

Astral Projections. Examining Arts-Based Pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and Speculative Design (SpD) as methods to process *(Dis)connections* and *Connections* between pedagogical practices utilized at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Collegiate Black Men (CBM).

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Abstract

Astral Projections. Examining Arts-Based Pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and Speculative Design (SpD) as methods to process *(Dis)connections* and *Connections* between pedagogical practices utilized at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Collegiate Black Men (CBM).

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Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

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The goal of this qualitative case study was to examine arts-based pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and speculative design (SpD) as tools that utilize imaginative solutions, cultural inclusivity, and arts-based teaching methods to process (dis)connections and connections between pedagogical practices utilized at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) and collegiate Black men (CBM) (Mont, 2012; Howard et al., 2016). Pedagogical (dis)connections include “anti-blackness” or racial(ised) misandry through cultural, personal, or academic challenges that dehumanize collegiate Black men (Smith et al., 2007). Pedagogical connections include empowerment, self-discovery, and personalized learning experiences that invite belonging and the well-being of CBM (Harper et al., 2009; Mont, 2012; Waters, 2021). Various creative artifacts were produced to examine reflections, ideas, and personalized pedagogical solutions imagined to impact the participants' lives. Theoretical concepts taken from Dewey (1938), Greene (1995), Eisner (2005), and Dumas and Ross (2016) were used to ground the pedagogical

argument centered on art inquiry, art as experience, social imagination, and anti-Blackness in learning environments. Five collegiate Black men attending a PWI were recruited through purposeful and snowball sampling to participate in the study. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field notes, and creative artifacts before, during, and after seven weeks of creative workshops. The data were examined and analyzed through case study stories and cross-case analyses to understand pedagogical solutions, forms of (dis)connections, and connections between CBM and pedagogical practices used at PWIs.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Since its inception, higher education in the U.S. for collegiate Black men (CBM) has operated as a system of oppression, bias, exclusion, and symbolism of White supremacy (Brooms & Druery, 2023). The tension between races reveals how, through policies and practices of White supremacy, CBM experience various forms of (dis)connections [misandry, dehumanization, anti-Blackness, etc.] and minimal forms of connections [empowerment, inclusion, self-discovery, and transformation] during their college experiences at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) (Brooms & Druery, 2023). According to Smith et al. (2007), Black racial misandry [(dis)connections] can be explained as an irrational hatred of Black boys and men because of societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices. According to Mendelberg, racial priming [(dis)connections] is the increased impact of negative racial predispositions on others, opinions, policies, or actions (Mendelberg, 2008). Unfortunately, hidden in curricula, textbooks, teacher expectations, and schooling inequalities [(dis)connections] are messages of overt and covert forms of racial priming that are noted, in part, as the cause of tension in CBM during their tenure at PWIs (Smith et al., 2007). Research continues to indicate that (dis)connections experienced through white-centric pedagogical practices stem from racial discrimination and cultural differences (Smith, 2010). These systemic challenges at PWIs are experienced by CBM as early as the application process, arriving on campus, or attending their first class (Howard et al., 2016).

The Tension Between Races

Historically, systematic racial priming caused by Whites about Blacks was experienced by CBM through a white-centric culture and race-specific stereotypes due to the use of

racial(ised) folklore, hate speech political systems, and mainstream media (Smith et al., 2007). Academic and social spaces at PWIs are noted for having racial tension manifest between CBM through verbal or non-verbal communication, curriculum and instruction, or systemic policies. These (dis)connections are noted as characteristics of being dissociated from humanity—to be treated as subhuman and nonhuman (Smith et al., 2007). Such tension highlights forms of anti-Black sentiments or aspects of defiling the presence of Blackness in white spaces (Fanon, 1967). In addition, higher education has also made minimal pedagogical progress toward locating, creating, or including specific sustainable solutions for widening the academic learning experiences for collegiate Black men who attend predominantly white institutions (PWI) (Mont, 2012). Mont states, “Curriculum and pedagogy are often based on the insights and interests of the White majority, which suggests that many higher education institutions are not as culturally responsive to the concerns and needs of students of color, including African American students” (Mont, 2012, p. 2).

A substantial body of research documents the negative experiences CBM undergoes at predominantly White institutions (Harper, 2006; Smith et al., 2007; Howard et al., 2016). Despite the findings of these studies, the experiences CBMs have at PWIs continue to reflect exclusion and disrespect (Brooms & Druery, 2023). Continued challenges and countless daily racial stimuli produced either unconsciously or consciously by the dominant white culture at PWIs cause resentment, discourse, and disdain in the minds of CBM (Smith et al., 2007). Over time, this distinct area of concern regarding (dis)connections has presented the illusive and destructive cultural and systemic action of white supremacy between pedagogical practices and CBM while attending PWIs (Harper, 2009). The context of (dis)connections in this study is loosely foregrounded with an underlying racial past in which CBMs experience forms of white

supremacy through white-centric pedagogical practices (Murrey et al., 2023). However, this study focuses on the opportunities to support CBM and educators in their shared interactions at PWIs with pedagogical practices by broadening the methods in which teaching and learning take place and advancing the opportunities through learning for self-discovery and well-being in CBM.

Due to continued apathy and slow progress, opportunities for change must be explored through research on diverse ways of knowing, self-discovery, and culturally inclusive thought leadership (Harper, 2006; Mont, 2012; Howard et al., 2016). For significant transformation in higher education to take place, institutions, specifically PWIs, must learn to examine their participation in narrow creative-critical thinking, limited curricular imagination, and the use of white-centric pedagogy and systemic racial(ised) academic conditioning (Kelley, 2018). Adopting diverse and sustainable pedagogical practices can provide inclusion, self-discovery, and empowerment through a pedagogy that can assist in achieving a better academic and sociocultural experience for CBM who attend PWIs (Howard et al., 2016). Because of the (dis)connection(s) that CBM faces through pedagogical practices while attending PWIs, there is a need for teaching and learning practices to evolve. The evolution of pedagogy that intentionally fosters connections through curriculum and instruction centers on student well-being, empowerment, self-discovery, and sustaining effective solutions for the diversity of students enrolled in PWIs (Paris & Alim, 2017).

Sustainable Solutions

The challenge with (dis)connections between CBM and pedagogical practices exposes various ways communication can impose mixed messages. Pedagogy can be described as a method of instruction delivered to a student. This method is a response, reaction, or interpretation

of information combined with objective and subjective experience about a subject that impacts learning (Gay, 2002). Pedagogy carries subtle personal, cultural, and social messaging from the instructor to the student. Each student has a personal, cultural, and social filter in how they translate and learn the messaging of content delivered (Mezirow, 1997). This learning experience between the instructor and the student can present opportunities for (dis)connections or connections based on how, when, why, or what complicates or creates ease of learning. CBM who endure (dis)connections with pedagogical practices at PWIs for social, cultural, or systemic reasons are exposed to what is missing or desired in the exchange of pedagogy and learning (Howard et al., 2016). This engagement between CBM and pedagogical practices raises the attention for sustainable solutions to resolve challenges within teaching and learning and the impact of pedagogy on learning (Harper, 2006; Paris & Alim, 2017). Reconciling with the complexities of pedagogy, addressing pedagogical purpose, intentionality, cultural and racial awareness, and student well-being must be considered (Smith et al., 2007; 2010; Waters, 2021). When considering sustainable solutions and pedagogical practices that pivot when engaging with CBM, it can be helpful for instructors to acknowledge the connection between their well-being and the student's well-being (Waters, 2021). Well-being is an attribute of psychological knowing that centers one's ability and attention toward a person-centered education, which can be perceived as a radical pedagogical practice and method of education (Fielding, 2006; Gatangi, 2007; Waters, 2021).

A person-centered environment invests in students and displays intentionality toward the teaching and learning practices to provide a student with an experience that leads toward self-discovery or transformation. This includes the experience of its students' lives and learning dynamics, allowing for relationship, empowerment, self-discovery, and experiential

connectedness (Beutel, 2009; Pyhältö et al., 2010). To support students, incorporating pedagogical practices that include emotional health and well-being are believed to be inseparable from the core of their learning experience (Kidger et al., 2009). Aside from arts-based pedagogy, Afro-Futurism, and speculative design, examples of pedagogy with this dynamic range from constructivist pedagogy, the method Currere, or critical pedagogy. Each practice incorporates a lens of engagement with a more personalized method of instruction for students' well-being, cultural and individual positionality, imagination, and creativity (Freire, 1970; Pinar, 1975; Waters, 2021; Bray & Harrington, 2021). The opportunity for a personalized learning quality in pedagogy creates a distinction that reflects a commitment to a broader approach to how learning can be experienced. This quality broadens the options that can be used to deliver transformative learning or self-discovery, allowing students to include lived experiences, culture, imagination, or critical creativity.

Arts-based pedagogy, Afrofuturism, and speculative design were pedagogical tools that created meaningful, out-of-body [astral projections] learning interactions for the five participants in my study. Considering the (dis)connections and connections between CBM and pedagogical practices, utilizing ABP, AfF, and SpD presented the opportunity to examine how the inclusion of experiences, culture, imagination, art, well-being, or critical questions could lead students to discover themselves while engaging in learning from such a variety of possible approaches (Freire, 1970; Pinar, 1975; Waters, 2021). These qualities created the impetus that anchored the direction of my research to examine their impact on CBM.

Purpose Of Study

The primary purpose of this study is to examine Arts-Based Pedagogy, Afrofuturism, and Speculative Design as methods to process (dis)connections and connections between pedagogical

practices utilized at Predominantly White Institutions and Collegiate Black Men. The research questions guiding this study are:

- 1) What pedagogical experiences are these CBMs encountering at the PWI?
- 2) What pedagogical practices were speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM?
- 3) What workshop features created conditions that facilitated the CBM's imagination of a more positive future for young Black men at a PWI?

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framing

Several qualitative studies have described the pedagogical experiences of CBM in detail. One study by Smith et al. (2007) utilized a critical race theory (CRT)-centered analysis to examine how racial priming shapes the postsecondary experiences of Black men. They sought to understand the impact of racial-gender history in the United States on African-American men. Their research revealed that Black men are constantly confronted by a system that oppresses them because they are members of a racial(ised) group (African Americans) and because they are Black men (Smith et al., 2007). Smith et al. further discovered collegiate Black men enrolled at PWIs reported experiencing four forms of racial(ised) (dis)connections spoken and unspoken thoughts or insinuations: (1) of Black men as criminals and predators, (2) of Black men as possessors of inner-city, ghetto-specific knowledge and behaviors, (3) of Black men as student-athletes, and (4) of Black men as anti-intellectuals (Smith et al., 2007). Smith revealed that CBM perceives the learning and living environments at PWIs as hostile, stressful, exhausting, and counter-productive to their success. These experiences produce a lack of comfort, belonging, or

well-being, causing low engagement and graduation rates (Smith et al., 2007). In my recent study (Kirkland, 2023), I used CRT, liberatory pedagogy, and identity theory as theoretical resources to examine pedagogical influences on CBM in PWIs to learn about what works in the learning environment and where influences are experienced at PWIs (Howard et al., 2016; Kirkland, 2023). In that study, I observed and learned about the challenges of (dis)connections that CBM regularly experienced with little recourse outside of connecting with other Black students, minimal interactive relationships with Black faculty or mentors, or participation in student-led activities or organizations such as The Black Student Union, or Black Greek Fraternities.

The pedagogical methods used in this qualitative case study were grounded in theories of art as experience, social imagination, art as inquiry, and BlackCrit Dumas & Ross (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2007; Greene, 2010; Dumas & Ross, 2016). These theoretical perspectives provided helpful perspectives on pedagogical approaches addressing (dis)connections and connections between pedagogical practices and CBM. With these theoretical tools, I aim to explore pedagogical practices that might lead to the self-discovery and empowerment of CBM.

BlackCrit

Dumas and Ross's theory, BlackCrit, allows for analyzing how educational contexts, such as higher education, "are informed by anti-blackness, and serve as forms of anti-Black violence, and how [practices and] policies facilitate and legitimize Black suffering in everyday life of schools" (Dumas & Ross, 2016, p. 419; Brooms & Druery, 2023). According to Dumas, anti-Blackness systematically marginalizes Black people and communities, associating Black bodies, people, and culture as dispensable or worthless, resulting in the production of tension, stress, and anxiety (Dumas, 2016). Centering anti-blackness inside (dis)connections between pedagogical practices and CBM helps provide a basis for understanding what pedagogical tool would be

needed. For CBM who experience anti-Black pedagogy, a tool of equity and anti-racist educational experiences, or a tool of cultural ways of inclusion, knowing and empathy for diversity would assist in creating a practice that includes rather than excludes students from diverse communities. In that case, there may be more reasons to listen to CBM and search for teaching methods and tools that more broadly achieve transformation for them. BlackCrit allows for a critique of anti-blackness and is a pedagogical tool for extending critical race theorizing to study “how the specificity of (anti)blackness matters in explaining how Black bodies [CBM] become marginalized, disregarded, and disdained in schools and other spaces of education” (Dumas & Ross, 2016, p. 415).

Art as Experience

Dewey’s theory of art as experience represents how human beings learn and grow through aesthetic experiences. In Dewey’s assertion, aesthetic experience is the highest form of interaction. This view reflects the interaction between the organism and the environment when it reaches a stage of fulfillment (Dewey, 1934). Dewey’s approach to aesthetics acknowledged and valued art as a pragmatic catalyst for mental, physical, and historical thinking. Dewey’s ideas about art as experience suggest the importance of art and what it affords regarding “undergoing” a personalized experience that reaches an aspect of value that is particularly fulfilling, memorable, or meaningful. “Undergoing” implies engaging with art through the senses [sight, sound, taste, touch, and thinking], resulting in a personal, emotional, or cognitive experience. Combining art with pedagogical practice can give students the opportunity and idea to be centered in their learning experience by creating something. This creation process, or using art to reflect an experience, is highly personal; it includes the student's imagination, memories, or feelings, displaying an authentic way of knowing. These ways of knowing captured in Dewey’s

thinking are emblematic of interactive engagement. Undergoing art as experience invites thought leadership, inclusion, and self-discovery. It initiates forms of communication and establishes a space for emotion and empathy while affording a personal experience of inclusion. Dewey's approach to art as experience aligns with ABP, AfF, and SpD in practical actions that alter the impact learning can afford based on how we feel, think, design, and imagine our interaction with our environments using art. Pedagogy that is culturally narrow, white-centric, and lacking imagination or creative criticality offered through art can be experienced as limiting in areas of pragmatism, democratic education, and experiential learning. These narrow learning experiences can be challenging, dismissive, damaging, non-inclusive, and a source of (dis)connection between CBM and pedagogical practices used at PWIs (Murrey, et al., 2023).

Social Imagination

Greene's theory of social imagination affirms one's capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our society from the position of where we live, our communities, and our schools (Greene, 1995). This theory also describes engagement methods using imagination, the creation of community, the reception and offering of empathy, and the inclusion of diverse ways of knowing. Social imagination becomes a pedagogical tool by engaging students in inventing visions [imagining] of what should and might be in our deficient society [learning environments]. Creating a learning environment through imagination can lead to opportunities to envision experiences that bring about change (Greene, 2010). Greene's theory of social imagination posits that because schools and higher education have limited concepts of what the learning experience could or should be, where it happens, and for whose benefit, it creates deficits in the learning and teaching experience (Greene, 1995). Like Dewey's approach, Greene's work aligns with ABP, AfF, and SpD in exploring social imagination by inventing

visions and connecting through imagining. Because pedagogy can be administered without these methods, it can alienate some learners and prevent self-discovery. For CBM, social imagination, expression, and community produce an opening to think critically about what can be learned or experienced pedagogically. Social imagination can help center the CBM experience through imagination and meaningful self-discovery.

Art as Inquiry

Eisner's theory of art as inquiry examines art in ways of knowing, connoisseurship, consciousness, feelings, community, and artistry as a path toward an essential and valuable idea that human feelings are revealed through art forms. Thus, art is positioned to function within its expressive and creative-critical ability to elicit literacy and language (Eisner, 2007). The process of art as inquiry is a vehicle of experiential engagements, increasing opportunities for impact inside the learning environment (Eisner, 2007). Experiential engagement includes learning experiences, which impact learning from multiple positions, languages, emotions, and memories. Experiential engagements invite humanization by including feelings [empathy, inspiration, expression, ideas, or imagination]. The radical idea is acknowledging "*feelings*" as part of the human condition, which can be stimulated by including art forms throughout the learning environment [schooling-higher education] and process (Eisner, 1998). Eisner's theory of art as inquiry calls on the interaction with art as a generative form of emotion, reflection, and creative analysis, producing a plausible pedagogical tool by creating a process for art-making to understand, interpret, and assess concepts.

These theoretical concepts that Dewey, Greene, Eisner, Dumas, and Ross have asserted discuss the impact of undergoing pedagogical practices involving art as experience, imagination, research, and BlackCrit. Each theory is used as a catalyst for art-based pedagogy,

Afrofuturism, and speculative design to center the concerns of CBM to avoid or bridge (dis)connections or create connections when engaging with pedagogical practices at PWIs. Doing so can provide CBM with an escape from conscious and unconscious bias, exclusion, and racial(ised) tension intertwined in pedagogical practices that center on whiteness and have limited cultural relevance (Bray & Harrington, 2021). These creative methods are affirmed as pedagogical possibilities that simultaneously create opportunities for CBM while learning at PWIs (Dewey, 1934; Hunter & Frawley, 2002; Eisner, 2007; Greene, 2010; Dumas & Ross, 2016).

Pedagogical Possibilities

ABP, Aff, and SpD are all pedagogical practices that utilize a method of teaching that personalizes the exchange between the method of instruction and the learning experience. Each pedagogical possibility incorporates a connection to a student's imagination or expression, cultural interpretation to understand a topic or a socialized relationship that gives reason to make meaning of specific thoughts related to curricula used in the instruction process (Greene, 1995; Mont, 2012). As pedagogical possibilities exist, these three instruction methods help explore diverse ways of knowing. Considering the challenges that CBM faces regarding feeling dehumanized and excluded due to white-centric pedagogical practices used at PWIs these three methods of instruction present possibilities of support for both students and instructors (Dumas & Ross, 2016; Brooms & Druery, 2023). Each pedagogy generates affordances centered on well-being, self-discovery, transformation, and the opportunity for personalized learning transformation. Attributes of these creative-critical thinking modalities are examined next.

Arts-Based Pedagogy

Arts-based pedagogy (ABP) is instruction using diverse forms of art (visual art media, linguistics, film, poetry, music, dance, and the exploration of fiction and concepts conceived through speculative design) (Mont, 2012). This method of pedagogy is a catalyst for cultural ways of thinking and problem-solving. With art, ABP generates opportunities for imagination, creativity, and the development of critical consciousness (Freire, 1970; Greene, 1995). ABP covers creative, cognitive, conceptual, and analytical methods of gaining knowledge and experience (Hunter & Frawley, 2002). ABP offers a relevant, creative, critical method that engages literacy, language, art production, creative expression, and cultural narratives to examine the context of a problem in learning.

Afrofuturism

Afrofuturism (AfF), a term coined by Mark Dery, is an African diasporic-centered genre of speculative fiction [fantasy or alternate history] that incorporates aesthetic, philosophy, and a wealth of cultural history (Dery, 1994). This pedagogical strategy entails envisioning possible Black (African and African American) futures explored through technoculture [examining technology, media, and video animation], literature, theater, visual art, music, and fashion (Dery, 1994; Bray & Harrington, 2021). According to Harrington, Klassen, & Rankin (2022), Afrofuturism emerged as an alternative that imagines futures where (Black)ness is integral to the story. Afrofuturism is not just another aesthetic vehicle of fantasy or fiction-based thinking; it is also a methodology and process for Black people [in this case, students] to conceive a future commonly dominated by White narratives, education, and political systems. The context of Afrofuturism offers a method and creative experience of fictional narratives, and like art, it is a method to project solutions for problems or norms that cover culture or cultural challenges.

Afrofuturism provides a target and path for CBM to aim their ideas, creative-critical thinking, and imagination for a desired experience and result.

Speculative Design

Speculative design (SpD) is a process of thinking, critical investigation, and practice concerned with future design ideas, proposals, and the capacity of lived or imagined experiences. The term "speculative design" was popularized by Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby as a subsidiary of critical design (Dunne & Raby, 2013, pp. 159-189). In my present argument, speculative design is a recommended pedagogical strategy based on providing a process incorporating ABP and AfF to design, imagine, and conceive, presently, a non-existent experience that can provide guidance, affirmation, cultural empowerment, and inclusive thought leadership. According to Harrington, Klassen, and Rankin (2022), speculative design emphasizes design as a method for solving problems that plague society, hoping to produce creative solutions that benefit society through imagining speculative fiction or Afrofuturism.

Combined, pedagogies and these theories suggest approaches that help address the problem of (dis)connections and the possibility of increasing connections between CBM and pedagogical practices at PWIs that have the ability to cultivate self-discovery and well-being (Dumas & Ross, 2016). This study aims to explore the affordances of ABP, AfF, and SpD, as pedagogical practices to support CBM who attend PWIs.

Chapter 3

Method

Context/Setting

In this qualitative study, I describe and evaluate five creative workshops to engage CBM in imagining “a different world of higher education.” The workshops were held at the Brooklyn Trail Building just off campus at the University of Washington. This location is significant for all five participants due to their connection with the building and the Brotherhood Initiative (BI), founded and operated by Dr. Joe Lott. The Brotherhood Initiative, commonly known as the BI, is a safe place that provides mentorship, community, course instruction, relationships, and a familiar place, much like a “barbershop” for all men of color to gather and empower one another. One significance of this location is that it reflects the needs, requests, and outcry of CBM who attend PWI and who make it known that they feel excluded, alone, and in need of community. Having the opportunity to conduct my study in this setting, in solidarity with the BI, personifies the importance of higher education to acknowledge, provide, and sustain the needs of collegiate Black men. Sustaining these provisions affirms CBM mentally, physically, and culturally by establishing an experience of value to support the lives of diverse men of color while existing in a PWI.

Another example of the significance experienced in conducting my study at the Brooklyn Trail building was that it displayed the value of having a network within one’s culture. Although not a member of the Brotherhood Initiative, I received support through my fraternity brotherhood, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Some of the administrators who operated the BI’s scheduling, programming, and logistics were Alphas. These men gave me access to the building after hours, the rooms throughout my study, snacks, AV resources, and the simple grace to utilize the provisions of the Brotherhood Initiative resource as I needed. This conduct and support observed by the participants allowed them to witness Black men as thought leaders, stakeholders,

and decision-makers during their journey through higher education. Seeing this is a form of empowerment, representation, modeling, and affirmation of their mentality toward what they can achieve. Combined, the essence of these significant examples reflects what my study aims to point out regarding the (dis)connections or connections between pedagogical practices and CBM who attend PWIs. The setting of my study symbolically expresses what is missing [(disc)connections] from the larger narrative of the experience for CBM when they attend a PWI and what is needed [connections] to change the narrative.

Participants

The participants in this study were five undergraduate collegiate Black men. The distinction of “Black” is directed toward African Americans (non-indigenous African-born Americans/non-immigrant). This distinction is directly referenced to the historical, social, academic, overt, and covert oppressive cultural challenges that have faced Black Americans (non-indigenous African-born Americans/non-immigrant) since the inception of the United States (Harper et al., 2009). This concern and specific selection are also a factor when examining the creative products, ideas, and intellect of individuals whose cultural identity is tied to an oppressive system versus individuals whose cultural identity is related to a search for a better life within the provisions of an oppressive system (Ogbu, 1998). Although I intended to locate African American participants, due to the availability of my sampling and available students, two of the participants identified as Africans [one from Ghana and the other from Ethiopia] (indigenous African-born Americans/immigrants) who have lived in the United States from a young age but have existed in a complete cultural and ethnic environment that separates many of the experiences from Black identifying (non-indigenous African-born Americans/non-immigrant) participants. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were accomplished through my

network of faculty, staff, students, and programmatic connections within the university community.

During the selection process, the participants were paid \$350 for their time during the workshop and interviewing; they also received one (1) academic credit listed as an Independent Study (IS) through the College of Education. The IS credit was sponsored by a tenured faculty member and awarded based on completing five initial free writes, five creative workshops, open-ended journaling, collage painting, one Haiku, one fictional narrative, and two post-workshop interviews.

Each participant wrote two paragraphs for evaluation and selection into the study before being admitted into the creative workshop (course). The two paragraphs responded to two open-ended prompts. The first prompt was to describe any educational defining pedagogical experiences as a collegiate Black man attending a PWI. The second, was to discuss why they are interested in discovering what “might be” a future useful pedagogical practice or experience for collegiate Black men who attend PWIs. The responses taught me how the young men were experiencing pedagogical practices at a PWI. This concern centered on what (dis)connections or connections they were experiencing, what ideas or creative imaginations they might consider for their future, and what imaginative solutions they may have about pedagogy. These responses were evaluated and used to select the participants for this study. A participant data generation consent form (**See Appendix J**) and a background table of each participant were used to provide information about their lived experiences as individuals enrolled in a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), specifically the University of Washington (UW) (**See Table 1**).

