure of double-consciousness to liberate. We must include these possibilities in studies of hip hop further outside the US. That is the next wave of CRT.

I love Hawai'i hip hop. It's a glorious scene, and I wouldn't ever speak ill of it…but… there *is* that element. And being an Anthropologist I gotta love the contradictions. Knowing

Codrington is right that hip hop is one of the most enduring and flexible modes of creative expression, I can only end this by asking, with hope and love for hip hop, what would've happened if the host said, "Sorry J, you're right. Illoko, cut that junk out and keep it hip hop?" I wonder, if the host asked that, would the crowd holler back?