Table 1/
Participant Background

Participant	Ethnic Identity	Major	Classification	Institution
Andy	African	Informatics Cyber Security	Sophomore	University of Washington
Devin	Black – African American	American Ethnic Studies	Sophomore	University of Washington
Ja’Nathen	Black – African American	Pre-Law Society and Justice	Senior	University of Washington
Moti	African	Finance and Information Systems	Sophomore	University of Washington
Trevon	Black – African American	Business	Freshman	University of Washington

Creative Workshops

The five (5) creative workshops consisted of 3-hour blocks allotted for discussion, writing, and creative production. During this time, the participants reviewed magazines for images, words, or creative ways to produce a composition that reflected their thoughts and ideas. They applied text passages and images of known or unknown people or created narratives using imagery to communicate their thoughts. In addition to the collage work, they also painted images, colors, or words with paint to diversify their creative experience by utilizing multi-media resources ranging from Sharpies and acrylic paint to magazine clippings. Each workshop focused on deepening the collage painting composition with layers of imagination, speculation, inventive critical thinking, and personalized perspective centered on their pedagogical experiences while attending a PWI. The creative artifact workshops took place every Tuesday over seven weeks to engage participants with open-ended journaling, speculative inquiry, creative art production, and interviewing. These features helped stimulate their imagination for designs of future pedagogical

practices or experiences for CBMs attending a PWI (Bhattacharya, 2017). The workshop used speculative design probes— (thought-provoking activities) such as free-writes, open discussion, collaborative discussions, and fictional writing that generated data. The workshop involved discovering unknown pedagogical ideas thought up by the participants regarding their lived experiences and imaginations and the benefit of imagining what could be learned from the ideas, personal stories, and imaginations through the lens of ABP, SpD, and AfF (see Table 2).

Table 2
Creative Workshop Artifacts

Arts-Based Pedagogy (Art-Making & Art Utilization)	Speculative Design Probes	Afro-Futurism	Journaling	Interviewing
Haiku	Photo-Voice Pictures & Free-Writes-to Reflect and Imagine	Fictional Future Narrative	Reflexive Response to Pedagogy (teaching & learning)	Open Discussion—with Semi-Structured/typed question-and-answer
Painting & Collage Making	Open Discussion – to critically think, reflect, and share	Open Discussion—What is your superhero name, and why?	Reflexive Response to Pedagogy (inclusion & belonging)	Typed response—with a semi-structured typed question-and-answer
Rap Music (Listening)	Collaborative Thinking – Designed an art statement	Open Discussion—What is your superpower, and why?	Reflexive Response to Pedagogy (imagination & future methods of learning-What Might Be?)	In-person—with a semi-structured oral question-and-answer

Multiple ways of knowing were used to stimulate imaginative, innovative ideas or solutions throughout the workshop to make meaning of the diverse forms of communication. Each method provided an opportunity that could lead to learning transformation and pedagogical ideas. Each week of the workshop utilized a cross-modality of creativity (collaging, painting, fictional writing, and poetry) to experience the topics and personal reactions to the process of uncovering

data around the context of this study. Each method provided a different mode of communication that manifested the context of each participant's voice and story (Mezirow, 1997; Simpson, 2009; Wiessner, 2009; Hoggan, 2009).

Selected creative interactions were utilized to examine arts-based pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and speculative design (SpD). The strategic methodology used to gather data outside of the creative workshop was photovoice and semi-structured interviewing. Photovoice is a participatory action research strategy that can contribute toward research and change within a community. This strategy enabled individuals to (1) record and amplify the strengths, assets, histories, beliefs, challenges, and visions of a community or person, (2) promote critical dialogue, respect, humanization, and knowledge about community topics with the use of discussion, photographs, and (3) the opportunity to reach key stakeholders, policymakers, advocates, students, and community individuals with lived experiences, imagery, and critical dialogue that assists in the progress of a community or person (Wang & Burris, 1997). Through the photovoice process, the participants used the photo images to express their experiences at a PWI, narrate the context of their creativity, and analyze their collages. Semi-structured interviewing provided additional depth beyond the focus and data using creative methods. The interviews were conducted using a typed question-and-answer response method and in-person semi-structured interviews. In addition to the interviews, collage-making, and painting, the participants engaged in reflective writing, discussions, journaling, haiku poetry, and future fictional writing. The process of creating the creative artifacts was centered on the production of one final collage painting. The nexus of the creative artifact explored "what might be" if given the chance to design or imagine pedagogy in the future and in a different way. The data collected focused on pedagogical experiences, imaginations, thoughts, ideas, and responsive

personal reflections related to using creative methods for learning and the teaching and learning interactions they experienced at a PWI.

The participants began the weekly creative workshop with an open-ended free-write about their pedagogical experiences at a PWI. The free-writes explored different responses (Inclusion, Belonging, Teaching, Learning, and Imagination and Culture) experienced as a collegiate Black man attending a PWI. Following the open free-write, the participants created one of the creative artifacts (Haiku poems, Fictional writing, collage painting, journaling). Following the creative workshops, the participants would capture pictures with their cell phones (Photo-Voice method) to document their life as CBMs, reflecting on how they live, cope, and experience their attendance at a PWI (**see Appendix K**). With photo-voice and interviews, the participants would reflect and respond to topics that covered thoughts ranging from explanations about their college experiences, ideas about teaching and learning, and “what learning might be” if they could provide creative solutions, ideas, imaginations, meaning or fictional design narratives to create pedagogical experiences for themselves or for collegiate Black men who attend PWIs.

Data Collection

The methods used to collect data for this study were oral (transcribed) and written interviews, field notes, and *creative artifacts* (Haiku, future fictional narrative, photo-voice pictures, journaling, and interviews) (Bhattacharya, 2017). The participants displayed ideas and thoughts through open discussions and written narratives that were being used to ground their ideas centered on lived experiences, creative actions, and the exploratory reality of being a CBM at a PWI. My efforts were to capture nuanced narratives communicated by the participants based on body language, verbal communication, creative, cultural, or colloquial conversations, any

evidence of imagination, emotionality, or any academic-based framing of thoughts or experiences. Twenty-five (25) reflective free-write responses, five (5) participants providing five (5) responses each = twenty-five (25), five (5) Haiku poems, five (5) fictional future narratives [letter to self or Son], five (5) visual artwork (collage painting), seventy-five (75) journal entries, one hundred (100) photo-voice pictures, and ten (10) interviews (See Table 3).

Table 3

Total Generated Creative Artifacts

Participant	Free-Write	Haiku	Future Fictional Narrative	Collage (visual art)	Journals	Photo-Voice Pictures	Interviews (written/oral)
Andy	5	1	1	1	15	20	2
Devin	5	1	1	1	15	20	2
Ja’Nathen	5	1	1	1	15	20	2
Moti	5	1	1	1	15	20	2
Trevon	5	1	1	1	15	20	2
Total Artifacts	25	5	5	5	75	100	10

Data Analysis

For the data analysis, I utilized an iterative review of the creative text (Haiku, Future Fictional narrative), journals, photo voice reflections, oral and written interviews, and an analysis of the creative visual art. In my data review, I observed personal stories, reflexive commentary on encounters with pedagogical (dis)connections and connections, and imaginative narratives about the participant's desired or speculated future about pedagogical methods experienced at PWIs. Using the case-study story method to analyze the data, I could summarize and interpret the participant's narratives and trace past, present, and speculative thoughts of future learning experiences. As part of the data analysis process, I produced case study stories, case study summaries, a cross-case analysis outline/memo, and a cross-case analysis for all case studies.

These methods were used as a thinking process—aimed at bringing to the forefront the many concerns, patterns, and data-centered narratives related to my research questions. Each aspect of the data positioned the study to address the experience of pedagogical practices encountered by the CBM of this study who attend a PWI and the possibilities for pedagogical solutions and transformative outcomes for CBM.

Hybrid Coding & Case-Study Storying

I analyzed the data in this study with a hybrid case-study story approach. The hybrid approach utilized open coding, A priori, In Vivo, Value, and Process codes to extrapolate the data to allow me to see patterns that led to summations of the participants' thoughts. Analyzing the participant's shared experiences from different vantages produced an understanding of their experience. Hybrid coding invited relational patterns between the participants and their experiences, deductive reasoning about actions or thought patterns, and actual narratives shared about occurrences. The hybrid codes helped organize the participants' feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. I began with Open coding, loosely using the research questions but centering most of my focus on specific excerpts of interest that were significant to the study and those that reflected a distinct pattern related to the story of the participant's relationship to the general idea of the research topic. These passages were then noted as open coding (using raw data, later grouped into conceptual categories to build descriptive, multi-dimensional preliminary frameworks for analysis to ensure the work's validity) regarding the impact of teaching and learning practices at a PWI. The second phase of the hybrid coding approach was based on reason and knowledge generated from theories centered on social imagination, art as experience, art as inquiry, and anti-Blackness in learning correlated to the participant's relationship with a PWI. These passages were then noted as A Priori coding (reasoning or knowledge that proceeds from theoretical

deduction rather than observation or experience) regarding the impact of teaching and learning practices at a PWI that may reflect what the participants might think before producing their creative artifacts. The third was based on discussions with the participants centered on the teaching and learning (pedagogical practices) experiences of the participant's relationship with a PWI. These passages were noted as In Vivo coding (emphasis on the actual narrative of the participants) regarding the learning experience at a PWI. The fourth phase was based on feelings and personal ideologies that guide how participants feel, think, and react to social or academic engagements and their relationship with a PWI. These passages were noted as Value coding (narratives that attempt to exhibit participants' inferred values, attitudes, and beliefs) regarding participant feelings such as exclusion, dehumanization, anger, discontent, humanization, inclusion, empowerment, or joy. The fifth and final phase of the hybrid coding approach was based on the use of words that end in “ing” (i.e., painting, collaging, drawing, etc.) that describe how participants are processing what they feel, think, and react to regarding social or academic engagements and their relationship with a PWI. These passages were noted as Process coding (used to describe and display creative actions, processes, creativity, and rituals) (See Fig 1).

Hybrid Coding & Case-Study Storying Text Coding Frame

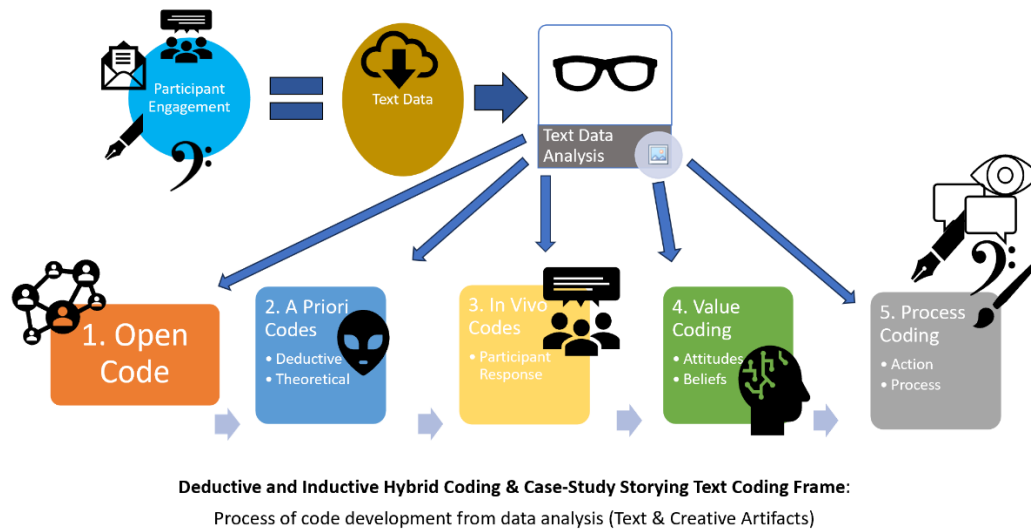
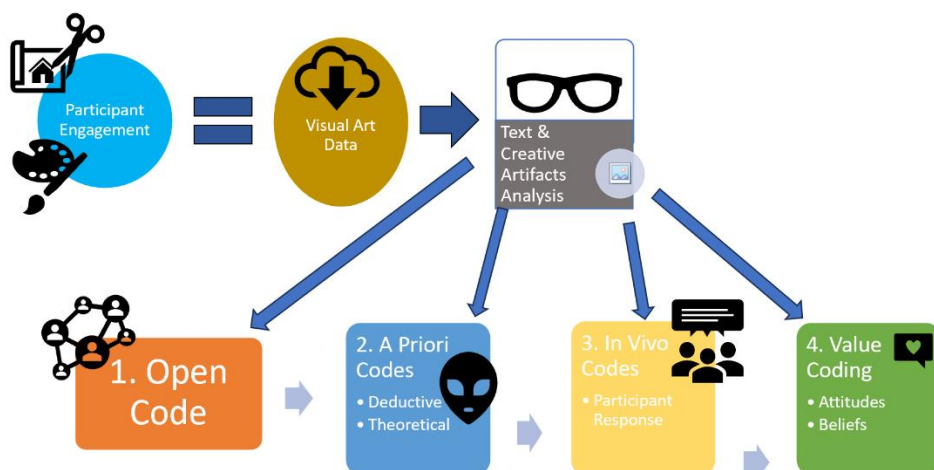


Figure 1. Deductive and Inductive Hybrid Coding & Case-Study Storying Text Coding Frame

To create visual art codes, I interviewed the participants and had them analyze their visual art. After completing their creative visual work, this process of interviewing the participants provided data with a hybrid approach. The participants would analyze and provide narrative data about imagery, symbols, rationale, or ideas embedded within the content. For the first phase of visual art codes, I began with Open coding, loosely using the research questions to focus on specific images of interest that appeared to be significant or visually interesting to the artwork and then to the study. Those images that stood out aesthetically or intellectually in the artwork signal a message of value related to the participant's story or experience. Those images reflected a distinct pattern to the research questions or some indicative value of interest in the participant's experience. Those images that stood out were related to empowerment, symbols, or words related to culture, (dis)connection, connection, self, family, the teaching and learning experience, the university environment, or future-oriented desires. In this pass of open coding, images were

noted as open code (images of interest and patterns within the narrative) regarding the impact of teaching and learning practices at a PWI. The second phase of visual art coding was based on reason and knowledge generated from theories centered on social imagination, art as experience, art as inquiry, and anti-Blackness in learning correlated to the participant's relationship with a PWI. These images were noted as A Priori code (reasoning or knowledge that proceeds from theoretical deduction rather than observation or experience) regarding the impact of teaching and learning practices at a PWI. The third phase of visual art codes was based on images discussed by participants that centered on the experiences of the participant's relationship with a PWI. These images were noted as an In Vivo code (emphasis on the actual narrative of the participants) regarding the learning experience at a PWI. The fourth and final phase of visual art codes was based on feelings and personal ideologies that guided how participants felt, thought, and reacted to social, academic, or pedagogical engagements and their relationship with a PWI. These images were noted as Value codes (codes that attempt to exhibit images related to inferred values, attitudes, and beliefs of participants) regarding participant feelings such as exclusion, dehumanization, anger, discontent, humanization, inclusion, empowerment, or joy. (See Fig 2).

Deductive and Inductive Hybrid Visual Art Coding Frame



Deductive and Inductive Hybrid Visual Art Coding Frame: Process of code development from data analysis (Text & Creative Artifacts)

Figure 2. Deductive and Inductive Hybrid Visual Art Coding Frame

To create case-study stories and cross-case analysis, I analyzed the data generated from the participant's discussions, interviews, creative artifacts, and reflexive journals. This process of storying required an intentional back-and-forth review of the data, with an intentional centering of the participant's experience with pedagogical practices experienced at a PWI to be anchored in the data. This analysis process allowed me to identify emerging patterns in each case and across them. The case study stories, case-study summary analysis process, and the hybrid coding method were a regular feature of my data analysis method. I used various questions within this feature to probe my reflections on the case studies: What did he – referring to the participants – learn? What did you – referring to myself – learn from the CBM? How does this relate to the experiences of each of the five CBMs concerning my research questions (RQs)? What similarities and differences are shown between these cases? How do these similarities relate to the RQs? From these questions, I organized patterns found within the narrative shared by the

participants into a substantive analysis of their experience with pedagogical practices while attending a PWI, possible pedagogical solutions, and experiences that the participants were exposed to self-discovery and well-being.

(See Fig. 3)

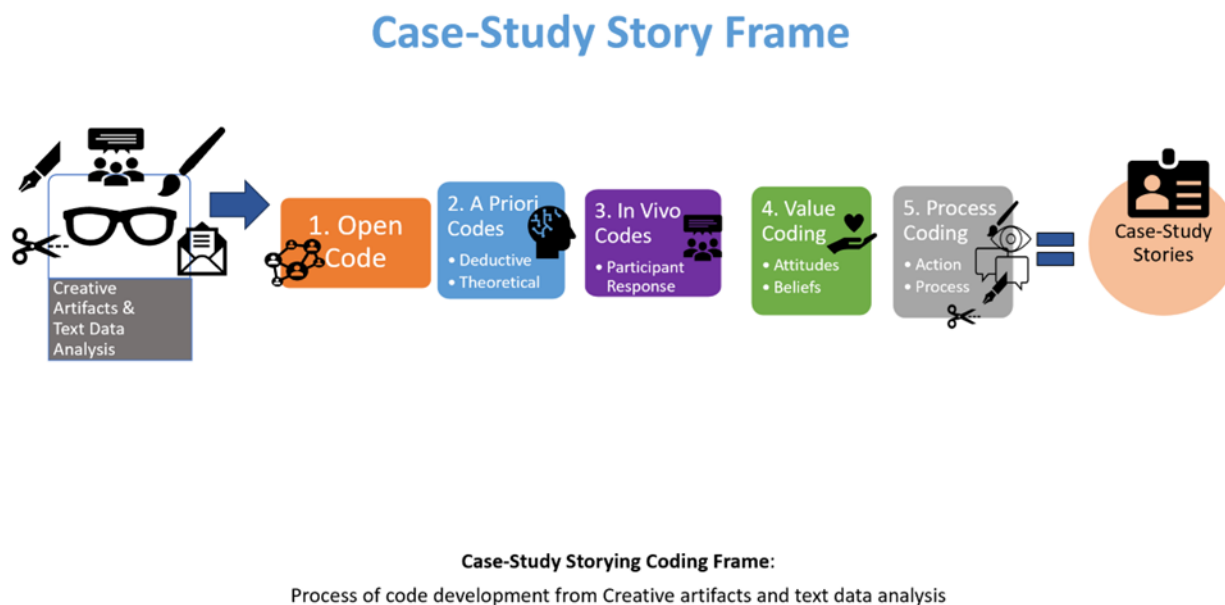


Figure 3. Case-Study Storying Coding Frame

Chapter 4. Five Case Stories

In this section, I have integrated all the observation, interview, and artifactual data collected from participants into a composite narrative for each of the five CBMs. Each narrative follows a sequence of events related to their time associated with the creative workshops, ending with final exit oral interviews. The sequence was: Finding Participants, Week One of the Creative Workshop, Week Two of the Creative Workshop, Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop, Week Five—the Final week of the Creative Workshop, Weeks Six and Seven—the Oral Interviews.

Andy – The Fading Black Star

Finding Participants

When I first met Andy, I noticed he was quiet and reserved and spoke in a low yet pleasant tone. From his demeanor, I could perceive that he was respectful and showed evident regard for me as an elder even though I, too, like him, was a student. Another participant, Ja'Nathen, recommended Andy to me as a possible participant for my creative workshop. Upon meeting with Andy to discuss and confirm his participation in my workshop, I realized he was an African (from Ghana) student, not African American (Black). This stipulation was not a deterrent but a point of reference that I had to contend with, considering the low population of Black (African American) available students from whom I could draw my participants within my snowball and purposeful sampling. In my meeting with Andy, I introduced myself and shared my reason for seeking out participants. I explained to him my situation as a doctoral student and that I was searching for five participants to work with me to collect data for my dissertation. After hearing my rationale and need for participants, Andy smiled and, with a conservative display of interest, happily agreed to participate. Andy made no significant overture to his participation as he displayed a contemplative acceptance. It was almost as if I could see him thinking, “What did I just agree to?” and “What will I have to do.” Although he looked hesitant, he was fully committed and made every effort to fulfill his word. Andy’s response was noted in one of his two preliminary questions, captured after my initial meeting, to confirm he was a suitable participant. Andy stated,

Andy: “Although you left me free to imagine the most out-there learning experience in my mind, I still felt bound to the classroom experience/environment I had been exposed to my whole life, so I did not fully rack my brain. Later, I thought about why it was so hard to envision what learning could be like in the future, and I realized it was due to how I had been taught. Since elementary school, I feel like there has been a one-

size-fits-all approach in how I was taught, and even in college, I still feel bound to that.”

Like many CBMs noted in the research, Andy’s formative and current challenges with PWIs were consistent with research associated with the experience of Black men (including African men who associate and identify as “Black”) who attend PWIs (Harper, 2006; Harper, 2009).

Week One of the Creative Workshop [Inclusion]

During the first week of the creative workshop, Andy would sit off to the side of the classroom



almost by himself.

Although Andy knew the other participants, he was not overly social, talkative, or a jokester. He was quiet and reserved, but he had a quick-wittedness about himself. He was often drawn into social banter with the other participants about rap music, food, fashion, and commentary about his teaching and learning ideas. We began with a free writing exercise at the beginning of all workshops. After the free writing in the first week, I opened the discussion with an icebreaker to get the participants in the mind of the data-centered inclusion, belonging, teaching, and learning of imagination and culture. During the Icebreaker, Andy responded to the questions, what is your classification and academic major, and “If you were to have a superhero name and power, what would it be, and why?” Andy stated,

Andy: I am a sophomore majoring in Informatics and Cyber Security. My superhero name would be Vim, and my superpower would be teleportation, with the ability to understand and communicate with all languages beyond humans. I want this power to prevent anyone or anything from being an “outlier.”

For Andy, his connection to the experience of being an “outlier” and his fictional desire to communicate with everyone and everything might be associated with how he feels while engaging in white spaces. Andy states,

Andy: There's been experiences with teachers and other people around me, that is maybe a suppressed feeling or just something I let roll off my back so that it doesn't affect me as much. The main spaces that I do not feel a sense of belonging at UW have definitely been classrooms. The reason for this is just due to my initial imposter syndrome at this university; although I had a space like the BI, knowing the actual percentage of people like me at this school, paired with the academic rigor, initially made me feel like my getting into UW was a fluke.

In the fifth week, the discussion was on imagination and culture. This topic allowed me to draw connections to week one and the use of the icebreaker. Again, I opened the dialogue around superpowers and superheroes. In this discussion, I asked the participants which superhero they identified with the most and why. Andy shared that he identified with the superhero *Nightcrawler* from the *X-Men*.



(Nightcrawler – www.pinterest.com)

Andy stated,

Andy: The hero I chose was Nightcrawler, a part of the X-Men. I chose him because I want his power of teleportation, and additionally, I like the contrast between his looks (he looks like a blue devil due to his father being the devil) and his ideals, as he is a huge Catholic. My experience

with imagination and culture at the University of Washington (UW) is limited. I say this because I do not have many chances to explore my Imagination as it relates to my culture and my culture itself. Due to UW being a PWI, there are not many spaces that allow me to explore my culture or be comfortable displaying my culture. I think that the conditioning that comes with being raised in a world in which you are socialized to idealize whiteness definitely played a part in choosing the hero I chose. Although I could try to deflect by saying that I chose Nightcrawler simply because I like his character, which is valid, I feel like denying that influence would be disingenuous.

The use of superheroes and superpowers was a gateway to allow the participants a chance to articulate their experiences at a PWI through a lens of Afro-futurism, and speculative design [imagination, creativity, and fiction]. These attributes are directly connected to using ABP, AfF, and SpD (Mont, 2012). Andy's courage to respond genuinely to his reflections on the icebreakers and topics related to inclusion, imagination, and culture indicates his honesty and the integrity of his truth. In addition, Andy's comments reflect the desired qualities that are missing from his learning experience while attending a PWI. Andy states

Andy: I think the part of the workshop I liked was about being more intentional with what I do. Being more deeply involved with the RSOs (Registered Student Organizations) that pay it forward, as well as my involvement with the Brotherhood Initiative (BI), like kind of creating or adding to the spaces that like to help people in general, so they feel more at home and have a place to belong and like a place to just be themselves and work on themselves without judgments.

These comments create a credible position and argument that for CBM who attend PWIs, the absence of *their* desired experience does have an impact on their ability to process, succeed, and sustain a mindset that elevates them personally, academically, imaginatively, culturally, intellectually, and professionally (Howard et al., 2016; Kelley, 2018).

Week Two of the Creative Workshop [Belonging]

In the second week of the creative workshop, Andy, again, consistently sat on the side of the classroom working quietly on his collage, participating in the open discussions with minimal retorts, and yet with precision, he delivered comedic wit as his contribution to the social banter instigated by the workshop's jokester Ja'Nathen. Andy's calm, collected, and conservative demeanor never wavered, nor did his consistent concern for culture dissipate. It can be perceived that Andy's desire for his culture stems from his formative upbringing and his direct relationship with his Ghanaian culture and ethnicity. These factors relating to belonging and a desire for culture for Black or African students are real concerns for those who attend PWIs (Smith et al., 2007). The issue of needing or desiring culture reflects a sentiment from CBMs who attend PWIs to receive an experience of their culture to support their time in an unfamiliar environment (Gay, 2010). PWI seemingly provides minimal support or experiences for diverse cultures outside of the dominant white culture (Howard et al., 2016). This factor became clear when Andy discussed a fading Black star, a metaphor framed in his Haiku understood as a metaphoric north star later illustrated as a "Black Star," a symbol he painted in his collage. Andy's Haiku states,

Andy's Haiku: Stale identity
 A fading Black star I am
 Fallen from above

Both the Haiku and the symbol of the Black star in Andy's collage capture a sense of (dis)connections (see **Andy's Collage Image**). Andy states,

Andy: The black star is the main image in my Haiku. It represents my culture, essentially being my north star, along with my feelings about how I feel a growing disconnect from it in certain aspects. Additionally, the broken ladder and the stick figure falling off it relate to the final line in the Haiku, representing how failing in academia can seem like taking a huge fall.



Andy's Collage:

There was always a background of rap music or R&B tunes during the creative workshops. For Andy, there was a present connection to belonging, inclusion, and creativity evident in his enjoyment of the music. Andy states,



Andy: This photo is me with Mick Jenkins, a rapper that I listen to and admire. The picture was taken at his concert here in Seattle some weeks ago. I felt like I “belonged”, at this concert because of his music and its subject matter.

In the second week, Andy and others continued to listen to songs by Boys to Men, Frankie Beverly and the Maze, Public Enemy, LL Cool J, Eric B. and Rakim, and many others, to name a few. During this time, Andy and the other participants shared stories of their connection with the BI and other RSOs, their connection to UW as CBM, and where they experienced challenges and good times.

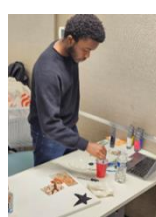
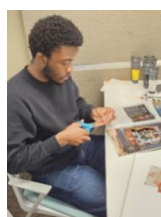


Andy stated,

Andy: My experience with belonging began early on, before I even set foot on the UW campus. I received a letter in the mail telling me about the Brotherhood Initiative, a program that gives men of color at this PWI a space to grow and a community to feel welcome within. The BI gave me a sense of belonging that I have since flourished in. Reflecting on my sense of belonging at UW, I noticed that all such spaces have been primarily black, from BSU to ASA and NSBE. All those spaces have given me a way to explore my identity and interests and, in that way, have contributed to my growth at UW. On the other hand, the main spaces I do not feel a sense of belonging to at UW are classrooms.

Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop [teaching and learning]

During weeks three and four, Andy continued to exude a quiet demeanor. He often had very few words to share unless spoken to directly, seldom provided any retorts to other participants' commentary, and remained consistent with minimal engagement with others when crafting his collage. Andy's conservative and quiet persona did not diminish the depth of his thoughts or creative ideas. Andy crafted and narrated the symbols in his collage with distinct clarity.



Andy states,

Andy: The connected figure in the middle of my collage represents my experience with teaching, including how I want it to be in the future. The figure on the left side (a teacher) is someone speaking to the figure on the other side (a student), resulting in their brain growth. My experience as a CBM attending a PWI has allowed me to see this happen to others, although not myself, leading me to want this to become more widespread so everyone can experience it. Regarding the learning practices, I feel those are harder to grasp as a CBM because they can sometimes depend on your educational development, even before high school and your environment at the time. While interacting academically with the predominantly white teaching body, my feelings and ideologies have felt almost put on the backseat.



Andy's Collage:

The results of Andy's analysis of his creative ideas produced in the collage are made clear when he addresses directly how he feels about the experience of teaching and learning. He directly correlates what is being taught and how they are being taught. As Andy has lamented over the (dis)connections with his culture [what], and if there was more integration of creative thinking, imagination, or integrated cultural dynamics, i.e., use of art, poetry, music, visual art, open dialogue [how], he believes his educational experience would improve. Andy states,

Andy: The impact that could be made on teaching and learning if something like this were more widespread would aid a redesign or restructuring of the current educational system, which would include a revamp of the things

that are taught and how they are taught. My experience with teaching at UW has been indifferent. There are classes where, as a student, you must learn the material by yourself. As a collegiate black man, I have experienced positive teaching results from participating in the Brotherhood Initiative. The classes help me to explore my identity of being a black man at a PWI. My experience with imagination and culture at the UW is limited I believe. I say this because I have not had many chances to explore my imagination as it relates to my culture and my culture itself. Due to UW being a PWI, there are not many spaces that allow me to explore my culture or be comfortable displaying my culture.

Week Five— The Final week of the Creative Workshop [imagination and culture]

In the final week of the creative workshop, it became evident that Andy was engaging in a deeper investigation of his experiences and his relationship with the other participants. In his collage, he used various symbols and correlations to his fictional future narrative to express his views of the future and what might be a better experience in teaching and learning. Andy states,

Andy: The main symbol in my collage that connects to my fictional future narrative is the large eye above the middle of the collage. Relating to the future narrative, it represents the idea that learning is made much easier, easing the burden on students in figuring out how to learn best and teachers in figuring out how to teach best. The experience of bringing my collage together was exhilarating, allowing me to dig deeper and be more introspective about my experiences as a CBM and the emotions those experiences evoked. The main reason I say it was exhilarating was that we structured our individual collages together and realized the story that can be told throughout each piece and how it all connects to one another.

Andy's Fictional Future Narrative:

The year is 2058; we have learned how to carefully take the full potential of the brain's learning capabilities of each individual and map it before they step on a college campus for the first time. Due to this, they can select which college best works for them as different colleges now teach a certain way based on what works best for their college population. No more will a student suffer in private because they struggle to learn from how a professor teaches. This has led to strides being made in schools that

struggle to retain high graduation rates, as now everyone is operating at their full potential and can examine any topic from the lens that best widens their vision. This innovation is one we would have only dreamed of when we were younger, and now the world does not struggle as much as it did when we were younger. The world's growth has sped up quickly, and the issues we had to worry about and that were happening over our heads daily have come to a stop. The thirst for knowledge has become the pinnacle of our new society; learning is never-ending and ultimately becomes that area once thought to exist until the end of time has ceased.

Andy's Collage:



Weeks Six and Seven— The Interviews

In the last two weeks of the workshop and data collection, Andy could share the continued depth and poignant perspective about his experience interacting with pedagogy at a PWI and its impact on his life. In one question, Andy was asked, “What would you share from the workshop that would help you or others deal with attending a PWI? Andy states,

Andy: I understand myself better, and obviously, just being at a PWI, understanding and knowing yourself, is the best thing you could have going for you. In terms of knowing. You know, the kind of people you want to surround yourself with, the kind of things you want to do in the

moment or the future, and then just navigating your experiences, you know, staying true to yourself. With a huge space like UW, doing this workshop allowed me to be more like myself.

During the interviews, Andy shared about what he learned, Andy stated,

Andy: Yeah, mainly the art component because I haven't taken an art class or anything like that since my sophomore year of high school. Putting my thoughts into paintings and selecting the images was fun. It was also a little challenge just to ensure it all came together. Reflect on things better, responding or thinking in the moment they happened instead of leaving them for later to understand critically what they mean to me. The workshop itself allowed me to understand myself better. Understanding and knowing yourself is the best possible thing you could have going for you. Doing this workshop allowed me to be more like myself. Additionally, when it comes to the creative thoughts and imagination of CBM, those are equally important as they offer a cultural perspective that could not be gained without the direct input/involvement of CBM.

Andy also shared what the workshop experiences meant to him, the impact they had on him, and his role or ideas in creating possible futures for CBM; Andy stated,

Andy: The class's seminars (creative workshop) have been helpful in allowing me to explore my identity as a black man at a PWI. The way conversations around such topics are approached allows for meaningful class discussion and insight. My experiences in this workshop led me to think a lot deeper about the circumstances surrounding me, which allowed me to reflect on myself and learn/recenter some things about myself, such as feeling like I am losing my culture. I think that learning for Black men will become better as far as people abruptly changing how teaching is implemented at these institutions that allow for everyone's growth instead of being skewed towards one population, namely white people. Imaginative ideas that came to light were how to determine how each person learns best. This would be done by sorting students into different groups based on how best their brains soak up information. This would allow for unseen growth academically and give students the best chance to understand the subjects of the world around them. I say this because growth in teaching would begin utilizing the new technology for education without any barriers to access, allowing teachers to climb over any barriers, culturally and socially. This would allow collegiate black men to learn better without

having to bear any biases from the brains of their professors. My thinking began reaching towards the idea of how much more I would have progressed had there existed a way for the way of learning that best fit my brain development. I think my learning would have experienced exponential growth, which would have allowed my development to boom. I believe that learning will become more of an experience than it currently is. I say this because, with the rate of technological advancement relating to how AI is already being utilized in several industries today, I believe AI will become integrated with teaching and learning. I believe AI can be utilized by having students take a test that then gives them a teacher, one real and one artificial, that allows the best style of both teaching and learning. It would give students, especially black students, a very positive outlook on how they learn and how they are taught.

Devin – The Radical

Finding Participants

When I met Devin, I initially observed him from afar. While sitting down the hall from the Black Student Union office (BSU), I noticed a young man wearing a COVID mask just outside the door of the BSU working on his laptop. For about 30 minutes, waiting to see if the person I intended to meet at the BSU office would arrive, I also wanted to meet the young man in the mask. When the person I intended to meet did not show up, I had to take advantage of this coincidental opportunity to meet another CBM. With little hesitation, I approached him and introduced myself. I anxiously asked him if he would join me at my table at the end of the hall for a brief discussion about my studies. After our shared introduction, I asked him about his experience at UW, his academic major, and where he was from. Devin, at first, was hesitant to respond with answers that had any depth; he slowly began to open up but quickly closed out the conversation with more surface answers and a request to return to his seat as he had other priorities to manage. Before leaving, Devin denied participating in my study but was thankful for the impromptu discussion.

Roughly four to five weeks before the creative workshop started, I ran into Devin again at my Fraternity's Black and Gold scholarship pageant, held on campus in the Kane Auditorium. That evening, I decided to expose my daughter to the Black and Gold scholarship pageant, one of my fraternity's outreach programs for young Black women to receive financial support for their collegiate experiences. As I mingled in the crowd with my daughter, I noticed a young man make his way straight in my direction; it was Devin. Something had happened in Devin's demeanor; he was visibly more open, he was not wearing the COVID mask, and he was very approachable and pleasant, and he came directly to me with a smile as if he were an old friend. He first said when he approached me, "Hey, Mr. Hasaan, it is me, Devin. I wanted to come over and say Hi and tell you that I would like to join your study if you will have me." To my surprise and delight, I responded to him by sharing my gratitude for his forward and kind greeting and willingness to join my group, but also that at the time, I had already located my five participants but would gladly put him on my backup list should I need one. Due to schedule mix-ups and competing priorities with another participant, Devin ultimately was able to step in as my fifth and final participant. Devin stated,

Devin: My interest in a study based on CBM is that it will allow me to make connections with everyone involved with the course as we share each of our experiences. I believe it is important because it will help bring awareness to CBM that have and will attend PWI's like this one. I think it's important because it's a good way to sympathize with the experiences of other CBM as well as people of all social identities at PWI's.

Like many CBMs noted in the research, Devin's interest in the study and engagement with other CBMs at PWIs are associated with research associated with interest, initiative, and intentional reasons for collegiate Black men to locate outlets that allow them to bond and build a community for survival while attending PWI (Harper, 2009).

Week One of the Creative Workshop [Inclusion]

During the first week of the creative workshop, Devin openly engaged with the other participants and the scope of the study. Devin could often be heard laughing, posing general questions to the group, or sharing his thoughts on political unrest on campus. Devin stated,

Devin: My experiences with this workshop expanded our horizons on the definition and importance of belonging, inclusion, and teaching and learning as Collegiate Black men. We also went a little off-topic, and I got to ask some group members how they became Alpha Phi Alpha members.

Devin was politically aware and outwardly active in speaking his mind about racism, activism, and any topic regarding social justice, the state of inequity at the University, or the challenges and social unrest within the student population on campus. Devin was notably confident in his views as he shared his consciousness about changing the status of the Ivory Tower toward empowering himself and others. Devin stated,



Devin: It's about time to get revenge on white supremacy. White supremacy has given the affluent white the money and power to suppress every other demographic, including Black people. It's such a brutal system that it will suppress other white people to keep people of color down. I gain greater political knowledge through cultural engagement. In fact, it's one of the reasons why I switched from a political science degree to an American Ethnic Studies degree. The greatest aspect of learning is through the lens of those that were left out and suppressed by the

system. And what better way to learn these aspects than through cultural engagement.

For Devin, his connection to the experience and voicing his concerns about injustice comes from his perspective on raising the attention of people of color against oppressive systems set against them, including his interaction in PWIs. Devin stated,

Devin: As people of color, we have to be aware of our surroundings and learn all the ways that society treats us through even the most subtle distinctions in society, from people to infrastructure to the climate.

In the first week, at the beginning of all workshops, we began with a free writing exercise. After the free writing, I opened the discussion with an icebreaker to help the participants focus on their experiences with inclusion, belonging, teaching, and learning of imagination and culture while attending a PWI. During the Icebreaker, Devin responded to the questions, what is your classification and major, and “If you were to have a superhero name and power, what would it be, and why?” Devin stated,

Devin: I am a Sophomore/Junior (rising) majoring in American Ethnic Studies. My superhero name would be “The New Black Panther”, and my superpower would be the ability to control propaganda to brainwash people to question authority.

Devin’s fictitious superhero power of propaganda to brainwash others toward questioning authority and his selection to identify in the persona of Queen Ramonda



(Queen Ramonda – www.etsy.com)

The mother of T'Chala the Black Panther from Wakanda reflects his relationship with cultural belonging and the concern for challenging systems with oppressive history. Devin states,

Devin: This ties into my superhero choice in Queen Ramonda, who, while she did not have superpowers, was not afraid to speak truth to power. In *Wakanda Forever*, Queen Ramonda said that the reason she did not want to trade Vibranium is not because of the dangerous potential of, but because of the dangerous potential of countries such as the US. We will always have to learn and teach both in and outside of the classroom to bring truth to the atrocities that our current society inflicts on people of color, including collegiate Black males.

The use of superheroes and superpowers was a gateway to allow the participants a chance to articulate their experiences at a PWI through a lens of imagination, creativity, and fiction. These attributes are directly connected to using ABP, AfF, and SpD (Mont, 2012). Devin's comments reflect the desired qualities in his experiences, his concerns for justice and cultural equity, and his learning experience while attending a PWI. Devin states,

Week Two of the Creative Workshop [Belonging]

In the second week of the creative workshop, Devin expressed his delight in bonding, sharing stories, and embracing the participants within the study cohort. Although Devin was not

a member of the Brotherhood initiative (BI), he shared a bond with the study participants as he expressed his interest in learning with and from them. Devin stated,

Devin: It is important to learn from CBMs regarding their experiences. I think it's important because it's a good way to sympathize with the experiences of other CBMs as well as people of all social identities at PWIs. People discussed their hardships in and out of school, which humbled me because I came from an upper-middle-class family.

During the workshop, Devin never relented on his monologues of belonging, community, creative expression, empowerment for Black people, rising up against systems of oppression, and his call to arms around speaking truth to power. Devin stated,

Devin: The issues that all marginalized students, including students of color face at PWIs can inspire people to get creative on how to help each other. My ideology helps me to oppose the administration at this PWI but also envision the hope that it could bring when we all come together. My ideology includes the radical imagination of future societies that center community, autonomy, anti-capitalism, and anti-colonialism, including at PWIs. It also emphasizes creative ideas that will help us get to those societies.

This political consciousness and belonging factor noted in Devin's narrative consistently echoes his two Haiku, a fictional future narrative, and his collage. Devin's two Haikus state,

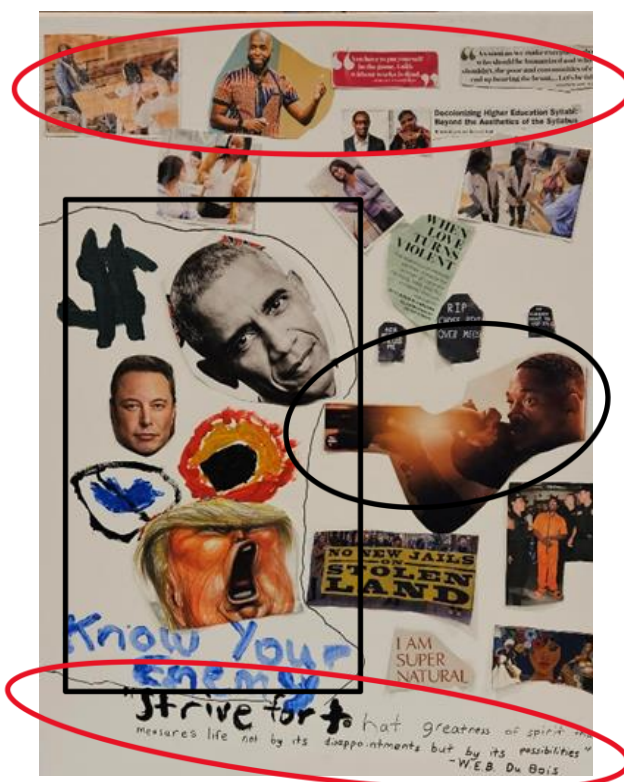
Devin's Haikus: **Lead**

The Police killed me!
I was leading a movement.
Now it is your turn.

Rise up!

The school silenced me!
I have had my life threatened.
And yet, I still rise!

The pictures of Black people teaching as well as the quote at the bottom of the mural by W.E.B. Du Bois signifies our culture of “finding a way out of no way.” Even though we are oppressed, we still find a way to teach and pass on our knowledge to the next generation. That is my sense of empowerment.



In the second week, Devin and others continued to listen to rap songs and engage in an open discussion about RSOs, The Brotherhood Initiative, and sharing stories about their experiences with the impact of their use of imagination, belonging, and culture. Devin stated,

Devin: One way I experienced belonging at a PWI was when I attended *Man on the Move* at my high school. *Men on the Move* is a program for all Black male students within the Kent School District. When we got on the bus to head to the meeting, I heard some of the students just letting n-words fly and that made me feel more comfortable expressing myself as a Black male. And when we got to the organization, I truly got to experience the beauty of being Black. People discussed the hardships they faced in their lives in and out of school, which humbled me because I came from an upper-middle-class family. There were some occasions where we got to

express how our communities could be improved and other sessions where we'd just do free-style rap, which I'll admit is not my strong suit. But listening to other Black men expressing themselves in a place where we can't be judged made me feel empowered and like I belonged there. Art helps me express my relationship with PWIs. For example, my collage expressed the themes of resistance (affiliation with ethnic student RSOs), optimism (envisioning a better future for workers and all marginalized students at this PWI) and knowing thy enemy (the UW administration) while at PWIs. Knowing my relationship with PWIs, it's important to appreciate being around other students of color. The school I attended in Georgia was incredibly diverse, giving me the false belief that all schools were as well. Hanging out with other students of color at PWIs gives me a greater sense of belonging and helps me realize the value of those relationships.

Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop [teaching and learning]

During weeks three and four, Devin continued to voice his viewpoints regarding community and finding aspects of teaching amidst his desire to receive the opportunity to have Black culture while attending a PWI. Devin stated,

Devin: As a collegiate Black male, I have experienced teaching not just from professors but also from my relatives and friends. I believe that teaching is universal, not simply confounding educational institutions. Teaching means informing someone about a certain concept, regardless of where said informing takes place. In fact, I have learned a lot more through teaching outside of class than I did in school. At our Black Student Union (BSU) meetings, for example, we are always being informed, through slide shows and discussions, on how all aspects of society, including education (PWIs) affect Black people.

Devin went on to share a time when he recognized the significance of Black culture and its value to him while attending a PWI. Devin stated,

Devin: The first time I experienced inclusion was when I went to my freshman year's first Black Homecoming (not the dance). I didn't have many other Black classmates in my classes, and I didn't have many people to talk with

outside of class. That all changed when I went to the Black Homecoming. It was almost like I never left my home state of Georgia. I got to talk with many other Black students and learn about their respective student organizations. I felt no need to force conversations, they just flowed comfortably as we talked about our lives in and outside of school. It felt like I found a bit of myself, my culture.

While crafting his collage, he often made sure the participants had one another's phone numbers should there be a need to contact each other outside of the study. Also, in a very endearing moment, Devin spoke with me directly, asking if I could stay with the university or the BI after I complete my dissertation. Devin states,

Devin: Mr. Hasaan, when you finish your dissertation, will you be working with UW any longer, or will you be able to work with the BI? I ask because it would be nice to have you available for more opportunities to meet and share our experiences. This has been enjoyable for me. Thank you again for accepting me to your study.

He shared how much fun he had with the participants, feeling empowered and expressing his hopes that I would continue at the university as a resource and presence for teaching and learning during his tenure.



The results of Devin's analysis of his creative ideas produced in the collage, Haikus, and photovoice images are made clear when he directly addresses how he feels about where he receives teaching and learning experiences at a PWI. Devin states,

Devin: The photo-voice images reflect my identity as a Black person at a PWI. With Darkness Comes Light: As a CBM, I bear witness to the many

hardships we, and all students of different races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, and religions, face at PWIs. Yet, we also gain victories through those hardships. As a person of color, my experiences at a PWI have radicalized me to gain a greater political consciousness. One involves knowing how the PWI administrations work and how they compare to our current government. These victories create mixed messaging symbolizing how people of color, especially at PWIs, should have deep political knowledge but also have fun. Laughter and joy are lesser-known forms of resistance. Considering that Climate change disproportionately affects people of color, it's always best to envision a world that heavily emphasizes the importance of total ecological sustainability. The photo voice images emphasize the importance of obtaining political knowledge, finding joy in life, and envisioning a better, ecological future for all people. All these traits are essential for our survival at PWIs. With knowledge, comes revolutionary optimism. And of course, it's always good to find joy in doing these things, because otherwise we'd be less inclined to do the "heavy" lifting to change the world. These images resemble my increased level of political consciousness that I have developed both before and during my time at this institution. I learned a lot from political commentary and from a lot of my friends within various student-led activist groups. This political awakening is more common especially among students and workers of color at PWI's because we understand first-hand how these institutions actively work against us.

Week Five— The Final week of the Creative Workshop [imagination and culture]

In the final week of the creative workshop, it was consistently clear that Devin's views, his caring mindset, his views on better teaching methods, and his imagination for creating a future society were all true elements of his current reflection of a future he could see for himself, and others like him. Devin stated,

Devin: At the Workshop, we went over each other's haikus and fictional future narratives and discussed our thoughts about them. When I thought about Moti and Trevon being put at a standard by their families and friends, it got me thinking about how I was compared to my cousins and that my mom viewed me as the last hope. It was a lot of pressure. In 60 years, I speculate that classrooms will be devoid of tests and homework and have more opportunities for people to expand on what they learned by doing group projects such as creating their own games and websites. These

projects will be versatile, imaginative and expand on the information that the students learn in their classrooms with ideas that surfaced included having PWIs where students, especially marginalized students, lead and where work is performed in a play-like manner to make it more fun. In 120 years, I imagine there being a plethora of Black-led programs and Black staff that are readily available for Collegiate Black students. I also believe in having Black therapists at schools, especially with the educational racial gap being so apparent between Black and white students. Imaginative ideas that surfaced while doing my collage about my current experiences at PWI's is one where Black students can learn to resist in many forms. One example is learning to grow our own food and help each other out via mutual aid. In 240 years, I envision that students of color will go to school and live together in their own solidarity communes. In these communes, people will live together and learn from one another. People's aspect of learning will be far beyond the confines of our current education system and will find their own creative ways of learning that help benefit each other.

Devins Fictional Future Narrative:

Dear Malcolm Calvin (M.C.) Hamer, Well I hope what we did then provides a catalyst for what you can achieve. As a revolutionary optimist, I have to hope for a brighter future, whether or not it came to fruition. And yet, here you are, part of an institution that doesn't have tests but memory games. One that uses its profits to reimburse its students, one that makes work and learning fun. And most of all, one that has students at the helm. You may think it sounds like anarchy, but who knows more about student problems than students. It is always good to challenge authority when you think they're doing wrong even your old man. Just don't get it to your head. You're also not perfect. We're human.

In his narrative, Devin wrote to his future son, naming him after Malcolm X (the political and cultural activist), His father Calvin Watts, Fannie Lou Hamer (the educator), and as a play on words, the brilliant rap artist and dancer from Oakland California, MC Hammer. His son, M.C. Hamer (Malcolm Calvin Hamer) was reminded of various points of evolved pedagogy, inclusive leadership and activism, and a vote of encouragement toward humility, all rooted in his reflexive

view of an optimistic future. One that provides his son with a better experience in education and cultural civility. Devin stated,

Devin: It helped me imagine what we can do when we come together as a collective. As I mentioned, we all have shared struggles. We all have common goals we wanna achieve. And a lot of us are, not all of us, but a lot of us are optimistic. And I do want us to come together so that we can all have that optimistic future. To imagine a world where, without this unnecessary hierarchy with people at the top who don't care about students or workers like for example, the UW President makes a million dollars salary while students barely are able to pay for rent. A 5th of all students is food insecure. I can imagine a world where schools where we'd be in charge of what goes on in our community because we'd be the most affected and it wouldn't be people who aren't in any way connected to our communities. It helped me imagine a future where students don't feel helpless even at a young age, where students feel like, even I can do something, and students are never afraid to call truth to power. And, a future where they can thrive and where they can be themselves. Where they won't have to be afraid of being themselves.

Weeks Six and Seven— The Interviews

In the last two weeks of the workshop and data collection, Devin shared his continued insight and ideology about his experience interacting with pedagogy at a PWI and the (dis)connection or connections it's had on his life. In one question, Devin was asked, "What would you share from the workshop to help you or others deal with attending a PWI? Devin stated,

Devin: I would say. Getting to know one another, but also, understanding our views within the system and changing them. Recognizing how we can express those views through art and being able to teach that to the next generation. It's all about expressing yourself and it's about expressing those views so that they can learn and understand how they can find that opportunism, then they can make their communities or even the world at that better place.

During the interviews, Devin shared about what he learned, Devin stated,

Devin: I would say sharing our artwork with the young Kings humbled me. They came in with some good questions and answers to our questions. It made me realize that now I'm in a position where I can teach, even at the age of 21. It really makes you realize you are making a difference. You are teaching. As a collegiate Black man, I experienced learning through more than just class. Just like with teaching, you never stop learning. It's a universal concept that goes way. Sometimes, you don't have to have someone teach you to learn about your surroundings. As people of color, we must be aware of our surroundings and learn how society treats us through even the most subtle distinctions in society, from people to infrastructure to the climate.

Devin also shared what the workshop experiences meant to him, the impact they had on him, and his role or ideas in creating possible futures for CBM; Devin stated,

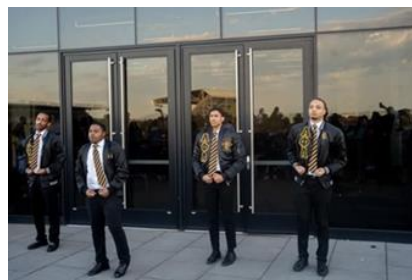
Devin: I would say that considering I'm not an artist, it made me realize that it was a good way to express my consciousness story since I came to UW. Doing this collage helped me realize the true meaning of a picture is worth a thousand words. It felt empowering. Working with all my friends and doing this with them was especially good. Getting to know them and seeing how they express themselves through their collages was good. It's good to express ourselves through pictures in ways other than words. Their experiences, how they view the future, the situations they're in right now, and whether it's pessimistic or optimistic, all of which I feel like all of us had an optimistic future. And it's good to find that shared common goal. To be optimistic means to want to change the world, and you have to be optimistic. It helped me imagine what we can do when we come together as a collective.

Ja'Nathen – The Advocate

Finding Participants

During the Christmas break of 2023, I attended an Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Christmas celebration. There, I was able to see some old fraternity Brothers I had not seen in a very long time, and I was able to meet a large group of new Brothers that I had never met before due to my years living in another state. At the Christmas party, we celebrated the end of the year, we played

cards, listened to music, and enjoyed our bond as men of the Black and Ole Gold. During the party, I was delighted to have met so many new brothers; it was refreshing and comforting that even though I had been away from my fraternity brothers from Seattle for so many years, the bond and community spirit were still a familiar experience. It was pleasing to learn about the many accomplishments, the morale, and the livelihoods of the brothers. Many were husbands, business owners, and successful contractors, and some were new fathers. Also in the crowd were a few undergrad brothers who provided a vibrant, youthful energy to the mix; it reminded me of myself when I was their age. Eager to please, glad to be seen in the crowd around the old guys, and empowered to be in the room with many accomplished men from their culture and community. As they shared their energy and exuberance to be in the room, I was happy to meet the few undergrads there. Upon meeting them, I immediately thought about my recent approval to start my study for my dissertation. I wanted to maximize the opportunity to find out if I could get their contact information. I needed five undergraduate students to assist me in my data development. With their support, I met and selected two undergraduate students to participate in



my study. The first student was Ja’Nathen White.



When I met Ja’Nathen, I immediately sensed that he was mature, personable, bright, and open to the premise of my study. In our first meeting, he was very attentive and willing to assist in supporting my study, finding other participants, and liaising for messages I needed to deliver to the other participants as I acquired the five students. Ja’Nathen was effective in helping me find all but one participant for my study in pursuit of a shared desire to advocate and uplift the minds and lives of collegiate Black men. Before my data discovery began, I was able to learn about Ja’Nathen’s ideas and plan to become an advocate for his community and why he was open to supporting my study. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: My interest in this study is understanding the teaching and learning experiences of culturally and racially diverse students (CBM; Culturally and Racially Black Minorities) at PWIs is critical for various reasons as I am one. First, it helps identify systemic barriers these students encounter when attending predominantly white academic environments; once identified, institutions can work toward developing more inclusive and equitable learning environments through strategies like creating more inclusive and equitable classroom environments. Studying CBM experiences in PWIs provides insight into the effectiveness of existing diversity and inclusion initiatives. This allows institutions to assess whether these efforts truly meet minority student needs or whether further steps need to be taken. Examining CBM experiences in PWIs provides valuable insight into the intersectionality of identities and how they influence learning outcomes, emphasizing the necessity for culturally sensitive teaching methods and curricula that acknowledge and celebrate diverse backgrounds among students. Overall, investigating the teaching and learning experiences associated with CBM at PWIs is paramount for creating an environment where all students can thrive and flourish.

Week One of the Creative Workshop [Inclusion]

During the first week of the creative workshop, I gathered that Ja’Nathen was the upperclassman who engaged with the other four participants from that vantage. Ja’Nathen often offered directions about what they were doing and why it was necessary. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: First of all, this workshop acknowledges the unique perspectives and insights brought to the table by culturally and racially diverse students. By including our experiences in discussions regarding teaching and learning, institutions can enhance our educational experience. Second, understanding CBM experiences in PWIs allows educators to identify innovative teaching methods and strategies that resonate with diverse student populations. By respecting different perspectives, educators can develop more inclusion in how they teach that addresses our needs.



Although he was the senior in the group and offered a mature mindset and apt mentality toward advocating topics related to the Black community, he also shared an actual “big brother” energy with the younger guys. From his connection, I could sense his presence and concern for their success and socialization at a PWI. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: The thing that surprised me was how knowledgeable everybody was. In the sense of like. Wow, everybody has great ideas. Everybody is talkative. It's not like I'm talking to a freshman in a sense if you know what I mean; it's like I'm talking Man to Man, a Black man to another Black man, about the challenges that we are going through. And even though I am the oldest, it didn't feel like I would have any type of authority; it felt like these are my brothers, and I’m gonna look out for them. I have three younger brothers. I have a 19-year-old who’s not in college; I hope he goes to college, and my two other brothers, a 16-year-old, are getting ready to apply to colleges. And then my 13-year-old brother, I want them all to have the same opportunities that other people who look like me have.

As Ja’Nathen often looked out for the other four participants, it was clear that he also valued inclusion and desired it for his own experience. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: As a collegiate /black man my experience of inclusion while attending a PWI has been a roller coaster. My freshman year was the worst. The first two days of my freshman year, I Hated this PWI and the decision I made. Due to me coming from a Predominantly Black school in the inner city, I had a culture shock and realized just how white (or Asian) UW can be. Due to me being a Black man, I would always get stared at as if I was a threat or less than like I didn't belong here. When I tried to get help from the student activities center or even my own advisor, it was almost as if they were trying to belittle me because of where I was from and because my parents did not go to college. Initially, it was hard to find my community because they built buildings to support students of color in a small, distant corner of campus. Luckily, I am a part of the Brotherhood Initiative (BI), where a group of Black men come together for various supportive resources. The Black men of the BI were the first people I met when I came on campus, which allowed me to feel somewhat comfortable. It wasn’t until an older Black guy who was a junior showed me around campus. He would tell me where to pop out if I wanted to be around our people. As a Black man, in my opinion, the school sucks at inclusion. It sucked then when I was a freshman, and it still does now as a Senior.

In the first week, at the beginning of all workshops, we began with a free writing exercise. After the free writing, I opened the discussion with an icebreaker to help the participants focus on their experiences with inclusion, belonging, teaching, and learning of imagination and culture while attending a PWI. During the Icebreaker, Ja’Nathen responded to the questions, what is your classification and major, and “If you were to have a superhero name and power, what would it be, and why?” Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: I am a Senior majoring in pre-law society and Justice. My superhero name would be “Young Liberty,” and my superpower would be not having to sleep—to have infinite energy for Free Speech to free the Black community and stay free in mind, body, and soul.

Ja’Nathen’s fictitious superhero power of not having to sleep—to have infinite energy for Free Speech to free the Black community and stay free in mind, body, and soul was personified by the anti-hero and nemesis of the Black Panther, N’jadaka “The Golden Jaguar” Eric Killmonger



(Killmonger – www.comicbookmovie.com)

from Wakanda. The Golden Jaguar – Killmonger reflects Ja’Nathen’s relationship with cultural advocacy, free speech, speaking truth to power, and destroying systems that oppress people of his community. Ja’Nathen states,

Ja’Nathen: As a collegiate black man, the way I experienced imagination and culture while attending a PWI has been difficult because the school wants to shape the way you think or act in certain situations. I know how this school would want me to form or think and my parents taught me to stay true to what I know and stand by my beliefs no matter what. For me, my superhero selection was Killmonger. Even though he may not be in some eyes a superhero, he is in mine. He had pain and hurt in his eyes and heart that he wanted to fix the only way he knew how and he wanted to make something happen for his people in Oakland. Like me, last year, when the government got rid of affirmative action, that really kind of killed my whole vibe. I remember being in my room for about two weeks, not saying anything to anybody. Just cause it was like. You Get rid of Affirmative Action; how many kids can go to college now? This action impacted me because it impacted my brother. This is why he is not in college right now. It’s kind of the reason why he gave up on college. He got in, and they told him he got in. Then, they rejected him in the summertime and said they brought another student instead. My brother couldn't get in because they got rid of affirmative action. They put him to the wayside because they no longer have to fill that quota. It kind of killed his whole mindset, it killed everything.

The use of superheroes and superpowers was a gateway that allowed the participants to articulate their experiences at a PWI through a lens of imagination, creativity, and fiction (Harrington, 2021). Ja’Nathen’s comments reflect his connection to the hardships experienced at a PWI on a personal, psychological, and emotional level.

Week Two of the Creative Workshop [Belonging]

In the second week of the creative workshop, Ja’Nathen continued to be the lead voice during the creative workshop, sharing his thoughts on belonging. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: As a collegiate black man, I experienced belonging while attending a PWI, just as some would expect, entering a newfound space that most people of color, and Black people could not attend or admitted to a place where you feel like you have no sense of being while you attend a top university. For me, there was no sense of belonging except the space called the Brotherhood Initiative, where I felt like I was back in my neighborhood and in my high school in the inner cities but with better facilities and better chances to learn more. All in all, this experience as I close out my senior year of undergrad, my sense of belonging initially had its ups and downs. Then it went up as the years went by due to finding and gaining more Black people and mentors who look like me coming into the university and helping me to feel that sense of belonging and comfort. It was like, when they look like me, they can make me feel like if he is here and doing well, then I can do the same or even better. That is what belonging at a PWI has been like for me.

Ja’Nathen’s Haikus states,

Ja’Nathen’s Haikus: titled **Proven**

Fought in the corner

Still here for me plus my mom

I am within reach!

Ja’Nathen’s Collage:



Both Ja’Nathen’s Haikus and his collage capture personal and familial connections related to his view of his experience with a PWI (see Ja’Nathen’s Collage Image). Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: Doing the Haiku and having these imaginative ideas triggered how to make the experience of a PWI more likable for the future of collegiate Black men. The haiku "Proven" captures themes of resilience and perseverance found within the college, echoing CBM's experience of facing challenges while maintaining her sense of identity and connection to family. I believe in 15 years, experiences for Collegiate Black men at PWI might be better or might be worse. I say it might be better for my sake because when my grandparents were my age, things drastically changed over time. But I say for the worst due to certain laws being changed for getting into college for Black people, specifically Black men. In this week's workshop during this painting, the thoughts that resurfaced for me were about how I brought my own space for people to feel a sense of belonging and inclusion. Making the fist with the blood around it reminded me how hard my past and present experiences have shaped me into the man I am today. So, I think the black fist represents the reason why I'm constantly not trying to prove myself to people who do not care about me; I'm banging my fist against walls so that people will listen. My collage depicts the journey of a collegiate Black Man (CBM) attending a predominantly white institution (PWI), including images that symbolize empowerment, cultural identity, and challenges posed by his environment. This imagery captures moments of resilience, community and self-expression against all odds despite difficulty.



In the second week, Ja’Nathen and others continued to listen to rap songs. They engaged in an open discussion about RSOs and the Brotherhood Initiative and shared stories about their experiences with the impact of their use of imagination, belonging, and culture. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: In terms of my current teaching and learning experiences at a predominantly white institution (PWI), the collage painting exercise sparked imaginative ideas about fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness in the classroom. I believe we can create more feelings and understanding of our environment by encouraging us to explore our identities through collages and Haikus. Additionally, integrating diverse perspectives and voices into the curriculum can challenge existing power structures and promote dialogue about social justice issues.

Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop [teaching and learning]

During weeks three and four, Ja’Nathen voiced his viewpoints regarding advocating for the Black community, making the participants laugh, sharing his experience as an upperclassman, and creating his collage with thoughts about teaching and learning. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: As a collegiate Black man, the way I experienced teaching at a PWI has not been that bad once I changed majors. Once I changed majors and showed up, I was participating in discussions with my professors, and they would ask what my name was and actually get to know me. The TAs, too. But sometimes, it would seem like they were curious to know more about me due to my color and the fact that they are not used to seeing anything like this or me. I think there will be more psychological play in the future of teaching and learning experiences. I honestly like the experience of teaching and learning in the workshop. The ability to write about my experiences and talk about them around other Black men is great. It is like a barbershop, but for academics, instead of getting a cut, you gain educated experience and knowledge. The thoughts about my past that surfaced in this week's workshop were great to have but also reminded me why I am here. But for me to get the feeling of a real black barbershop like I do at home, I have to drive to Renton 30 minutes outside of Seattle, another inconvenience for black men at a PWI.

Ja’Nathen also talked about how he feels regarding teachers and the type of experience he would want for his son in the future if he were to attend a PWI. Ja’Nathen stated,

Ja’Nathen: This week's workshop was about teaching, learning, and thinking about those who cared for me. Teachers who were uninterested in me also showed up in my collage painting. Those two experiences of having those different types of teachers reminded me of how I would and would not want my kids to be treated. The saying goes, treat people the way you want to be treated. Also, my experiences with how I feel about the professors here at UW show a lot about my art and what I believe needs to happen to improve it.



Week Five— The Final week of the Creative Workshop [imagination and culture]

In the final week of the creative workshop, Ja’Nathen shared his imagination and culture through his fictional future narrative. In it, he expressed to his son a review of how the culture at a PWI had changed and was different than his time attending a PWI.

Ja’Nathens Fictional Future Narrative:

Hey Son,

For collegiate Black men, attending a PWI is hard and tough. The reward is getting your degree. As you know, today, there are many more opportunities for Black men to take at a PWI than around my time. For you, there are way more Black Professors in every department. And, your college advisor likes you. It is easier for you to find your crew, as the admissions at PWIs have become more open to helping and making sure that not only do Black men come into their schools, but they graduate. Every Black man no longer has to check in with their advisor every week until they graduate. The learning experience has become more open for Black men to have full discussions no matter the department they are studying in. Also, students of Color can be around each other more often and get the HBCU experience, having a dorm or floors in all dorms where Black people live; either way, you are set for the future.

I love you, son. My phone is always open, and I will see you in 2 weeks.

Love Pops

Weeks Six and Seven— The Interviews

In the last two weeks of the workshop and data collection, Ja’Nathen shared his continued advocacy for community, culture, and family regarding his experience interacting with

pedagogy at a PWI and the (dis)connection or connections it's had on his life. In one question, Ja'Nathen was asked, "What would you share from the workshop to help you or others deal with attending a PWI? Ja'Nathen stated,

Ja'Nathen: It helped me imagine just what possibilities could be. What could happen, and in what ways could it be 10 minutes from now? Even if the future could be a week from now, how can you change? How could you make it to two steps, three steps forward toward your goal? How do you get closer to each step so you're not alone when you leave this area; other people will continue with you on that journey. The journey for me represents my life's focus; in the future, I want to have a nonprofit with a zero-tolerance policy against the school-to-prison pipeline.

Ja'Nathen also shared the impact that the workshop experiences had on him, what he took from it, and his role or ideas in creating possible futures for CBM, Ja'Nathen stated,

Ja'Nathen: I guess it's almost as if, the experience when one is the senior, it's as if they are at an HBCU or just like when the white people here on campus will not judge you, and it makes you feel safe to walk to class and not feel judged. I mean, the conversations, I would say, greatly impacted me. It's just because our conversation was really in tune with college in general through the workshop and our lives. And having just those 3 hours to sit down and talk things out. For all of us again, it's like that relief, that break where you don't have to keep your wall up all the time. Especially, I mean, as men in general, we're told. Keep your motion inside like, don't talk about it. Nobody wants to hear that stuff. And shut up. You sound soft. It allowed us to just talk. I mean, I cracked a lot of jokes; I was kind of the jokester in the workshop. That's because I know them all, like my little brothers. But you're not going to get judged, crucified, or bullied in any certain type of way. And it reminded me of home in a lot of ways. The same atmosphere here; I really felt like I was back home.

Moti – The Optimist

Finding Participants

After receiving the information to meet Ja’Nathen through my connections with my fraternity brothers, I later met another young Alpha; this time, I met Moti Geleto.



When I met Moti, like when I met Andy, I immediately recognized that he was an African student (from Ethiopia), not African American (Black). This stipulation was not a deterrent but a point of reference that I had to contend with, considering the low population of Black (African American) available students from whom I could draw my participants within my snowball and purposeful sampling. The first noticeable characteristic I noted about Moti was his brilliant smile. This aspect was not common in meeting Black students, as many of them, in my experience, were guarded until a reason for smiling was made known. For Moti, as I began to learn, he was filled with reasons to smile. Over the next seven weeks, I would learn the optimism, personal story, and drive that keeps Moti with a forward mindset and an attitude on the upside of his experience at a PWI. In our first meeting, Moti was working at the front desk in the Brooklyn Trail building, the location of the BI. Moti was a BI member, like three other participants (Andy, Ja’Nathen, and Trevon). At the front desk, Moti welcomed all guests into the building, managed building concerns, periodically checked the rooms for students who may have needed tutoring help, answered the phone, and helped various students in and out of the building

when they had a meeting with any of the administrators of the BI staff. It was clear that Moti was about business, providing a positive and equitable experience to those who entered the BI, respecting all students, and, at best, the opportunity to exude and share his bright and welcoming energy. Moti stated,

Moti: My personal connection to the experiences of Black men in college, particularly at PWIs such as the University of Washington, fuels my interest in learning about the experiences of CBM who attend PWIs. As a Collegiate Black Man, I have navigated higher education for a couple of years now and am aware of our unique challenges. This personal perspective allows me to bring a nuanced understanding to the study, as I have directly encountered the gaps in education that exist for individuals like myself. My commitment to promoting fairness and equality in education is deeply rooted. I believe that education should be a level playing field, and by examining the specific challenges and triumphs faced by Black men in higher education, we can pinpoint areas that require attention and intervention. The goal is not only to address these challenges but also to create an environment that fosters success for every student, regardless of their background. Moreover, my interest extends beyond personal experience to a broader advocacy for social change. By delving into the teaching and learning experiences of Collegiate Black Men, we contribute to a larger dialogue on inclusivity in higher education. This research has the potential to inform policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within academic institutions. My interest in contributing to this study of the experiences of Black college men is driven by my personal journey, a commitment to fairness, and a broader advocacy for positive change. By understanding and addressing the challenges faced by Collegiate Black Men, we can move towards creating a more equitable and supportive educational environment for all students.

Week One of the Creative Workshop [Inclusion]

During the first week of the creative workshop, I gathered that Moti was a levelheaded thinker with a propensity to see positive outcomes in any situation. Often, Moti shared his confidence through his perspective on seeing the value of being a CBM within the PWI culture.

His connections with the BI, his cultural narrative, and his family helped frame his interactions with other CBMs. Moti stated,

Moti: First of all, our experiences are unique, shaped by an intersection of inclusion, identity, culture, and societal expectations. By sharing these experiences, we contribute to a more comprehensive narrative of the collegiate journey, shedding light on both the triumphs and challenges faced by Black men in educational settings. This perspective is crucial for educators, administrators, and policymakers at PWIs to develop targeted and effective support systems. Secondly, imagination and creativity are powerful tools that can reshape traditional approaches to teaching and learning. Collegiate Black Men often bring diverse perspectives and innovative ideas that can enhance the educational experience for everyone. Learning from our creative thoughts fosters an inclusive environment that acknowledges the richness of diversity, ultimately benefiting the entire academic community. Lastly, understanding the experiences and creative thoughts of Collegiate Black Men fosters a sense of empowerment. When our voices are heard and valued, it sends a powerful message about the importance of representation and validates our contributions to the broader academic discourse. It encourages a positive cycle where diverse perspectives enhance the learning environment, creating a more inclusive and dynamic educational landscape. Therefore, learning from Collegiate Black Men is essential for promoting inclusivity, fostering creativity, and ensuring that the educational experiences at PWIs reflect the diversity of voices within the student body.



Moti was vigilant with his work, expression, and efforts to find connections with other CBMs at the university to bolster his actions, attitude, and network with other CBMs. Moti stated,

Moti: For me, I experienced inclusion at UW by simply putting myself in spaces where there are people who look like me for one and have similar goals and aspirations. The Brotherhood Initiative (BI) has been a pivotal space for me because I have gotten to meet other males of color who have gone through similar experiences that I have. Another space is the Undergraduate Diversity Service (UDS) within Foster at UW. UDS focuses on providing support to business students from marginalized backgrounds. I have also been fortunate to network with these people so that way I can grow personally, professionally, and academically. Another space where I meet other males of color is the Oromo Student Union (OSU). I am a proud Oromo, the largest ethnic group within Ethiopia, and I have had the proud privilege to serv as the Treasurer this year. It has been an enriching experience because I have been able to serve my community and meet other Oromo students and or Oromo people from around Seattle. The common theme with finding inclusion at UW starts with putting yourself out there and going to spaces that fit your demographic, interests, skills, etc. and from that you will form tight-knit bonds within those around you simply through authentic relations. But at the end of the day you have to push yourself outside your comfort zone and put yourself in those spaces.

In the first week, at the beginning of all workshops, we began with a free writing exercise. After the free writing, I opened the discussion with an icebreaker to help the participants focus on their experiences with inclusion, belonging, teaching, and learning of imagination and culture while attending a PWI. During the Icebreaker, Moti responded to the questions, what is your classification and major, and “If you were to have a superhero name and power, what would it be, and why?” Moti stated,

Moti: I am a sophomore majoring in finance and information systems. My superhero name would be “Morpheus,” and my superpowers would be Teleportation, Shapeshifting, and Morphine, all able to move efficiently, continuously adapting through innovation to meet people's needs.

Moti's fictitious superhero power of meeting people's needs was supported by the hero Peter Parker's



(Spiderman – www.abzlocal.mx)

“Spiderman” Moti selected a superhero who personified his mindset as a CBM. For Moti, Spiderman's mindset of having great gifts comes with great expectations, which were shared in Moti's ideals as he made it clear that he was willing to sacrifice the reality of what felt like challenges of being a CBM for the greater good of gaining a higher education. Moti states,

Moti: Engaging with creativity, art, and cultural understanding in a predominantly white institution (PWI) helped me face the challenges of stereotypes and ways to express my intersecting identities (Being African, a College Student, a student leader, and a BI Member). It shows how I value my ethnicity and the community spaces I am around. By imagining better futures and using personal beliefs and feelings, people can work towards making PWIs more inclusive and equitable places for everyone. It will challenge these PWIs to create more inclusive education spaces for CBM and other identities on campuses worldwide.

The use of superheroes and superpowers was a gateway that allowed the participants to articulate their experiences at a PWI through a lens of imagination, creativity, and fiction (Harrington, 2021). Moti's comments reflect his optimistic attitude while experiencing the culture at a PWI on a cultural and professional level.

Week Two of the Creative Workshop [Belonging]

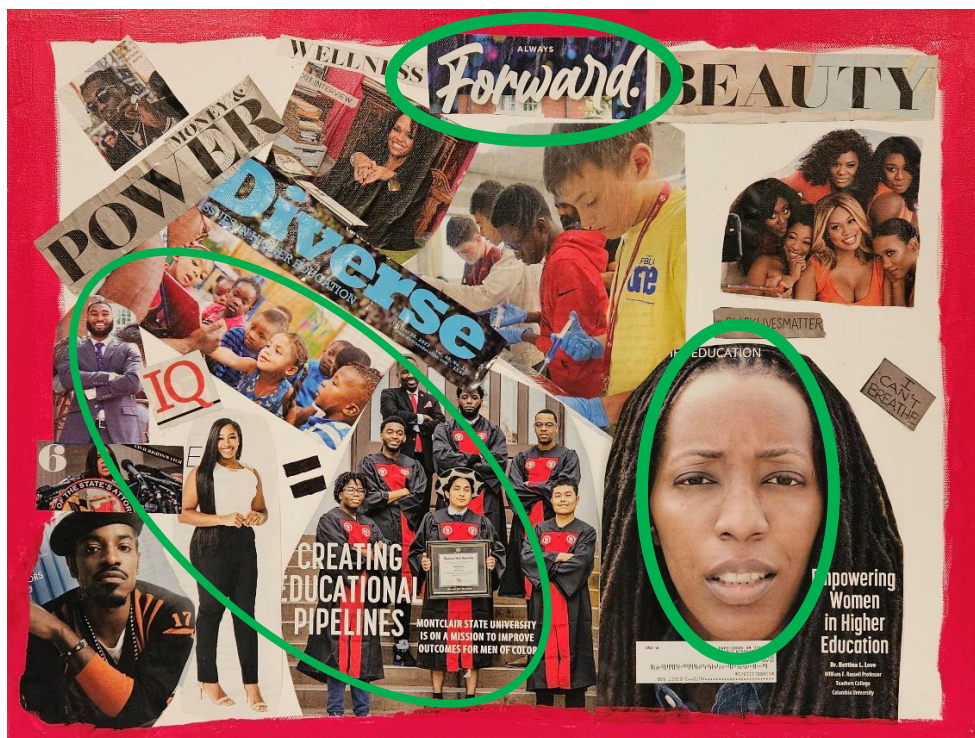
In the second week, Moti was absent and missed the engagement of the creative workshop. When Moti returned, he shared his thoughts on belonging, optimism, and opportunities through his Haiku as he continued to work on his collage. Moti stated,

Moti: Optimistic, for sure. Like my board on the top, it says, “always forward,” and I would say that’s a big thing. Of all the stuff that it did, whether it was a collage, the future narrative, or the haiku, it talked a lot about opportunity and letting your story unfold. So, regarding the art that I made and also just kind of my own lifestyle, my life, especially as a collegiate black man, I like to have more of an optimistic approach. I like to, you know, think ahead because at the end of the day, you know, life doesn't stop for anybody, right? But this is enough for nobody, no matter how hard it gets, especially in society as collegiate black men; you know, we have it tougher, so we gotta, you know, keep our head right, keep our headstrong, and just keep on moving forward, being optimistic and being positive having a positive mindset. It’s always been something that I pride myself on, especially when things might not be okay. Like I said, at the end of the day, society doesn't stop for us, right? Especially, as collegiate Black men, so, it's imperative to, you know, just know to be grateful honestly for what you got to be grateful for what you got going on and just keep on looking forward, keep your head straight even when You know things may not be straight.

Moti’s Haiku states,

Opportunity
Comes as a new day unfolds
My story untold

Moti’s Collage:



Moti's Haiku and his collage capture his optimism and views on the necessity of seeing the upside of any situation for himself and his community (see Moti's Collage Image). Moti stated,

Moti: Yeah, so aside from the optimistic approach that I have, you know, especially for, collegiate black men, honestly inclusion, diversity, that was very huge. You know, I started off when I was 1st making this. I focused on like education and like inclusion and education but then my idea switched more towards like empowerment and culture and especially not only, not even just only for collegiate black men but for, you know, black folk as a whole. So like, you know, you see a lot of like in the middle there's the creating education pipeline. Just promoting diversity in higher education. We have a Dr. Bettina Love right here. Empowering women in education. That's kinda like I started with. I have this man right here. Cause this is somebody I'm obviously aspiring to be like in a couple of years, a successful Black man. I shifted more kinda towards culture. This is the future, obviously. When I presented to the Young Kings, last week, I really made an emphasis like, hey, this is you guys right here right now. You guys have the power to be anything. And education is so important, especially at this age, I truly believe that the youth is the foundation so that's like a point of emphasis too. I came into this with more, Optimistic

idea and then I switched to like a diverse approach, especially within education, but then that shift towards just like culture and empowerment and stuff like that.

Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop [teaching and learning]

During weeks three and four, Moti voiced his viewpoints regarding the differences in his PWI experiences, schooling, and higher education and what he believed was needed to succeed. Moti stated,

Moti: Honestly, teaching here at UW is a different experience than high school; I was used to smaller classes and a slower-paced curriculum there. You have bigger class sizes and less access to your professor during instruction at UW. Classes are also WAY faster than in high school. You essentially have to put a lot of work into learning the content, and in some cases, you might end up self-teaching. The key is to use outside resources and form study groups to succeed. It is hard to do it alone in college. I had to learn how to study for real in college. Navigating learning as a young Black man at a PWI like UW has been a journey of resilience and self-discovery. Despite facing unique challenges and often feeling like a minority within a minority, I've found strength in my identity and community. Through perseverance and seeking out supportive networks, I've embraced opportunities to excel academically while advocating for greater representation and inclusivity on campus. My experiences have shaped my education and empowered me to contribute positively to broader conversations about diversity and equity within higher education.

Week Five— The Final week of the Creative Workshop [imagination and culture]

In the final week of the creative workshop, Moti shared his imagination and culture through his fictional future narrative. In it, he expressed to his son (named Young Buck) a review

of how the culture at a PWI changed and was different from his time attending a PWI. Moti stated

Moti: Attending a Predominantly White Institution as a young Black man has been a journey of self-discovery, much like my favorite superhero, Spider-Man. Just as he grapples with confidence issues without his mask, I've faced similar challenges in navigating stereotypes and societal pressures. However, like Spider-Man,

Moti's Fictional Future Narrative:

Dear Young Buck,

The UW isn't as capacity-constrained for certain majors as it used to be for me. The struggle of being labeled a "pre-major" isn't the same as it used to be. More and more Black men are transcending the barriers of higher education. Programs that are capacity-constrained, like business, engineering, and other STEM fields, are becoming more and more accessible to CBM because of the increasing resources. There has also been a significant increase in the number of Black faculty members who help foster inclusivity in these constrained programs. With that being said, I am blessed to see such a change in my alma mater, where individuals like us are thriving and transcending the boundaries that PWIs and society put on CBM.

I pray for nothing but improvement and prosperity for CBM, who continue to navigate through these spaces.

Sincerely,

Morpheus

Weeks Six and Seven— The Interviews

In the last two weeks of the workshop and data collection, Moti shared his continued optimism, advocacy, diversity, and equality regarding his experience interacting with teaching and learning at a PWI. In one question, Moti was asked, "What would you share from the workshop to help you or others deal with attending a PWI? Moti stated,

Moti: The collage and then honestly just the conversations we had. The conversations we had and the writing. There were a lot of crossovers. I don't want to say redundancy, but more cross-over themes for many themes. So, just seeing. Yeah, I was noticing all the themes and the different things I was doing within my work, but also, in everyone else's noticing, there are a lot of intersecting themes. That gives me optimism because it's not like I'm the only one thinking about it. Everyone else is thinking. If we got a population and a sample here, thinking closely about the same thing. We can only imagine what everyone else might be thinking, and so on and so forth. So, at that point. It just comes down to education and advocacy. I see where you go out and advocate for things like this and, you know, push public policy and social change, and it's a whole different dimension. But I would say that the intersecting themes that I found within my different art pieces, the intersecting themes, and, honestly, the conversations that I and the other 4 participants had gave me optimism for the future.

Moti also shared the impact that the workshop experiences had on him, what he took from it, what he desired for the future, and what he believed his role or ideas in creating possible futures for CBM; Moti stated,

Moti: Because obviously, we don't know what the future entails. We can also hope, right? So, I can confidently hope for a more inclusive future. Specifically, here with the UW, you know. More black faculty. You know, more resources and advocacy for people like us, not only collegiate Black men but also Black faculty or even people of color. Smarter advocacy for marginalized communities because, at the end of the day, the institute and society still have us in the box. And so, I just hope for a future where, before now, it's, you know, there's still improvements to be made, and there are improvements that haven't been made, you know, that's very subjective, of course. I do believe that things will get better as time comes. So, I hope for my kids when they come to school, especially if they go to a PWI. My ideas for the future of CBM include diversity, advocacy, and empowerment, which is especially important because, as I said, it's not easy for us in society.

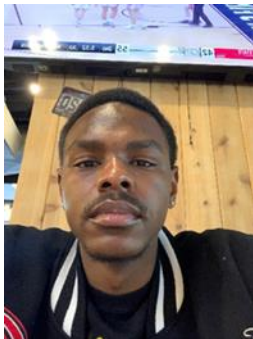
Trevon – The Hopeful

Finding Participants

On the day I met Moti Geleto, I had the opportunity to meet Trevon Mitchell. While introducing myself to Moti and observing his routine at the Brooklyn Trail Building for the Brotherhood Initiative (BI), another BI member slowly approached the front desk where Moti and I were conversing. With the confidence of an undergraduate senior, this self-aware young man eased up to the conversation and chimed in with a familiar, simple question, “*Whatchall talking about?*” This question was so common and familiar to me; it signaled all my memories of being back in college at Washington State University at the Compton Union Building (CUB), seeing my boys and walking up to them with the same inclusive comfort as Trevon did, asking the same question. With his direct question and high level of comfort, he appeared undeterred that I was unfamiliar with the space, having an open dialogue with one of his fellow BI members. With his command of my attention, he followed up his initial question with a self-initiated introduction and a firm handshake; he stated, “My name is Trevon Mitchell; how *are you?*” With delight, I was immediately receptive to his introduction and how he carried himself, and in turn, I replied. Now, having a conversation with Moti and Trevon, I quickly restated all that I had shared with Moti about my study, who I was, and my intentions on meeting members of the BI to see if they would be interested and available to join my study. Without directly asking Trevon, he initiated his interest by stating, “*I would love to do that. Is it possible for me to join?*” Without blinking, I replied YES! It was evident that Trevon was familiar with engaging with cultural actions, self-aware energy, and initiating his control over his experiences by stepping up and into situations positioned to help him learn, grow, and contribute to activities aimed at impacting his own experience as well as those for the Black community. Trevon stated,

Trevon: As someone from a family with no college experience, navigating the academic environment can be pretty daunting, especially in a PWI setting where I may feel underrepresented or marginalized. As a black male, understanding the challenges and barriers faced by black men in similar situations, I can help myself navigate my academic journey more effectively by finding ways to get help.

Trevon continued to shine in this initial moment as he wore a letterman's jacket with the Black Panther Society on the Back, an African-made shoulder pouch from Ghana, a short-cropped Afro, and a level of confidence that signaled to me he was an individual who was acutely aware of the plight of Black men, and the attention and value of cultural respect. In my experience, Trevon exceeded the typical persona of a freshman in a university setting. Trevon reminded me of myself in some ways with his cultural consciousness, assertive demeanor, respectful poise, confidence, deference for elders, connection with Black men, civic and political consciousness, and familiarity created by his affinity and hope for better days for the Black community.



When I asked Trevon why he would be interested in my study, he stated,

Trevon: Understanding the teaching and learning experiences of Collegiate black men attending a predominantly white institution (PWI) is crucial for several reasons, particularly for individuals like me, a black male from a Family that has no experience in going to college or having that understanding of how a PWI works and who it caters to. Firstly, it provides an opportunity to shed light on the unique challenges and obstacles faced by black men in academic environments where we may be underrepresented and or marginalized. By dialing my experiences,

researchers can identify systemic issues such as racial bias, lack of representation in faculty and curriculum, and sociocultural barriers that may hinder our academic success and overall well-being. I feel like it is very important for me because I also work for Seattle Public Schools middle school through high school, I believe it is very important to understand the connection from high school to college; additionally, research in this area can inform institutional policies and practices aimed at improving the educational experiences of black male students. Insights gained from the study can help the University of Washington and other universities develop targeted support programs and culturally responsive teaching approaches that address this demographic's specific needs and concerns.

Week One of the Creative Workshop [Inclusion]

During the first week of the creative workshop, I could tell that Trevon was kind, hopeful, respectful, self-aware, confident in his culture, “green,” and although he was a freshman, he had an “old soul.” Trevon’s diverse, upbeat personality was often on display as he shared many of his thoughts on the topics discussed in the creative workshop on inclusion. Trevon stated,

Trevon: As a collegiate Black man, I experienced inclusion when my roommate and his friend were in our dorm room before looking for stuff to do. My roommate came up with the idea of walking around campus as a group. This made me feel good because I needed to get away from my computer and get out of my dorm room. That’s when I felt included.



Trevon also shared how his involvement with registered student organizations (RSOs) helped provide him with the opportunity to feel included. Trevon stated,

Trevon: Being part of groups like BSU (Black Student Union) really helps me feel included, and seeing/meeting other Black folks who go to the University

of Washington allows me to make friends with whom I can hang out. Another way I found inclusion at the University of Washington is during a class called the Brotherhood Initiative (BI). This class brings me inclusion because there are folks who look just like me. We had to do a project that required us to work together and include everybody in the project. We had many agreements about how we would do the project, and I felt included—a project without having to code-switch.

In the first week, it was clear that Trevon was aware of his environment at UW, and his level of comfort was connected to the opportunities and experiences that included African American students. This recognition and factor of comfort were also noted in direct correlations to his classroom experiences outside of the BI, the Black Student Union. Trevon spoke on two references that he recognized inclusion, and when he did not, he stated,

Trevon: When it comes to my other classes, those outside of the BI, the inclusion level goes down or feels unwanted. When I say that, I mean when I talk to other white classmates, it's hard to feel or want to connect with folks so I can feel some inclusion. I felt most included when I took economics in my first quarter; although there were few Black folks in class, we connected with each other as Black folks, and we used that connection as a reason to support one another. We studied together in the library and had dinner. Doing these things, having study groups or having a meal outside of the classroom, made me feel included inside the classroom. The way I feel included may differ from others, but I like feeling like I can have a simple conversation with someone to be comfortable and be helped.

After various discussions shared between the participants, I opened the discussion with an icebreaker to help them focus on their experiences with inclusion, belonging, teaching, and the use of imagination and learning with culture while attending a PWI. During the Icebreaker, Trevon responded to the questions, what is your classification and major, and “If you were to have a superhero name and power, what would it be, and why?” Trevon stated,

Trevon: I am a freshman majoring in Business. My superhero name would be Kofi (a Ghanaian name), and my superpowers would be to clearly articulate the future, the use of Bitcoin, and other Business skills and

resources. I would be able to tell the Future, know my steps, and be a gatekeeper for my people. I chose Black Panther not because of his superpowers but because of his power to have a country and a society of engineers who are black people.

Trevon's fictitious superhero power of knowing the future and being a gatekeeper for his people was reiterated in his selection of "T'Chala—the Black Panther," a superhero who personified his character and mindset while attending a PWI.



(Black Panther -www.pinterest.com)

For Trevon, Black Panther's mindset, knowledge, humility, and protection of the people of Wakanda, reflect his mindset and self-aware attitude toward striving for a higher education, a stronger Black community on and off campus, solutions through hard times as a collegiate Black man, and his hope for a better future. Trevon states,

Trevon: I chose Black Panther not because of his superpowers but because of his power to have a country and a society of engineers who are black people. Just seeing that is very important. I experienced culture at a PWI when I was in my ENGL 131 class; we learned a lot about black people and how they wrote, to me, this is the closest thing to culture. When it was my turn to share with my class, I told a bit about my culture, sharing about the black panther party, allowing them to hear and learn about what was going on in Seattle and Oakland, California.

Although Trevon had an open mind to share what his culture had done in history to provide a relationship with empowerment, survival, community service, and protecting the future, Trevon was also open about experiencing continued challenges that were not always resolved with historic action shared by community activist groups like the Black Panther Party. Trevon stated,

Trevon: I guess I wasn't expecting to have so much agreement with other Black men about certain topics, feeling isolated, excluded, or without culture. I didn't expect to have to deal with such hefty topics about what it's like to be at a PWI or even going into college. Even the schoolwork, the classroom dynamics, you don't see Black folks. The way I'm going about things in the classroom, being silenced, not feeling comfortable enough. But, if we do the “one on one rule”, if we, you know, support higher education, changing the world or like, you know, put, more attention on having a faculty of color for every field of study or profession, I truly believe that certain things can change. I truly believe if we were to, you know, target or implement cultural or racial inclusion even a little bit more or if we got black people's experiences and listened to them, I do think things would be better, it would be amazing. I truly believe that, for black people in America, our history has literally been taken away from us. Literally, names, culture, everything is stripped. As a requirement for black people or collegiate Black men, they should take African and African American history to really know their roots and where they came from.

The use of superheroes and superpowers was a gateway that allowed the participants to articulate their experiences at a PWI through a lens of Afro-futurism, imagination, creativity, and fiction (Harrington, 2021). Trevon's comments reflect his hopeful outlook, optimistic attitude, care for Black culture and community, and effort to participate in guiding, sharing, and protecting his and the future of other Black men at a PWI.

Week Two of the Creative Workshop [Belonging]

In the second week, Trevon continued to show up with confidence and a mentality toward learning and engaging with the creative workshop. His discussion was colorful and filled with truth and a lived experience about how his experience at a PWI reflected his first year at UW and those moments that caused him to feel that he belonged when he felt he did not. Trevon

stated,

Trevon: As a good-looking black man like myself I experienced belonging at a PWI by essentially being involved in the Brotherhood Initiative. I feel like I belong because so many of us come from similar backgrounds, we can relate to many topics, from lifestyle, family, high school experiences, music, style, hair products, food, language, and just being Black. We share a space once a week, allowing us to build relationships beyond school. When I go into the Brooklyn Trail Building (BTB), I see folks who look just like me, and we immediately start conversing like we have known each other for a long time. This space allows me to be my authentic self. Another way I experienced belonging is at the IMA. The IMA is the UW gym. The IMA will enable me to share a space with folks with a common goal of working out. While there, I saw my brothers (other collegiate Black men) who I didn't know attended the same school. There are some places that I don't feel like I belong, some of my classes, but the main space is Suzzallo Library. When I go there to study, I feel like I don't belong because I pop out in the crowd. Certain people look at me before I sit down or when I am just passing through. Everybody who attends UW knows not many black folks attend UW. When I go to the library, I feel the stares, especially when sitting beside a white student.

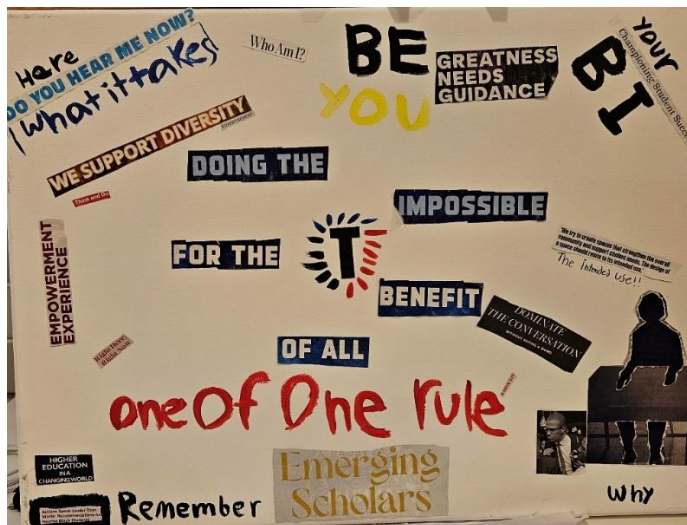
Trevon's Haiku states,

I am powerful

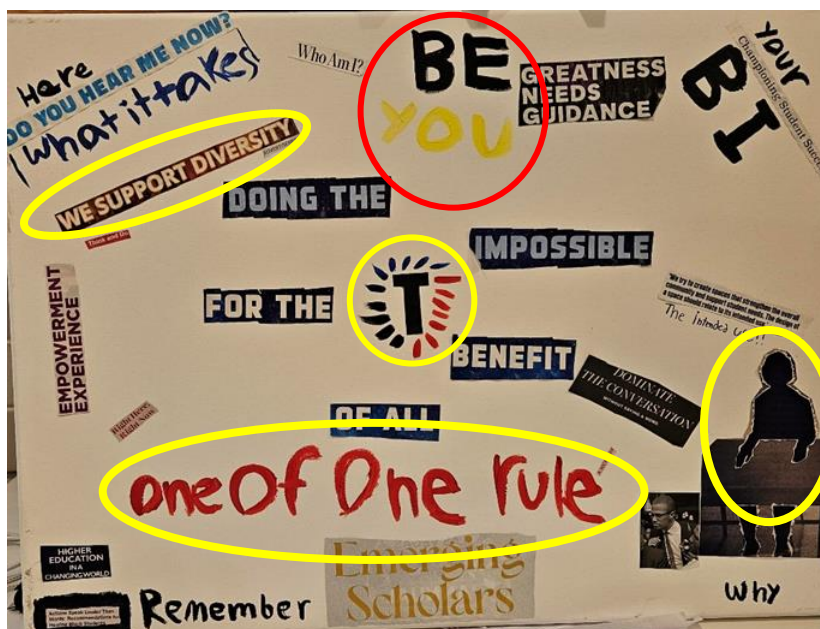
Like a lion in the wild

Yet soft like a bird

Trevon's Collage:



Trevon's Haiku captures his confidence in self-identity as he notes the power and softness between a lion and a bird. However, his collage points to less empowered elements that reveal topics within his mind that reflect his insecurities and concerns about not being good enough at a PWI (see Trevon's Collage Image).



Trevon stated,

Trevon: This piece of art is about Trevon Mitchell, a collegiate black male at a PWI. The T in the middle means my name. This is basically telling my

story at the University of Washington. The symbols that you see on my collage are how I have interpreted teaching, learning, and belonging from my time at a PWI and how excluded we are as Black students in a PWI. Such as the “diversity advertisement” represents how the word “diversity” looks for a CBM at a PWI. And then, it says, “we support diversity”. And then under it, you see advertisements, and so, I say that because, here (at a PWI), *the diversity is me!* When I step into classes, I see a sprinkle of Black folks, right? But then, when it’s time to support diversity outwardly, at least for me, inside looking out, it’s not really pushed in the way the university promotes it. I feel like being in it, it’s like NAAAAAH, its really not diverse at all. And then it says, We try to create that strength and create spaces that strengthen the overall community and support student needs. The design of a space should relate to its intended use.

The student on the right represents how I sometimes feel at the University of Washington in those big classes. I always feel hesitant to raise my hand, or I feel like I have a lot of knowledge in me that has yet to be poured out. I remember the First quarter. I was going through kind of like an identity crisis to see what I really wanted to do in life. Then, it says, remember why you're here. And so, it kinda expands out and always remembering why I'm here. I think that's why it's on the outside. I have to remember why I'm here to remember pretty much what I am going through. And so, I have to remember who I am.

Then there is this “One for one rule”. There is this brother by the name of Ajalah; I was actually working with the student leadership council, and he had brought forward this idea: if you show one white doctor, show them one black doctor, show them one Native doctor. Basically, let me see myself in that position. And I really mess with that.

And then, it says, “Be You”. I always have a constant reminder to be my authentic self; no matter what I'm doing, I'm always learning. I'm gonna be my true self. And I think that's really, really important. To me. To always be myself

I hope creating this will help future black collegiate students attending PWI, hoping for a more comfortable environment and not being used for diversity advertising.

Weeks Three and Four of the Creative Workshop [teaching and learning]

During weeks three and four, Trevon voiced his thoughts vocally and through his creative works. He captured aspects of his teaching and learning experience through examples of barriers and benefits that ranged from his classroom interactions with instructors and his desired method of study to the differences between his hope and his frustrations with the learning experience at a PWI, Trevon stated,

Trevon: Higher education, in a changing world, is very important to me. That's the goal, obviously, hopefully, something will or can change. My collage says, *doing the impossible for the benefit of all*. I really love that because it's like I'm really doing this (making my collage) for the benefit of all. My core classes have been getting harder now, so I need to be getting more help and asking more questions. How I learn is more 1on1 and seeing multiple examples so I can understand the material. One of the ways that I experience a barrier in my learning is through one of my teachers, who sometimes uses a phrase like "challenge me" when she feels like no one is asking enough questions to challenge her knowledge of the subject she is teaching and has studied her whole life. Hearing this is like a roadblock because sometimes I don't know what to ask, so I feel pressure twice, once to raise my hand, which I usually don't, and once to ask questions. She is verbal and gives examples from the book. I learn with multiple examples. It's hard to learn because I get the same examples every time. When I need help, I go to the Instructional Center (IC). There, I experienced the teaching and learning that I like. There, I get extra help and can get questions answered that would usually not have been answered by the actual teacher. The Instructional Center offers free tutoring at the University of Washington. This helps my learning experience because it allows me to learn how I inherit the learning. I really appreciate those TAs (Teacher Assistants) because they dive more into specifics on certain questions, allowing me to understand the topic so well that I can teach it. Another way I feel teaching and learning is through teachers who are extremely engaging with their students(us). I really appreciate that because teachers are usually never engaging. This teacher walked around the room while teaching, calling on different people to engage more with the material she was trying to teach. The teacher caught my attention as no other teacher did. She seemed so passionate about what she was teaching. I wish there were ways teaching can look more like a

discussion on how we interpret certain topics and be able to understand the topic overall.

Week Five— The Final week of the Creative Workshop [imagination and culture]

In the final week of the creative workshop, Trevon shared his imagination through a future fictional narrative to pull out his thoughts on how culture plays a part in his learning. His narrative continues to express a throughline of cultural awareness and connection to resources supporting the Black community. Trevon stated

Trevon: Imagining myself in the future was interesting because even then, I was teaching or telling other people about my experience with hopes of helping them in the future. My ideas are futuristic, such as robots, and the technology world will be very high-tech. This will allow “us,” Black students, to learn differently than now. Instead of being taught by teachers, it would be done through technology. The ideas that I have for CBM at PWI are beyond learning. It would be more input than anything, it would look like more blacks teaching blacks more often, being more funded, and allowing black people to be more together while attending a PWI.

Trevon’s Fictional Future Narrative:

(A letter from Trevon to Trevon from the future) The dorms are like never before. You still have to use a key card, but they give you a comfortable bed, and you can choose your roommates. You can have none of it if you want to. Now, college is like a technology field in all fields. This allows everybody to stay connected. We purchase items and learn through our fingerprints, and our brains automatically sync with the items or topics. For CBM, PWIs are much better. Black men started to pressure the PWIs to make college affordable. But Although racism still exists, we Black folks are finally being accepted into PWIs. Our classes require Black folks to take African and Black studies so that Black students can learn about who they are, and nothing is hidden from them about their culture and history. The future holds a lot. There are no more weird situations in classes because the PWI population still varies. There is more access to colleges.

Weeks Six and Seven— The Interviews

In the last two weeks of the workshop and data collection, Trevon shared his continued cultural awareness, hope for better days as a CBM, drive to help others, and desire for more inclusion for Black students learning at a PWI. In one question, Trevon was asked, “What would you share from the workshop to help you or others deal with attending a PWI? Trevon stated,

Trevon: That one thing I know is that you remember why I'm here, or you are here. I feel like the biggest thing I would take out of this is that no matter what I go through or what happens, I always feel like I must finish college. I always feel like this is what it is. There are some themes between all of us. No matter what is going on, this is for the benefit of all. And what I'm taking out of this is that this will really help other people. I feel like this has allowed me to think outside the box and really try to imagine the future for my kids or future black students, as a CBM.

Trevon also shared the impact of the workshop experiences on him, what he took from it, what he desired for the future, and what he believed was his role or ideas in creating possible futures for CBM. Trevon stated,

Trevon: Well, for me, I'm a kid person, so you know, I love kids. But connecting to this is important. And they're in elementary school, but they're extremely brilliant. And they're so innocent, so sharing with them all the barriers they will face will help them when they get there. You gotta believe in yourself 100% no matter what nobody says or does to block your dreams. I think it is important to bring awareness to the youth for any who may want to go to a PWI. It really hits home when you think about their innocence, they have no idea and are not thinking about racism. So, for me, it's about sharing what it is with them. I'm telling them this information to inform them, and I hope they retain it.

Chapter 5. Cross-Case-Study Analysis

The primary goal of this cross-case-study analysis was to observe and understand the patterns, experiences, imaginative ideas, or solutions expressed about pedagogical practices by collegiate Black men (CBM) who attend a predominantly white institution (PWI). While the individual case study stories presented a detailed reflection of the participant's accounting of each experience with the (dis)connection or connection relating to pedagogical practices, this cross-case analysis synthesizes similarities and differences between the participants analyzed through a lens of Arts-based pedagogy, Afro-Futurism, and Speculative design. The five case-study stories narrate affirmation, empowerment, exclusion, isolation, and othering. These experiences shared by the participants provide clarity, similarities, and differences in how collegiate Black men experience pedagogical practices while attending predominantly white institutions.

The following research questions guided the cross-case analysis: *What pedagogical experiences are these CBMs encountering at the PWI? What pedagogical practices were speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM? What workshop features created conditions that facilitated the CBM's imagination of a more positive future for young Black men at a PWI?* These research questions generated the following conceptual themes with various subtext headings to capture the participants' experiences: The School Sucks at Inclusion, It sucked then, and It Still Does Now (subtext-headings: Feelings and Mindsets, Belonging, and Inclusion, Activities to Combat the Absence of Culture); They Not Like Us (subtext-headings: Ideas about Instruction, Learning Outside the Class, Utilizing Creativity in the Class); Features of a Positive Future (subtext-headings: Imagining “what might be”, Barbershop Experience,

Empowerment) and, Superheroes and The WAKANDA Experience (subtext-headings: The New Black Panther, Know Your Roots, Young Liberty, Morpheus).

The School Sucks at Inclusion, it sucked then, and It Still Does Now

The case study stories' characteristics and patterns signal moments when the participants experienced cultural recognition, affirmation, representation, empowerment, and community, along with identified sources of tensions, isolation, microaggression, and othering that create adverse and insightful experiences for collegiate Black men. The conceptualized themes related to experiences [(Dis)connections or Connection] were centered on feelings, as feelings provide an inspection of the human condition, empathy, emotion, language, and learning environments observed through the inclusion of forms of art (Eisner, 1998). *The School Sucks at Inclusion, it sucked then, and It Still Does Now* explore the relevance and evidence of *feelings* and who is being considered. The participants of this study share their thoughts about pedagogical practices and experiences where their feelings were being valued and when their feelings were not being valued, as well as the impact it had on their experience while attending a PWI.

Feelings and Mindsets

All participants were vocal and forthright throughout the study about their feelings and mindset about being Black or African in context to how they experienced pedagogical practices while attending a White institution. (Dis)connections that appeared in their time attending a PWI were impersonal displays of interest in their lives through a lack of inclusive cultural content, a display of doubt in their abilities created by a lack of diverse or ethnic instructors to lead, collaborate, or teach topics within their majors, a disinterest in ensuring creative or imaginative inclusion on topics discussed throughout the curriculum, or lack of communication, language, or familiarity with the black experience integrated into the learning experience within the

curriculum (Murrey, et al., 2023). Throughout the data, Andy, Trevon, and Ja’Nathen were forward with narratives about their (Dis)connections and white-centric pedagogical practices. Pedagogical practices that are student-centered with well-being, culture, identity, or imagination as a characteristic of its method or praxis can generate an experience of belonging, inclusion, or empowerment, and when it is not applied, it can influence an experience of exclusion, impersonalization, superiority, and othering (Gay, 2010; Waters, 2021). These (Dis)connections were associated with what could be described as feelings of exclusion, othering, imposter, or isolation. Each shared their experience of feeling Excluded, Unwelcomed, and As If (they) Did Not Belong in Class, in the library, and When Around White Students and Faculty While Learning [(Dis)connections]. In Andy’s data, he stated, “My experience with imagination and culture at the UW is limited, I believe. I say this because I have not had many chances to explore my imagination as it relates to my culture and my culture itself. Due to UW being a PWI, there are not many spaces that allow me to explore my culture or be comfortable displaying my culture. There have been experiences with teachers and other people around me that may be a suppressed feeling or just something I let roll off my back so that it does not affect me as much. The main spaces where I do not feel a sense of belonging at UW are classrooms. While interacting academically with the predominantly white teaching body, my feelings and ideologies have felt almost put on the backseat.” These challenges were unique to Andy compared to Trevon and Ja’Nathen, as his experience had an added aspect regarding his Ghanaian cultural lens. In Andy’s collage, he revealed that he sometimes feels disconnected and distant from his culture. Andy’s lack of cultural inclusion and imagination related to the curriculum also fostered a disconnect or distance from his cultural experiences in Ghana. For Trevon, his (Dis)connections were experienced through a lens of feeling as if he did not belong. Trevon

stated, “There are some places that I don't feel like I belong. Some of those places are my classes, but the main space is the Suzzallo Library. When I go there to study, I feel like I don't belong because I pop out in the crowd. Certain people look at me before I sit down or when I am just passing through.” This experience of feeling like you don't belong for Trevon is heightened as he shares, “Everybody who attends UW knows not many black folks attend UW. When I go to the library, I feel the stares, especially when sitting beside a white student. When it comes to my other classes, those outside of the BI, the inclusion level goes down or feels unwanted. When I say that, I mean when I talk to other white classmates, it's hard to feel or want to connect with folks so I can feel some inclusion.” Like Andy, Ja’Nathen had experienced a feeling of (dis)connection in the form of cultural exclusion in his early years at this four-year institution. Ja’Nathen shared, “My freshman year was the worst. The first two days of my freshman year, I hated this PWI and the decision I made. Due to me coming from a Predominantly Black school in the inner city, I had a culture shock and realized just how white (or Asian) UW can be.” Like Trevon, Ja’Nathen also endured feelings of othering, imposter, or isolation, noted by the bewildered, fearful, and unwelcome looks of other students or faculty. Ja’Nathen discussed these feelings in his data, “Due to me being a Black man, I would always get stared at as if I was a threat or less than like I did not belong here. When I tried to get help from the student activities center or even my advisor, it was almost as if they were trying to belittle me because of where I was from and because my parents did not go to college. As a Black man, in my opinion, the school sucks at inclusion. It sucked then when I was a freshman, and it still does now as a Senior.”

Belonging and Inclusion

Throughout my analysis of the data and the case-study stories, Trevon, Moti, Andy, Devin, and Ja’Nathen were transparent in noting their triumphs when feeling included, culturally represented, and as if they belonged. For example, four participants discussed the impact of their involvement with the Brotherhood Initiative, founded by Dr. Joe Lott, or some other Black student social group or organization used to create intentional inclusion, support, guidance, cultural representation, and belonging. Trevon shared, “I found inclusion at the University of Washington during the Brotherhood Initiative (BI) class. This class brings me inclusion because some folks look just like me. We had to do a project that required us to work together and include everybody in the project. We had many agreements about how we would do the project, and I felt included—a project without having to code-switch. Being part of groups like the BI and BSU (Black Student Union) helps me feel included, and seeing/meeting other Black folks who attend the University of Washington allows me to make friends with whom I can hang out.” Trevon also shared, “I felt most included when I took economics in my first quarter; although there were few Black folks in class, we connected as Black folks, and we used that connection to support one another. We studied together in the library and had dinner. Doing these things, having study groups or having a meal outside of the classroom, made me feel included inside the classroom. How I feel included may differ, but I like feeling like I can have a simple conversation with someone to be comfortable and be helped.” For Trevon, it was noted that he felt inclusion during his engagement with inquiry-based learning, collaborative pedagogy, integrative pedagogy, or culturally sustaining pedagogical practices in his economics course due to his cultural connections with other Black students in his class, their efforts to gather and collaborate outside of class, and their intentional actions to develop an intentional inquiry of the

topic of economics (Persaud, 2024). Ja’Nathen’s sense of belonging and inclusion with collaborative pedagogy and culturally sustaining pedagogical practices was also felt in the Brotherhood Initiative due to his collaborative learning with other collegiate Black men.

Ja’Nathen expressed, “There was no sense of belonging except the space called the Brotherhood Initiative, where I felt like I was back in my neighborhood and high school in the inner cities but with better facilities and better chances to learn more. All in all, this experience as I close out my senior year of undergrad, my sense of belonging initially had its ups and downs. Then it went up as the years went by due to finding and gaining more Black people and mentors who look like me coming into the university and helping me to feel that sense of belonging and comfort. It was like, when they look like me, they can make me feel like if he is here and doing well, then I can do the same or even better. That is what belonging at a PWI has been like for me.” Throughout the data, the participants expressed how their feelings were centered and affirmed when reflected in their interactions with cultural student groups or social organizations. Moti stated, “For me, I experienced inclusion at UW by simply putting myself in spaces where there are people who look like me for one and have similar goals and aspirations. The Brotherhood Initiative (BI) has been a pivotal space for me because I have gotten to meet other males of color who have gone through similar experiences. Another space where I meet other males of color is the Oromo Student Union (OSU). I am a proud Oromo, the largest ethnic group within Ethiopia, and I have had the privilege to serve as the Treasurer this year. It has been an enriching experience because I have served my community and met other Oromo students and Oromo people from around Seattle. Moti stated: Another space is the Undergraduate Diversity Service (UDS) within Foster at UW. UDS focuses on providing support to business students from marginalized backgrounds. I have also been fortunate to network with these people to grow personally, professionally, and

academically.” Like Moti, Andy also experienced an affiliation and affinity for his African heritage and association to his ethnic community. Andy shared, “Reflecting on my sense of belonging at UW, I noticed that all such spaces have been primarily black, from the Black Student Union (BSU) to the African Student Association (ASA) and the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). All those spaces have given me a way to explore my identity and interests and, in that way, have contributed to my growth at UW. Being more deeply involved like with the RSOs (Registered Student Organizations), that pay it forward as well as my involvement with the Brotherhood Initiative (BI), like kind of creating or adding to the spaces that like help people in general, so they feel more at home and have a place to belong and like place to just be themselves and work on themselves without judgments.”

Activities to Combat the Absence of Culture

Devin, the only participant not a member of the BI, found a similar form of inclusion through Black student groups and activities to combat the absence of cultural representation within his curricular interactions. This challenge of having limited cultural representation, either by having faculty of color, cultural relatability with the curriculum, or having cultural representation, heightens the use of cultural outlets and cultural engagements (Howard et al., 2016). Devin stated, “The first time I experienced inclusion was when I went to my freshman year's first Black Homecoming (not the dance). I didn't have many other Black classmates in my classes, and I didn't have many people to talk with outside of class. That all changed when I went to the Black Homecoming. It was almost like I never left my home state of Georgia. I got to talk with many other Black students and learn about their respective student organizations. I felt no need to force conversations; they just flowed comfortably as we talked about our lives in and outside of school. It felt like I found a bit of myself, my culture.” Although the interactions with

cultural inclusion may differ between the participants, what remains to be understood is the absence of cultural representation within their curricular interactions. This pedagogical practice of having a white-centric curriculum while interacting with CBM or any student in opposition from the dominant culture can cause them, like the participants, to seek out or accept the provision of culturally related resources to compensate for the absence of culture at a PWI (Smith et al., 2007).

They Not Like Us

The thematic sentiment of *They Not Like Us* personified the contrast between pedagogy that makes the participants feel or experience moments of dehumanization, versus pedagogy that is culturally collaborative, inclusive of a student's well-being, and self-discovery.

Ideas about Instruction

On one level, the participants differed in how they imagined ideas about instruction. One might have viewed ideas about instruction from a concern of engagement or cultural representation, another, the need for therapy, farming or food aid, or cultural solidarity, communes or safe places, while another might have spoken about the need for the allowance of creative thought leadership and imagination; however, each reflected an aspect of their relationship to the pedagogical practice from a vantage that signaled what they needed rather than from the position of what the faculty needs regarding what is perceived by a white-centric curriculum to achieve a valued learning experience or outcome. Trevon stated, "I feel teaching and learning is through teachers who engage with their students(us). I appreciate that because teachers are usually never engaging. I wish there were ways teaching can look more like a discussion on how we interpret certain topics and be able to understand the topic overall. By

dialing my experiences, researchers can identify systemic issues such as racial bias, lack of representation in faculty and curriculum, and sociocultural barriers that may hinder our academic success and overall well-being. Then there is this “One for one rule” by the brother Ajalah; I was working with the student leadership council, and he brought forward this idea: if you show one white doctor, show them one black doctor, show them one Native doctor. Basically, let me see myself in that position. And I really mess with that.”

Learning Outside the Class

Although Trevon expressed what he needed from pedagogical practices inside the class, Devin shared about methods he experienced outside the class. He further articulated what could be imagined and speculated about various pedagogies in the future. Devin stated, “I have learned much more through teaching outside of class than in school. At our Black Student Union (BSU) meetings, for example, we are always informed about how all aspects of society, including education (PWIs), affect Black people through slide shows and discussions. The greatest aspect of learning is through the lens of those left out and suppressed by the system; what better way to learn these aspects than through cultural engagement? In 60 years, I speculate that classrooms will be devoid of tests and homework and have more opportunities for people to expand on what they learned by doing group projects such as creating their own games and websites. These projects will be versatile and imaginative and expand on the information that the students learn in their classrooms with ideas that surfaced, including having PWIs where students, especially marginalized students, lead and where work is performed play-like to make it more fun. In 120 years, I imagine a plethora of Black-led programs and Black staff will be readily available for Collegiate Black students. I also believe in having Black therapists at schools, especially with the educational racial gap being so apparent between Black and white students. Imaginative ideas

that surfaced while doing my collage about my current experiences at PWI's is one where Black students can learn to resist in many forms. One example is learning to grow our own food and help each other out via mutual aid. In 240 years, I envision that students of color will go to school and live together in their solidarity communes. In these communes, people will live together and learn from one another. People's aspect of learning will be far beyond the confines of our current education system and will find their creative ways of learning that help benefit each other."

Utilizing Creativity in the Class

While Devin shared openly and thoroughly his ideas about the future and the additional capacities of pedagogical practices that engaged his mind toward learning, Moti expressed a direct desire to utilize his creativity and imagination within learning, an experience often negated by a limitation of pedagogy in learning. Moti stated, "Collegiate Black Men often bring diverse perspectives and innovative ideas that can enhance the educational experience for everyone. Learning from our creative thoughts fosters an inclusive environment that acknowledges the richness of diversity, ultimately benefiting the entire academic community. Lastly, understanding the experiences and creative thoughts of Collegiate Black Men fosters a sense of empowerment. When our voices are heard and valued, it sends a powerful message about the importance of representation and validates our contributions to the broader academic discourse."

Features of a Positive Future

Each participant was encouraged to imagine "what might be," an idea catalyst to create, redesign, or discover pedagogical possibilities through creativity and imagination that could be a solution or a possible pedagogical feature of their experience at a PWI. Each theme associated with Features of a Positive Future provided the participants with an experience that reflected a

response related to having a safe and supportive space, an experience of empowerment through imagination, or the opportunity to utilize creativity to explore Afro-Futurism and Speculative Design Thinking, including critical reflection, cultural consciousness, or envisioning themselves now and in the future. These methods were used to explore, speculate, and redesign pedagogical practices by sharing ideas imagined by the participants regarding their personal and collective struggles, aspirations, and visions about pedagogical methods for the future. These methods allowed participants to connect through experiences with pedagogy that elevated, evolved, and culturally affirmed their learning experiences, dismantled learning challenges (exclusion, isolation, or non-arts-based learning), and included CBM throughout the learning experience by exploring creative pedagogical possibilities such as collaborative, integrative, reflective, creative, responsive, culturally relevant, or culturally sustaining pedagogies.

The sub-context themes related to Features of a Positive Future were *Imagining “what might be” through Art, Fictional Storytelling, Poetry, Collage Making* - Using imagination, art making, discussion, and reflexive features to help the participants acknowledge their racial identity, resist dominant cultural forms of exclusion, and challenge the dominant narratives and pedagogical structures that limit their potential and learning opportunities, the *Barbershop Experience* - to share their experiences, feelings, and aspirations as Black men in a predominantly White institution fostered a sense of community, belonging, and empowerment among the CBM, who could relate to each other's stories and challenges, *Superheroes and The WAKANDA Experience* - to experience critical reflection, consciousness, and envisioning themselves and pedagogical ideas in the future related to historical and contemporary issues affecting Black men in higher education (racism, oppression, marginalization, and stereotypes, and to stimulate imagination that influences thinking beyond “what might be” regarding

alternative scenarios and solutions to enhance Black men's well-being, achievement, and representation in higher education. With these features, the participants could envision themselves as leaders, innovators, and change agents to positively impact their experiences with PWIs.

Imagining “what might be”

While all participants were motivated using imagination, creativity, reflective analysis, collage making, fictional narratives, and speculative designing, some also took inventory of the opportunity to project what it might be to feel empowered, encouraged, and emotional about the idea of having a positive future and what it would be like for themselves and other collegiate Black men. Devin shared, “The idea of working to educate and empower the next generation relates to the Haiku, *Lead*. It symbolizes honoring many of our legendary revolutionary leaders who were assassinated, such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Chairman Fred Hampton. My collage expressed the themes of resistance (affiliation with ethnic student RSOs), optimism (envisioning a better future for workers and all marginalized students at this PWI), and knowing thy enemy (the UW administration) while at PWIs. Knowing my relationship with PWIs, it is important to appreciate being around other students of color.” For Devin, linking his Haiku to the emotional context of leadership, resistance, and optimism and what might have been desired by radical social justice Icons such as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Chairman Fred Hampton reveals a context of how pedagogical practices as a method of social justice is desired to safeguard against future oppression. Ja’Nathen’s imagination and creativity were centered on utilizing imagery, words, and colors to reflect his intent on remaining steadfast through the challenges of PWIs. Ja’Nathen stated, “My collage depicts the journey of a collegiate Black Man (CBM) attending a predominantly white institution (PWI), including images that

symbolize empowerment, cultural identity, and challenges posed by his environment. This imagery captures moments of resilience, community, and self-expression against all odds despite the difficulty.” Contrary to the individual resilience expressed by Ja’Nathen, Trevon expressed a desire for a shared power found in community, Black culture, and shared knowledge acquired by technology and testimonies. Trevon states, “My ideas are futuristic, such as robots, and the technology world will be very high-tech. This will allow “us,” Black students, to learn differently than now. Instead of being taught by teachers, it would be done through technology. The ideas that I have for CBM at PWI are beyond learning. It would be more input than anything, it would look like more blacks teaching blacks more often, being more funded, and allowing black people to be more together while attending a PWI.” For Andy, his collage imagery was linked to the concept of pedagogical methods that would aid students and faculty with the ease of how to learn best or teach. Andy expressed a concern about simplifying the process of learning. Andy stated, “The main symbol in my collage that connects to my fictional future narrative is the large eye above the middle of the collage. Relating to the future narrative, it represents the idea that learning is made much easier, easing the burden on students in figuring out how to learn best and teachers in figuring out how to teach best.” These features reflect how the participants, through collage making, fictional future narratives, and poetry, attend to their primary perceptions about “what might be” in the future contrasting “what it is” to learn at a PWI.

Barbershop Experience

Ja’Nathen, Trevon, and Moti openly expressed their views about their experience at a PWI and what they felt by describing the kinds of pedagogical practices like white-centric curricula that did not seem to fit the purpose of why they were there. During the interviews, Ja’Nathen shared his affection for the workshops and what he valued about the collaborative,

integrative, and reflective pedagogical method; he stated, “I honestly like the experience of teaching and learning in the workshop. The ability to write about my experiences and talk about them around other Black men is great. It is like a barbershop, but you gain educated experience and knowledge for academics instead of getting a cut. I mean, the conversations, I would say, greatly impacted me. It is just because our conversation was really in tune with college in general through the workshop and our lives, and having just those 3 hours to sit down and Talk things out. For all of us again, it's like that relief, that break where you don't have to keep your wall up all the time. As a collegiate black man, I experienced belonging while attending a PWI, just as some would expect, entering a newfound space that most people of color and Black people could not attend or admitted to a place where you feel like you have no sense of being while you attend a top university. For me, there was no sense of belonging except the space called the Brotherhood Initiative, where I felt like I was back in my neighborhood and my high school in the inner cities but with better facilities and better chances to learn more. The thoughts about my past that surfaced in this week's workshop were great but also reminded me why I am here. But for me to get the feeling of a real black barbershop like I do at home, I have to drive to Renton 30 minutes outside of Seattle, another inconvenience for black men at a PWI. I guess it's almost as if, the experience when one is the senior, it is as if they are at an HBCU or just like when the white people here on campus will not judge you, and it makes you feel safe to walk to class and not feel judged. I mean, the conversations, I would say, greatly impacted me. It is because our conversation was in tune with college in general through the workshop and our lives.” This reflection and call out to conversation, dialogue, neighborhood, and belonging is a desired aspect filtered through pedagogical practices that offer safety, familiarity, and community. This articulation frames the responses about the benefits and necessity of a supportive safe space. For

Ja’Nathen, it likens his experience to going to his Black barbershop back home in California, where there is no judgment or othering but inclusion, understanding, and shared vulnerability through culture and experience. A known interaction and exchange where Black men gather, share, reflect, and emote transparently about topics that range from society to cultural realities.

Empowerment

Like Ja’Nathen, Moti was also connected to the value of empowerment, which was shown through sharing, reflecting, and emoting transparently around topics and diverse perspectives. Moti expressed his motivation and affinity with this style of discourse, and learning was that it empowered and validated his identity, thus encouraging him to seek out moments to have an open dialogue with other men of color to lead and learn. Moti stated, “Understanding the experiences and creative thoughts of Collegiate Black Men fosters a sense of empowerment. When our voices are heard and valued, it sends a powerful message about the importance of representation and validates our contributions to the broader academic discourse. It encourages a positive cycle where diverse perspectives enhance the learning environment, creating a more inclusive and dynamic educational landscape. Therefore, learning from Collegiate Black Men is essential for promoting inclusivity, fostering creativity, and ensuring that the educational experiences at PWIs reflect the diversity of voices within the student body.” The diversity and specifics of experiences are captured in known nuances of culture, heritage, and community that make the safety of a Black barbershop or the energy shared amongst men that gather to talk about life are the sentiments desired in the participants and often CBM who attend PWIs. Trevon spoke of his affection for belonging through his interaction with collaborative, reflective, and culturally sustaining pedagogical practices. Trevon said, “I feel like I belong because so many of us come from similar backgrounds; we can relate to many topics, including lifestyle, family, high

school experiences, music, style, hair products, food, language, and being Black. We share a space once a week, allowing us to build relationships beyond school. When I go into the Brooklyn Trail Building (BTB), I see folks who look just like me, and we immediately start conversing like we have known each other for a long time. This space allows me to be my authentic self.”

Each of these reflections captures the element of safe spaces that are often only dreamed about or imagined in the minds and lives of African Americans when the idea of what the world now or the future would look like if they were able to create a better place for themselves and others. The participants shared their imaginations about pedagogy and their experiences at a PWI, echoing America’s icons of Black history and contemporary voices of optimism and hope for a world operated by technology and superpowers. Whether it be the promised land noted by Martin Luther King Jr. or Wakanda protected by T’Chala The Black Panther, each location, mindset, and outcome is regarded as a safe place achieved by purposeful pedagogical practices that are intended to empower CBM to aspire, achieve, and attain an unrefuted higher learning.

Superheroes and The WAKANDA Experience

The study participants used their exposure to Afro-Futurism, speculative design, and Art-based pedagogy to ignite their imagination toward learning. Each was willing to share and constructively critique their creative limits to acquire a new understanding of pedagogy through collage-making, poetry, and fictional writing. At all times during the seven weeks, each personally transparently shared personal narratives about tensions, challenges, and triumphs that caused them to rise to the task of growth in an environment that was not culturally set for them to succeed. Although pedagogical practices that use a white-centric curriculum were challenging for the participants, limiting how much each participant could learn, the experiences of isolation,

exclusion, or othering did not minimize their imagination or interest in expanding their creativity. When asked to imagine what superhero they identified with, what superpowers they would possess and why, and what might be new pedagogical practices or experiences of teaching and learning in the future, each shared something remarkable about optimism, resilience, creativity, justice, community, and education in the form of a conceptual pedagogical narrative.

The New Black Panther

Devin stated, “The idea of resistance relates to the haiku Rise up! The issues that all marginalized students, including students of color face at PWIs can inspire people to get creative on how to help each other. My ideology helps me to oppose the administration at this PWI but also envision the hope that it could bring when we all come together. My ideology includes the radical imagination of future societies that center community, autonomy, anti-capitalism, and anti-colonialism, including at PWIs. It also emphasizes creative ideas that will help us get to those societies.” Devin also shared, “My superhero name would be “The New Black Panther,” and my superpower would be the ability to control propaganda to brainwash people to question authority. Imaginative ideas that surfaced while doing my collage about my current experiences at PWI’s is one where Black student can learn to resist in many forms.”

Know Your Roots

As Devin shared his notion of what empowerment looks like and how resistance can inspire people to get creative to envision how we all can come together, Trevon was keen on acknowledging his own experiences as something researchers could use to identify systemic issues that can transform challenges experienced at PWIs. Trevon stated, “Firstly, it provides an opportunity to shed light on the unique challenges and obstacles faced by black men in academic

environments where we may be underrepresented and or marginalized. By dialing my experiences, researchers can identify systemic issues such as racial bias, lack of representation in faculty and curriculum, and sociocultural barriers that may hinder our academic success and overall well-being. I truly believe if we were to, you know, target or implement cultural or racial inclusion even a little bit more or if we got black people's experiences and listened to them, I do think things would be better; it would be amazing. As a requirement for black people or collegiate Black men, they should take African and African American history to know their roots and where they came from.” Devin and Trevon’s conceptual pedagogical narratives are examples of their desire for Integrative pedagogy, the desire to use connections between concepts and experiences so that the information and skills acquired can be applied to common and complex challenges (Persaud, 2024).

Young Liberty

Like Devin and Trevon, Ja’Nathen also advocates for knowledge, freedom, resilience, and the pursuit of a Black community that is supported and recognized for its rich cultural heritage and the identity found within its community. Ja’Nathen stated, “My superhero name would be “Young Liberty,” and my superpower would be not having to sleep—to have infinite energy for Free Speech to free the Black community and stay free in mind, body, and soul. In terms of my current teaching and learning experiences at a predominantly white institution (PWI), the collage painting exercise sparked imaginative ideas about fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness in the classroom. I believe we can create more feelings and understanding of our environment by encouraging us to explore our identities through collages and Haikus. Additionally, integrating diverse perspectives and voices into the curriculum can challenge existing power structures and promote dialogue about social justice issues.”

Morpheus

Lastly, like the other men before him, Moti shared his challenges and optimism for cultural engagement and how to make meaning out of actions that lead toward a more inclusive learning experience. Moti stated, “My superhero name would be “Morpheus,” and my superpowers would be Teleportation, Shapeshifting, and Morphine, all able to move efficiently, continuously adapting through innovation to meet people's needs. Engaging with creativity, art, and cultural understanding in a predominantly white institution (PWI) helped me face the challenges of stereotypes and ways to express my intersecting identities (Being African, a College Student, a student leader, and a BI Member). It shows how I value my ethnicity and the community spaces I am around. By imagining better futures and using personal beliefs and feelings, people can work towards making PWIs more inclusive and equitable places for everyone. It will challenge these PWIs to create more inclusive education spaces for CBM and other identities on campuses worldwide.” Moti and Ja’Nathen’s conceptual pedagogical narratives are examples of their desire for critical pedagogy, which assists students' learning experiences with social justice and democracy (Persaud, 2024).

Chapter 6 - Discussion

The study's research relied on the reflections, creations, and imaginations of five collegiate Black men and their experience with pedagogical practices while attending a PWI. Conceptually, the study was grounded in theoretical narratives about social imagination, art as experience, art as inquiry, and BlackCrit (a critical response to anti-Black learning environments in higher education). The participants generated data through interviews, creative artifacts, fictional future narratives, Haikus, journal reflections, free-writes, and collages throughout this study. There was some triangulation through art critiquing, art-making, field notes, interviews,

free-writes, and weekly journal data. The findings indicated that the CBM of this study endured experiential tension and forms of (dis)connection such as social exclusion, the desire for their cultural references and resources within a predominantly white institution, the desire for faculty of color or culturally responsive, relevant, or sustainable pedagogies, minimal curricular or pedagogical practices that centered their well-being, personal experiences or the use of art-based pedagogies throughout their learning. These findings of pedagogical tensions generally point to a white-centric curriculum along with traditional methods of instruction (lecture, individualized learning, or banking methods of learning) (Freire, 1970; Gay, 2010). This point of contention is understood throughout the data and points towards the participant's desire for pedagogical practices that are centered on their well-being, culturally relevant and sustainable, integrative, creatively critical, empathetic to their cultural ways of knowing, collaborative, imaginative, inclusive, and valued through a personalized experience with art (Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 2004). Each of these findings is worthy of replication through additional study, including documentation of collegiate Black men, collegiate Black women, or collegiate students from diverse communities and identities, that could broaden these specific findings.

In the cross-case study story analysis, data from each student displayed patterns and examples of pedagogical practices experienced by CBM who attend a PWI. The collective narratives shared by the participants about pedagogy articulated the desire for pedagogical practices using arts-based pedagogy, Afro-Futurism, and speculative. Each practice offering inclusion engages students to understand the meaning and self-discovery through learning materials instead of passively ingesting content (Mont, 2012; Bray & Harrington, 2021; Persaud, 2024). Each narrative shared by the participants was contextually associated with culturally responsive, relevant, or culturally sustaining pedagogy or collaborative and inquiry-based

learning. Like the hands-on method of creativity with Arts-based pedagogy, Afro-futurism, and speculative design, these pedagogies gave the participants a chance to respond, think, and recognize their interests. Reflective pedagogy, or the method Currere, allows students to understand what they have learned from their memories and future imaginations (Pinar, 1975; Persaud, 2024). All stories incorporated and included the desire for connection and togetherness within their respective cultures, communities, and ethnicities. These pedagogical practices offer encouragement to ask questions that will drive insight and experience around topics of learning and the inclusion of their well-being, emotional health, and culture (Gay, 2010; Paris, 2017; Waters, 2021; Persaud, 2024).

The study included seven weeks of creative artifact workshops administered to generate free-writes, fictional writing, haikus, paintings, photo-voice pictures, journaling, collages, and interviews to examine participant reflections. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field notes, and creative artifacts before, during, and after seven weeks of the creative workshops. The data were examined and analyzed using case study analysis for each participant, followed by cross-case analysis to examine the effectiveness of ABP, AfF, and SpD as tools for identifying connections and (dis)connections between pedagogical practices at PWIs and CBM. This chapter summarizes the study, the contributions offered through my findings from the three research questions, the findings, the significance of the findings, and future recommendations by integrating the case study stories, cross-case analysis, and interviews.

I examined the affordances of arts-based pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and speculative design (SpD) as tools to support self-discovery and well-being in CBM and broaden pedagogical solutions practiced at PWIs. The participants' surge of interest in ABP, AfF, and SpD was due to the absence of pedagogies that are either student-centered or inclusive of

practices that generate an inclusion of well-being, culture, self-discovery, or diverse ways of knowing (Ladsen-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2010). This study also addresses the (dis)connections and connections between pedagogical practices utilized at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) and collegiate Black men (CBM) (Mont, 2012; Howard et al., 2016). The use of grounded theories from Dumas & Ross, Dewey, Greene, and Eisner complements the literature surrounding the use of ABP, Aff, and SpD (Dewey, 1934; Greene, 1995; Eisner, 2004; Dumas & Ross, 2016). Each theoretical narrative provides structural insight and supportive help in understanding essential affordances that offer solutions and transformative learning experiences for CBM who attend PWIs. The three research questions in this study asked: What pedagogical experiences are these CBMs encountering at the PWI, what pedagogical practices were speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM, and what workshop features created conditions that facilitated the CBM's imagination of a more positive future for young Black men at a PWI?

Research Questions

Research Question 1 - What pedagogical experiences are these CBMs encountering at the PWI? Devin, Andy, Moti, Trevon, and Ja’Nathen encountered a range of pedagogical experiences at their PWI (University of Washington) that were often shaped by cultural challenges and resistance to a white-centric curriculum. The pedagogical challenges experienced throughout this study by the CBM were framed as (dis)connections or tension [variations of racial priming, cultural limitations, black racial misandry, dehumanization, anti-Blackness, microaggression, doubt, exclusion, labeling, etc.] (Smith et al., 2007; Brooms & Druery, 2023). As a result of these challenges, each participant expressed a strong desire for inclusive

pedagogical practices that reflect their cultural heritage and identities, the opportunity for self-discovery, and consideration for their well-being.

Devin shared his notion of empowerment and resistance, imagining a future society centered on community and anti-colonialism. He emphasized the importance of creative ideas and radical imagination to help marginalized students, including those at PWIs, come together and resist oppressive structures. Andy openly expressed his limited experience with culturally relevant or responsive pedagogy, well-being, or ABP, AfF, or SpD due to his experience with a white-centric curriculum, white-centered dominant culture, and a limited infusion of African (Ghanian) culture throughout his time at a PWI. His desire for a more inclusive and culturally responsive educational environment that integrates culture and offers opportunities to express his imagination and creativity through critical thinking and personal reflection is severe, considering his comments during the creative workshop. Moti highlighted the challenges of cultural engagement and the importance of creating inclusive learning experiences. He valued the opportunity to express his intersecting identities and emphasized the need for PWIs to become more equitable and inclusive. Trevon focused on the systemic issues faced by black men at PWIs, including racial bias and lack of representation. He advocated including African and African American history in the curriculum to help black students understand their roots. His experiences underscore the importance of cultural and racial inclusion in creating a supportive academic environment. Ja’Nathen expressed his affection for collaborative and reflective pedagogical practices. He valued workshops that allowed open dialogue with other black men, likening these experiences to the camaraderie of a black barbershop.

Collectively, these CBM advocates for pedagogical practices that prioritize personalization of their experiences due to undergoing an experience with ABP, AfF, and SpD as

an experience. Each shared intimate reflections that collectively echoed a desire for inclusivity, cultural awareness, personalization and meaning, well-being, and the empowerment of black students who attend PWIs. They emphasize the need for creative, reflective, collaborative, and integrative pedagogical practices and methods that validate their identities and foster a sense of belonging.

Research Question 2 - What pedagogical practices were speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM? The pedagogical practices speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM aligned with methods associated with culturally responsive, relevant, historic, or sustaining pedagogies (Gay, 2010; Paris & Alim, 2017; Muhammad & Williams, 2023). These practices were speculated or redesigned in the imagination of CBM through collage-making, Haiku writing, and fictional narratives.

One of the participants, Devin, emphasized creative ideas while crafting his Haiku on radical imaginations to confront and resist oppressive structures and the integration of anti-colonialism and community-centered learning. Another participant, Moti, expressed pedagogy that utilized inclusive learning methods and experiences that recognize and engage with intersecting identities. This was noted in the interpretation of his collage, where he created a visual composition about equitable and inclusive environments at PWIs. Lastly, another participant, Andy, offered his views through a future fictional narrative that acknowledged pedagogical practices with inclusive and culturally responsive educational environments and opportunities for imagination and creativity through critical thinking and personal reflection.

This feature also encouraged participants to ask questions and explore topics of personal and cultural significance, helping them develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of their learning materials. Each participant emphasized the need for pedagogical

practices prioritizing inclusivity, cultural awareness, personal meaning, well-being, and the empowerment of Black students at PWIs. They envisioned creative, reflective, collaborative, and integrative pedagogical practices that validate Black identities, experiences, language, political views, and African culture while fostering a sense of belonging, inclusion, and safety.

Research Question 3 - What workshop features created conditions that facilitated the CBM's imagination of a more positive future for young Black men at a PWI? The workshop features that created conditions that facilitated the CBM's imagination of a more positive future for young Black men at a PWI was revealed in Features of a Positive Future (Imagining “what might be” through Art, Fictional Storytelling, Poetry, and Collage Making) and Barbershop Experience (Safe and Supportive Space).

Shared in the study, one of the participants, Ja’Nathen, speculated ideas shared through a personal correlation to his experiences of being back home in the barbershop and how collaborative and reflective pedagogical practices help create open dialogue and a “family” or “brotherhood” style form of connection. This feature added to the experiences of learning and teaching in different ways.

Barbershop Experience (Safe and Supportive Space) created collaborative and reflective practices, emphasizing well-being, emotional health, and inclusion of personal narratives. This feature of the creative workshops facilitated open discussions and dialogues among participants, resembling the camaraderie of a black barbershop (Harper, 2009; Howard et al., 2016). The sense of community and shared experience fostered a supportive environment and created a safe space for participants to discuss sensitive issues related to their identities and cultural experiences (Eisner, 2004; Greene, 2005). This workshop's features promoted emotional well-being and resilience, allowing participants to connect their experiences with broader cultural and social

contexts by sharing personal stories, thus understanding their role in a collective movement for change (Fielding, 2006; Gatangi, 2007; Waters, 2021).

Another participant, Trevon, asserted his imaginative ideas about teaching methods and student engagement through inquiry-based, integrative, and collaborative learning. He addressed systemic issues such as racial bias and lack of representation, including African and African American history in the curriculum. Trevon speculated about supportive academic environments through cultural and racial inclusion.

Features of a Positive Future (Imagining “what might be” through Art, Fictional Storytelling, Poetry, and Collage Making) created Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogy and Inquiry-Based Learning. The workshops emphasized pedagogical practices relevant to the participants' cultural backgrounds through art-making, which allowed participants to engage in meaningful learning experiences and provided an experience of self-discovery through creativity and language (Gay, 2010). This feature also encouraged participants to ask questions and explore topics of personal and cultural significance, helping them develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of their learning materials (Paris & Alim, 2017).

These features collectively created an educational environment that validated the participants' identities, promoted inclusivity, and created a community that led toward creative thinking and self-discovery, which empowered them to imagine a more positive and equitable future.

Significance of the Findings

The Significance of the Findings outlines critical interpretations of the data described by a conceptualized theme: Having the License to Make My Experience Matter. This theme is

followed by subsections Invitation, Creation, Communication, and Personalization, which further analyze the theme and the significance of the findings. Each subsection provides essential discussion to frame the rationale of the CBM of this study's findings regarding what the participants believe to be the core of their desire when engaged with pedagogical practices while attending a PWI. These topics illuminate what is often missing or the essence of (dis)connections and the delight of when connections are made throughout their learning experience. In this study, ABP, AfF, and SpD were used as pedagogical catalysts to foster a learning experience for five collegiate Black men attending a PWI. These men, their creations, ideas, thoughts, and reflections were observed to discover what might be considered critical pedagogical solutions for teaching at PWIs. The artifacts provided a lens into the participant's emotions, intellect, experiences, and imaginations (Harper, 2006, 2009; Howard et al., 2016). Through this study, the use of art created data to examine (dis)connections and connections between CBM and pedagogical practices at a PWI. The utilization of art offered the participants an experience with imagination, creativity, and empowerment to author their ideas about how they believed learning and teaching would assist them. This form of learning engagement for the participants presented the opportunity for inclusion and belonging (Harper, 2006, 2009).

From the workshops and production of creative artifacts, ABP, AfF, and SpD were acknowledged as significant catalysts for learning and thus identified as a desired method of well-being and personal and meaningful pedagogy. From this collective assertion by the participants, I selected the primary theme of the findings: *Having the license to make my experience matter*. This primary theme relates to having a meaningful and personal experience with learning because of pedagogical practices that engage with art, culture, imagination, and personal experience. Engaging art in any form with pedagogy allows the dynamic between

faculty and students to shift from one mode of instruction to a particular mode of teaching that is open to diverse ways of knowing (Harrington et al., 2022).

Grounded in theoretical structure and supportive literature, the context of this theme was identified by conditional factors regarding interconnecting pedagogical practices with interaction with cultural inclusion, well-being, experience, imagination, and art (Dewey, 1934; Greene, 1995; Eisner, 2004; Dumas & Ross, 2016). This allowed the student and the faculty to share their personal experience through art to further what can be learned or taught about the topic within the course (Eisner, 2004). These cognitive, personal, cultural, and experiential interactions produced four conditions of undergoing an experience with pedagogy and art: *invitation*, *creation*, *communication*, and *personalization* (Dewey, 1934; Greene, 1995; Eisner, 2004). These conditions supported and influenced ways of knowing and meaning-making as a response to pedagogical practices at a PWI. This dynamic can result in feelings, experiencing, or identifying with community and belonging while learning. The process of undergoing an experience with art, imagination, reflection, and cultural inclusion allowed the diversity of thought, multiple ways of knowing, collaborative thinking, integrative and critical thinking, and personal meaning-making (Mont, 2012). The primary theme of the findings, *having the license to make my experience matter*, encompasses the following sub-categories [invitation, creation, communication, and personalization], which explain the features of undergoing an experience with ABP, AfF, and SpD.

Having the License to Make My Experience Matter

The CBM of this study discussed, reflected, and asserted how the interaction with ABP, AfF, and SpD could offer a helpful catalyst for experiencing inclusive learning, empowerment, cultural recognition, belonging, and well-being (Mont, 2012; Waters, 2021). The following sub-

categories explain the features of the primary theme: *invitation, creation, communication, and personalization.*

Invitation

The Invitation feature of the conceptual theme *having the license to make my experience matter* is initiated with the interaction and involvement with reflection, imagination, art observation, and art evaluation. These features are part and parcel of a multi-faceted occurrence of the creative process (Hunter & Frawley, 2002). Greene's theory of social imagination affirms one's capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society from the position of where we live, our communities, and our schools (Greene, 1995). The contextualization of this feature is an examination and interpretation that elicits inclusion and community through art-making, meaning-making, and creative, critical thinking. Self-evaluation and reflection, critiquing one's work, observing the works of others, and collaborating on shared thoughts and works of art is an implementation of empathy, humanness, and centering. Sharing space is a by-product of responding to the invitation to share ideas, thoughts, and imagination and being centered in the space of thought leadership and diverse ways of knowing, learning, or teaching. During the creative workshops, the participants openly discussed their ideas and how their experience at a PWI impacted their lives while drawing comparisons to how much they found likeness in the lives of the other participants. This feature is an influential part of feeling empowered, confident, competent, safe, and supported to develop meaningful ideas through art and to have the validation to exist in white spaces.

Creation

The Creation feature of the conceptual theme *of having the license to make my experience matter* is established when imagination materializes into thought, form, and action, resulting in some critical entity of one's experience. Creation is the process and interplay of ideas into forms. This interplay of experiences, visual elements, ideas, and the human senses initiates the interaction, involvement, and evaluation process of art-making and undergoing art as an experience. ABP, AfF, and SpD operate as catalysts through imagination, creativity, and meaning-making, which describes engaging in a creative learning process. Dewey's approach to art and art as an experience is the opportunity to think about the possibilities rather than limit them to the singular nature of the product of art. Dewey's ideas about art as experience suggest the importance of art and what it affords regarding "undergoing" a personal and meaningful learning engagement between the observer or creator of art and the art (Dewey, 1934). Through ABP, AfF, and SpD as a creative process, the participants had numerous moments to create and gain insight into their identities and learn from others.

In this study, Andy and the other CBM navigated their lived and personal experiences through ABP, AfF, and SpD by engaging with art as an experience. Each could create, clarify, engage, think, speak, and refine their imagination into experiences that could communicate their lived experience. This action gave voice through *Creation* and opened a pedagogical practice in which the participants could reflect, be seen, and be valued as the voice of learning.

Communication

The Communication feature of the conceptual theme, *having the license to make my experience matter*, is the interaction of observation, evaluation, and messaging between the art,

the artist, and the audience. ABP, Aff, and SpD were used in this study to elicit multiple reflections, reactions, and ideas about the experience of CBM who attend PWIs. This exchange of thoughts was examined to learn what might be thought up or communicated by the CBM about their future. This probing of ideas, concepts, and possible future pedagogical practices encouraged the participants to express their thoughts and consider the possibility of coming up with solutions, speculations, or imaginative design concepts to impact the experience of CBMs who attend PWIs. Language, emotion, memories, and experiences created through art can create internalized thoughts of self and others infused with aspects of education, increasing the options of impact inside the learning environment (Eisner, 2007). This theory creates an opportunity to produce a pedagogical tool that offers art as research as an analytical process to communicate, engage creative-critical thinking, art-making, humanness, attributes of relationship, and the inclusion of emotional and intellectual depth that often make learning not only possible but more accessible (Eisner, 2004). Having an experience with ABP, Aff, and SpD as a method of producing dialogue and diverse forms of communication through writing, visual art, or fiction, the participants shared various messages about how they felt, viewed the culture of PWIs, as well as articulated the strengths and weaknesses of having a predominant white-centric experience in learning and the (dis)connections it creates for CBM.

Like Ja’Nathen, the other participants also communicated verbally and visually the value of having the license to make their experiences matter. Each communicates meaningful descriptions of how they have imagined a better experience while attending a PWI. Each participant was welcomed, supported, and centered throughout the study through expression, creativity, and communication. This centering of the collegiate Black men elevated the

participant's well-being and led toward having a personal realization that pedagogical practices that centered their experiences create personalized learning.

Personalization

The Personalization feature of the conceptual theme, *having the license to make my experience matter*, is the final aspect of undergoing an experience with art. The participants of this study were all able to undergo their own personalized experiences due to having been invited into the space of thought leadership through imagination. They were acknowledged for their experience, knowledge, and cultural expression through the process of creation, and they were centered and supported in their learning experience, allowing them to communicate and give voice to their experience (Dewey, 1934). These actions all produced a personalized learning experience—a learning experience that utilizes observation, evaluation, and messaging between the art, the artist, and the audience (Eisner, 2004). ABP, AfF, and SpD can be used as the lines of communication between the student and faculty and between the student and the art. This exchange of power between the student and the faculty is the process of humility and respect that gives license to make my experience matter for both the faculty and the student—creating a level of empathy, respect, and well-being through the process of sharing personal aspects of one's thoughts, expressions, imagination, cultural experiences, and critical consciousness (Freire, 1970; Waters, 2021). The participants could incorporate their personal lives into the many creative artifacts through the Haiku, the Fictional future narrative, or the collage. Their stories were educational and informative to others simply by sharing the space of respect and being heard. Once their experience was captured in the creation process and materialized into a work of art that carries their unique message, it now exists as a personalized experience (Mont, 2012).

This process and result produced a fulfilling emotion of enjoyment that they had not previously experienced in the learning experience due to being centered culturally and by way of being affirmed and empowered through hearing and seeing themselves in the content and context of the learning interaction of the study (Gay, 2010; Howard et al., 2016). This concept of personalization is the factor the CBM of this study most desired in their engagement with pedagogical practices while attending PWIs. Dumas and Ross's theory, BlackCrit, allows for analyzing how educational contexts, such as higher education, "are informed by anti-blackness, and serve as forms of anti-Black violence, and how [practices and] policies facilitate and legitimize Black suffering in everyday life of schools" (Dumas & Ross, 2016, p. 419). Centering anti-blackness inside (dis)connections between pedagogical practices and CBM helps provide a basis for understanding what pedagogical tool would be needed. For CBM who experience anti-Black pedagogy, a tool of equity and anti-racist educational experiences, or a tool of cultural ways of knowing and empathy for diversity would assist in creating a practice that includes rather than excludes students from diverse communities.

By the end of the workshops and after all the interviews, each participant was able to express their gratitude for the experience. Each shared their thanks for personalizing their story, experience, and the plight of CBM attending PWI. The interesting challenge to their gratitude was to know that although they all came from different backgrounds and had different direct personal experiences, beyond the typical hope of wanting to receive their degree, be empowered, and prepared for success, they all shared a desire that through their learning experience in higher ed at a PWI, they all had a desire to be seen, respected, valued, centered, and acknowledged.

The results of this study indicated that ABP, AfF, and SpD do indeed support the opportunity for CBM to experience pedagogical practices while attending a PWI that affords

significant learning opportunities that empower, center, and support their well-being. The context of having the license to make my experience matter underlines the personalization in learning that is not happening broadly for CBM who attend PWIs. Each participant appeared to be significantly impacted regarding their understanding of what was happening during the workshop, their exposure to pedagogies like ABP, Aff, and SpD, and what was not happening in their daily engagements with their core faculty. In addition to the realization of what worked and what is desired regarding the context of how learning happens, there also was the realization of the (dis)connections that took place in the absence of pedagogical practices aimed at centering their experiences. The (dis)connections that were experiences revealed varied experiences that were interpersonal, institutional, emotional, cultural, and personal.

These challenges and tensions experienced afforded the opportunities to observe the gaps in the broad assessment of pedagogical practices, the access to knowledge, and the interactions between faculty and students that bring attention to the assessment of awareness, readiness, sensitivity, willingness, or preparedness on the part of white faculty or any faculty who aligns more with the dominant white culture of a PWI over the diverse cultures of CBM. This gap exposes the tensions of being excluded, invisible, dehumanized, passed over, devalued, and many other stressors that complicate and produce a vulnerable state of being for CBM while attending a PWI. These data suggest a litany of actions, opportunities, and solutions that can be considered when investigating the pedagogical practices used at a PWI to include students of color or members outside the dominant culture of a PWI and, specifically, increasing the use of culturally responsive, relevant, and sustainable pedagogy, integrative and collaborative pedagogy, arts-based pedagogy, Afro-futurism, and speculative design as pedagogies that center the student and their personal and cultural well-being. This adjustment of teaching and

pedagogical practice not only raises the opportunity to achieve a personalized learning experience for CBM, but it also functions as an opportunity for faculty at PWIs to evaluate and take accountability in their teaching practice and philosophy to account for the students they teach. This accountability on the part of the faculty and institutions helps ensure that they are not just delivering their time, culture, knowledge, expertise, and experience but also making room for all students to develop, learn, and have their own experience in learning that matters.

Limitations

Four primary limitations of this study are essential to consider in interpreting these findings/ results. This study's limitations highlighted the relationship between pedagogical practices and CBM through instruction, curriculum, and pedagogical practices that made room and meaning for students with cultural, personal, and experiential differences.

The first limitation was the study's small sample size, in contrast to conducting a study to describe a population of collegiate Black men. Five participants were conducive to conducting a small case study over seven weeks to explore collegiate Black men's experiences. The combination of CBM and art-making was used to learn about their experiences and imagine possible futures, mainly as it raises questions for further work. The limitation of only having five CBMs to work with limited the depth, scope, data, and broad view of what is experienced between a population of CBMs and the pedagogical practices at a PWI.

The second limitation was that each participant was selected via snowball sampling. Although I did not know the participants, I discussed the scope of the study through the snowball sampling method before their participation, which may have affected the evaluation and interpretation of their experiences with the study.

The third limitation was that only African and African American collegiate men were included in the study. The scope, depth, data, and sample size, with the inclusion of other diverse ethnic or gender-based community groups, would deepen the examination and interaction between collegiate men of color (African, African American, Asian, Latino, Indigenous American, etc.) and pedagogical practices at a PWI. Because the focus of the study was generated from my experience as a Black man who attended a PWI, the narrative initially and throughout the study was aimed at that singular group. Many aspects of the other communities and cultures for this study were beyond the scope of the study as designed.

The fourth limitation reflects that my presence unequivocally influenced the CBM in this study as a CBM educator, mentor of CBM, doctoral student at their institution, member of Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity Inc., and elder in the Black community. With this contextual limitation, the participants likely viewed my participation, leadership, and support as a significant part of the “pedagogy” missing from the experience while attending a PWI. If I had not directly shared their ethnicity, community, and culture, the participants might have generated more data to represent the larger population of collegiate Black men.

The limitations of this study regarding my connection and cultural alignment with the CBM of this study also function as assets as I, too, exist as a CBM, affording me the internal and external experience to understand and guide the participants. This contextual provision allowed me to engage as the researcher while experiencing the shared meaning and value of collaborative and cultural learning with the participants. Understood from the participant's narrative, I present the embodiment of pedagogical practices that offer care, consideration, respect, knowledge, awareness, guidance, intention, experience, imagination, and inclusion for the experience of CBM while attending a PWI to assist in inviting, creating, communicating, and personalizing

their learning transformation. The context of this relationship raises the criticality of what can be achieved with Black faculty and addressing (dis)connections between pedagogical practices and CBM regarding the need and desire for respect, inclusion, and intentionality of white and other faculty to learn, be aware of cultural meaning, relevance, and sustainability for CBM. These critical assessments raise the necessity and profundity of addressing, correcting, and asserting essential methods to acknowledge what is missing in the learning and pedagogical experience for collegiate Black men attending PWIs.

Research and Development Recommendations

The recommendation for future research incorporates replication and application of Arts-based pedagogy, Afrofuturism, and Speculative design. This contextual way of teaching, thinking, communicating, and learning is anchored on a foundation of inclusivity. This concept could develop a creativity-based pedagogy initiated by integrativeness, shared thought leadership, solution-based thinking, cultural inclusivity, and collaboration. This concern of replicability and applying creativity at the curriculum level impacts learning and program development regarding its usefulness and driving solutions for learning and engagement. This includes an unorthodox method of curriculum and instruction that centers on inclusion, learning, diverse ways of knowing, and solution-based outcomes.

A creativity-based pedagogy could be developed from a rooted concentration on the inclusive exchange of solution-based ideas that solve problems, stimulate dialogue, and support transformative thinking while igniting responsiveness, expression, and critical consciousness. This unorthodox and reflexive engagement targets a demographic of teachers, learners, students, and curriculum developers to broaden the learning experience by inviting the opportunity for

shared learning through experience, expression, and creative solutions. As a form of instruction and curriculum development, this compound level of strategic and creative thinking initiates the possibility of distinguishing between arts-based pedagogy and what could be a creativity-based pedagogy. As stated in this research, arts-based research centers on using, enhancing, and applying traditional or creative art practice (painting, drawing, collage, music, dance, etc.) to explore its impact on instruction and learning. In contrast, applying creativity-based pedagogy is about exploring experience, culture, knowledge, critical questions, and expression through a lens that values everything as a tangible, experiential, cultural, or cognitive resource to achieve a solvable result. This method provides a point of knowing or understanding by inviting all who can conceive an idea while learning or instructing. For instance, an instructor who uses a painting, theater, or a Hip Hop video to explore the presence of cultures while teaching a course in political science would be an example of an Arts-based pedagogy. This would be a direct act of using the arts to explain further, explore, or express the context of learning political science rather than the practice of art. This method is not centered on developing an artful ability or skill in the arts. However, it allows engagements with the use of the art form to expose a level of learning, understanding, or knowing that makes the topic of political science clear. In contrast, the same instructor uses three glass pitchers of liquid, one with water, one with coffee, and one with milk, and combines them in various ways as a metaphor to explore the same topic of political science to capture experience, well-being, culture, or imagination would be practicing creativity-based pedagogy. Creativity is explored using items not directly associated with art, and the metaphor is not about art. This position of pedagogy invites students to engage with the items from their experience, culture, normalcy, and context with the items and the liquids while activating their minds to push beyond their norm and use the items to conceive how they are

being used to understand a concept of political science. This thinking exemplifies the difference between *MacGyver* (circa 1985) and *Hamilton*, the 2015 Musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda. This unorthodox recommendation for the use of ABP, Aff, and SpD is to shift from a “know it all” mindset into a “learn it all” perspective, a positionality, and intersectionality offered by a creativity-based pedagogy driven by the opportunity to posit ideas, imagination, culture, and creative solutions to achieve critical and experiential results.

Along the lines of creativity, application, and replicability, it is important to understand the distinction between the application of creativity to solve problems, initiate dialogue, include thought leadership or culture, or invite imagination and the practicality of art in the context of making something under the traditional action and use of art forms to engage learning and understanding. This research and developmental recommendation provide a window to evaluate the current methodology in addition to class engagement, pedagogical philosophies, instructional methods, and class observations. Class observations and pedagogical philosophies could be structured to assess the direct impacts of pedagogical practices on CBM. This effort, combined with the data generated by the participants, would help support the assessment of (dis)connections or connections articulated by CBM who attend PWIs. The use of ABP, Aff, and SpD produces an avenue to assess the personal meaning of course content, the interaction with curriculum, levels of cultural sustainability, the empowerment of identities, personal transformation, and the well-being and personal enrichment of learning in CBM (Hunter & Frawley, 2002; Eisner, 2007; Mont, 2012). This suggests these pedagogies can be used as valuable practices that enhance the learning experience for CBM who attend PWIs. The value of art as experience, imagination, anti-Black curriculum, and art as inquiry used through arts-based pedagogy, Afro-Futurism, and speculative design appears conceptually and practically to

contribute to the personalization of learning for CBM who attend PWIs—understanding that the desire for a personalized learning experience amplifies a need to adjust or examine pedagogical practices at PWIs to support CBM (Dewey, 1934; Greene, 1995; Harrington et al., 2022).

Hope for a Transformative Education

These future recommendations address how little PWIs, white faculty, or those aligned with a white-dominant cultural mindset know or understand about what collegiate Black men experience or what pedagogical practices can, could, or are desired to help them achieve a transformative higher education. Knowing this helps to fulfill the institutions' and individuals' academic, professional, social, and cultural hopes for a more inclusive, transformative, and personal educational experience for CBM. In the direction of transformation, the context of representation for CBM should be clearly understood; there are multiple ways CBMs have transformative experiences. Having diverse examples of Black men and women supports complex experiences, socially diverse interactions, and instrumental relational engagements that position the collegiate Black man to initiate his own experience with those individuals. It also recognizes that those representations are not socially, culturally, intellectually, colloquially, or politically monolithic. Black men and women have a multitude of types and variations of personalities that are experienced by different people or students in various ways. It is vital to note that the context of having representation is not that any Black person of status in the faculty ranks, administration, or staffing is or should be seen as a silver bullet to solve a diverse, complicated need or desire by CBM but rather, having more representation at PWIs for CBMs creates the opportunity and the possibilities of experiences a transformative education. These recommendations stand on the sur-reality of predominantly white institutions that enroll Black men but socially and institutionally tokenize them. Unfortunately for CBM, PWIs rarely account

for pedagogical practices structured in ways that are centered on their well-being or empower them toward self-discovery rather than ignore, overlook, exclude, or dehumanize them (Smith et al., 2007; Dumas, 2016; Howard et al., 2016; Kelley, 2018). Without systemic efforts to support the needs, desires, and representations that support CBMs, PWIs fall short of impacting the lives of CBMs beyond, at times, a performative experience of learning. This experience produces a false sense of value for CBM and PWIs regarding the purpose of attending higher education institutions. Considering the challenges of pedagogical practices at PWIs that dehumanize CBMs, it can be understood why they feel suppressed, marginalized, and excluded. PWIs often propagate a cultural narrative indicating that because you have been enrolled, you are automatically prepared, affirmed, transformed, and empowered to be successful. Which, for CBM, is partly untrue. Evolving historical and contemporary pedagogical practices with diverse, innovative solutions like those found in ABP, Aff, and SpD that center self-discovery, well-being, and empowerment sustained over time, collegiate Black men can achieve a transformed higher education at PWIs (Harrington et al., 2022; Kirkland, 2023). It is the challenge of change and the balance of a personalized path of learning that supports competence, confidence, identity, and the application of information that leads to self-discovery and transformation.

Chapter X – Research Afterword

Haiku -

Fruit trees with roots grow

Strong fruit trees bear fruit and show

No roots, fruit trees die

Poem –

The Funk Piece – By Kipchoge and Hasaan Kirkland

(K) - Hmmmmph! This is called the funk piece,

Incense burning, mind wandering into subliminal content,

uncovering praxis into theoretical context.

Beat-Boxing to a mellow mic check,

my mic sounds nice, check one,

my mic sounds nice, check two.

I'm imbued with the lyrical genius of Rahkim and Mos' Def,

bringing in dope Caribbean sounds like brother Wyclef

but can't seem to get enough of your sweet stuff

You know that, hot chocolate, laffy taffy, or ooey gooey, honey deeped sweetness

that makes you go high frequency,

I'm looking to speak fluently in that deep rhythmic fluency,

that blends into the flavor of your ages

turn us into poetic phrases of sensual tones that resonate in your bones,

reverberating into a syncopated Boombastic rhythm

that hits'm with a one-two knock-out shot, funky doo doo brown.

Making you wanna go on and get down, breaking it down,

creating new visions and ideas,

Clearing the path for new souls to unload their flow,

teaching young'ns to speak in code,

Switching back and forth to marketplace spades to that ebonic place

Where that, tongue tying ain't nothing but a thang, ya dig!

This here gig is called the funk piece,

Where your senses get released into the galaxy.

With mental matrices giving up spiritual velocities,

propelling souls through time on a dime,

hurled into a distant thought, creating combustion
on fools who be asking unthoughtful questions.
Igniting them into the heat of the moment
because there is no space for ignorance.
This here piece is called the funk piece,
a combination of heart and soul
creating luminescent glows of emergent brilliance,
touching eternally and externally twisting your mind into a poetic complex.
Brain beats blasting to heartbeats pumping pulses that pierce bodies like 10,000 silver bullets.
Yeah, this here is called the funk piece.
Mystical magic standing splendidly, and chaotic commotion
emitting in control the strength and emotion
as powerful as a tempest raging in the ocean,
drenching you with a tsunami of verses.
Destroying historical curses of
subjugations, denigration, miscegenation, and domination,
digging into your feet, making you bounce like a Bust-a-Rhym
being snapped back into a Zulu beat.
Feeling the heat of my ancestor's hands, pressed into your bosom,
Silently infusing their journey across the burning sands
into the feast, I call the funk piece.
Struggling stack of black hip-hop flavor winding in cultural neighbors
that speak by dialectically, intricately weaving English into the native tongue.
Passion and oral tradition defended Mama's mission for us chir'n to keep keeping on.
This here, is called the funk piece
The beats for soldiers who fought for my freedom.
This here, is the funk piece

A new national anthem for us to sing,
 A new tradition to tell us to bring
 your wounded, your wretched,
 your poor, your hungry, your angry, your poets,
 your revolutionary, your tomorrow's leaders,
 who will take up the pace and take over this place
 with a blend of African drumbeats,
 they beatboxing to new spirits,
 can't you hear it? Can't you feel it?
 Get back Jack increase the peace
 As you get down to this thing called the funk piece.
 That cause us to cease all this mindless,
 senseless violence, forcing our children into silence.
 This here is called the funk piece.
 They want you to move to a groove of us getting down.

(H) - Yesssuh! This is called the funk piece,
 Water splashing into pigments on canvas blends concepts into compositions
 creating astral projections
 yeah... your mic sounds right, that's one.
 My mic sounds nice; makes two.
 Influenced by Earnie Barnes and Romare Bearden
 I am in tune with the visual storytelling about lives lived on the defense
 Creatively immortalizing "soul" into a cultural experience
 Blackness was "colored" by colorless tones
 Color, was made clear by Lois Mae Lou Jones
 I'm speaking fluently for those who learn through creativity.

Conflating facts, experience, imagination and Blackness
 Grounding theory and praxis with collage, fiction, expression, and history
 Poetically writing about the lives of Black men from PWIs into a PhD
 Abstraction is experienced through pictures and hues
 Pedagogy is just a theory until it is put to use
 When pedagogy uses art, it feels like the drop-beat
 Expression is one thing, but this is the Funk Piece.
 A state of being where your senses are invitations from the galaxy
 Touch, taste, sound, sight, and thinking,
 A matrix of imagination, logic, and ecstasy
 Like Uhura's and T'Challa's faces that mirror the universe
 Afrofuturism extends Blackness into a melanin multiverse
 A note to read the future, Octavia wrote it
 A melanated history; genetics expose it
 This here piece is called the funk piece,
 An empire mentality, Zulu or Mali.
 BlackCrit vs anti-Blackness, audacity and boldness
 Mansa Musa's legacy is cartography for culture.
 Culture gives meaning to colloquialisms split by swag and semantics.
 Creativity is a language that enhances teaching and somatics.
 Yeah, this here is called the funk piece.
 Exposing monotone teaching that lulls minds into sleeping
 Paralyzed by pedagogy without passion, all talk and no action,
 enrolled in classes to learn from folks who fear me
 biased content, exclusion, and apathy...Man, please!
 White supremacy is Psychopathy.
 Nothing but know-it-alls and mendacities.

Colonizers and crooks published in the academy
 Fragility and tears are curricular trickery.
 Often unspoken is fear in pedagogy
 Arrogance, while teaching, is a scripted travesty.
 Whiteness in teaching leads to resenting and code-switching
 A tragedy of venting is when no one is listening.
 At PWIs, sadly, Collegiate Black men gladly gravitate gradually graduate
 uninspired with degrees and unfulfilled dreams
 No wonder we dream of freedom, Black Faculty, and one-for-one philosophies.
 This here is called the funk piece
 A mindset, a tactic, a time-on-task action,
 A proactive reaction and a pedagogical practice
 Casting away the harm of dehumanization, racial priming, and black misandry,
 embracing futurity to ponder “what might be.”
 This is called the funk piece,
 A speculative design probe of imagination with conscious criticality,
 empathetically addressing inclusivity and student well-being,
 This is the funk piece, provoking the spirit visually, illustrated with poetry
 Can’t you hear it? Can’t you see it?
 Get back, Jack, and increase the peace.
 As you stand on business, this thing is called the funk piece.
 That causes us to empower teaching with creativity
 Higher education to dream beyond grades and degrees
 This is called the funk piece.
 They want you to move to a groove of us getting down.

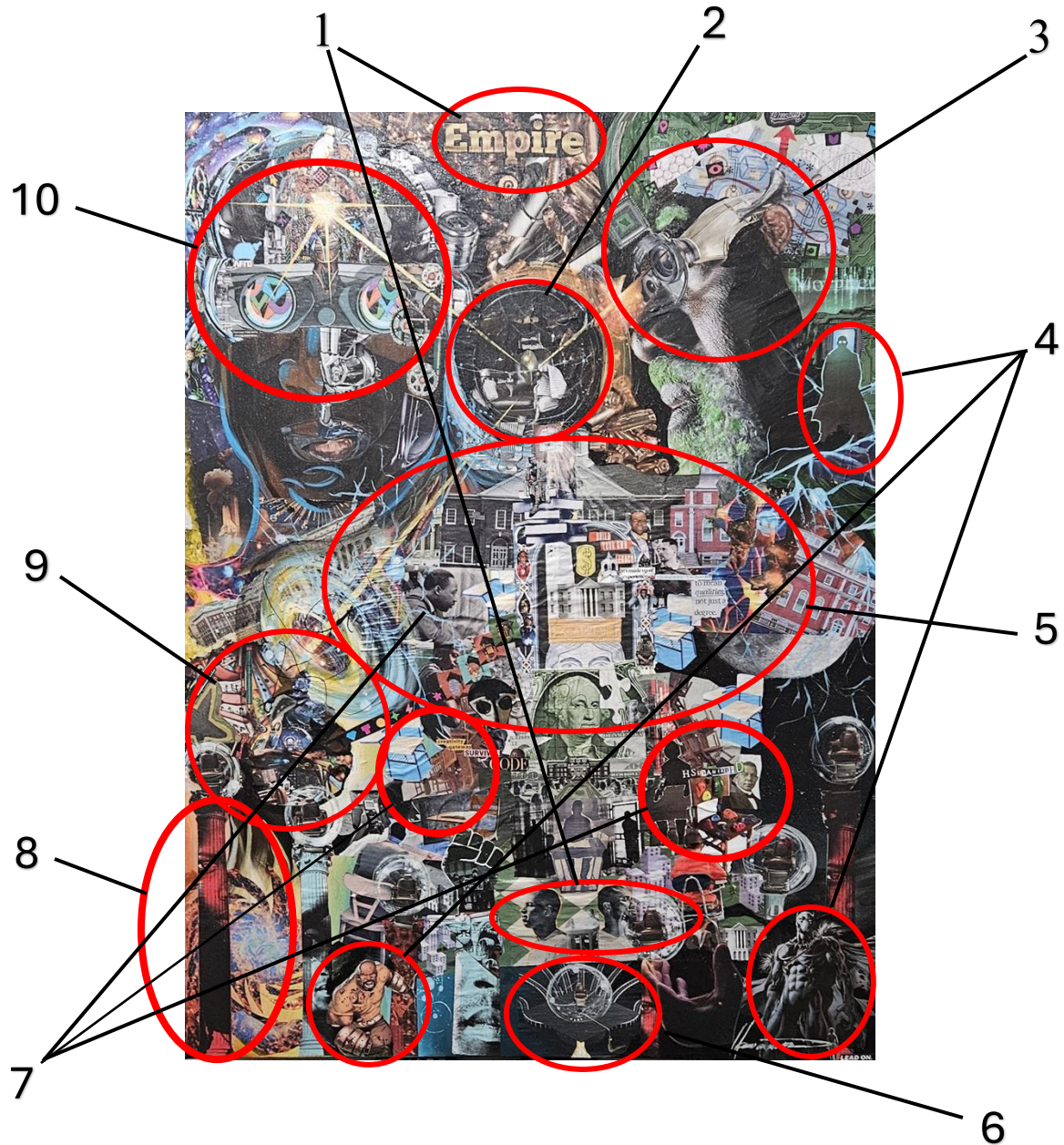
Collage/Painting – The Funk Piece



Artist Statement – The Funk Piece

The Funk Piece is a collage painting created with acrylic paint, glue, varnish glaze, and magazine clippings (36" x 48"). This mixed-media composition illustrates a photomontage collage arrangement of ideas, concepts, and visual narrative that delivers a complex story about collegiate Black men who attend a predominantly White institution. The work's title and collage painting echoes a spoken-word poem created by my brother, Dr. Kipchoge Kirkland. The poem provides the initial framework of the piece regarding the efforts of Black men, Black families, and the Black community that contribute to continued efforts to press forward utilizing our shared gifts, talents, strengths, and brilliance to contend with the oppressive reality of racism in America. The Funk Piece is an anthem to rally the mindset of those within the Black community who are ready and willing to stand up to these concerns. In the collage, I have extended the narrative of my brother's poem to highlight a nuance within the Black community regarding collegiate Black men and their journey in predominantly White institutions. Both the poem and the collage painting offer an experiential story of the narrative of empowerment, a direct assessment of what is needed and what is in opposition to the plight of the Black community and specifically to collegiate Black men. Within the composition are various statements and narratives that reflect three resources of critical thinking and teaching (Arts-Based Pedagogy, Afrofuturism, and Speculative Design) that can impact the journey of Black men as they endure years of White-centric education and the hegemony of White institutions.

Free Write - The Funk Piece (Deconstructing – The Funk Piece)



1. **The Bullets and the Word Empire** – This is my way of showing homage to my brother, Dr. Kipchoke Kirkland (PhD-UW Grad, '01). He is the original author of the spoken word poem, *The Funk Piece*. The bullets are noted in one of his verses, and the word empire is noted in one of mine. His verse is, *“This piece is called the funk piece, a combination of heart and soul creating luminescent glows of emergent brilliance,*

touching eternally and externally twisting your mind into a poetic complex. Brain beats blasting to heartbeats pumping pulses that pierce bodies like 10,000 silver bullets". This verse (to me) symbolizes the relevant power of having an emotional and experiential connection to one's soul that allows one to connect with others, creating a relational experience that impacts/pierces the body and life, like 10,000 silver bullets. This speaks to the need to empathize with oneself and others; if done, a transformation can happen in how you experience yourself and humanity. My verse is, *"This here piece is called the funk piece, an empire mentality, Zulu or Mali, BlackCrit vs anti-Blackness, audacity and boldness, Mansa Musa's legacy is cartography for culture"*. This verse symbolizes having a mental strength that impacts the experience of the Black community, providing way finders like a map to navigate the opportunities and pathways to elevate, secure, succeed, protect, provide, plan, prepare, and produce an economy of wealth, health, and well-being and beyond through intellect, wisdom, care, economics, politics, leadership, and shifting Black culture for the better. The homage to my brother is also noted by the two figures at the bottom that appear back to back, side-by-side, facing the various elements in the lower composition; this symbolizes that my brother and I have always been in this environment (school/academe) together, side by side, and even though my brother is no longer with me in the living, his spirit lives with me daily as I continue to live on in his legacy while building my own.

2. **Barbershop Chair** – The barbershop chair symbolizes a portal into a mindset of empowerment, grooming, relevance, culture, feeling good about oneself, and the opportunities to be shaped by other Black men's knowledge, wisdom, guidance, and

experience. The Barbershop experience, as noted by one of the participants in my study, was desired to learn through discussion or writing with other Black men. The participant stated, “I honestly like the experience of teaching and learning in the workshop. The ability to write about my experiences and talk about them around other Black men is great. It is like a barbershop, but you gain educated experience and knowledge for academics instead of getting a cut. I mean, the conversations, I would say, greatly impacted me.” In the painting, the Barbershop chair (a portal of sorts) is held inside a bubble-like orb, which provides collegiate Black men with a temporary safe place. It is temporary, as the bubble does not last forever, but while inside, it is an experience like none other for collegiate Black men.

3. **Speculative (SpD)** – The profile of an older man (upper right corner) is filled with images of design, shapes, microchips, computer diagrams, and lines. This figure, who appears to be older, symbolizes speculative design. Speculative design originated with fictional possibilities through technology and digital design outcomes. This figure also foregrounds Morpheus from *The Matrix* and the concept of a teacher or elder that brings forth the possibilities of designs by combining the age of the figure with new possibilities of technology. This figure also characterizes various codes noted by similar shapes that seem to be coming from the mouth of the younger figure. These codes link to younger men who speak in code the language of creativity and the imagination that fuels speculative design.

4. **Three Super-Heroes** – The three superheroes symbolize the importance of having superhero examples for younger men to identify with from a cultural, futuristic, or present mind to be empowered, capable, strong, intelligent, desired, helpful, and valued. The context of identifying with a superhero is rooted in feeling challenged as a human in society and having something or someone to draw courage or strength from in times of trouble. When there are images of power that can shift a circumstance, and that entity looks like you, you find emblematic sparks of resilience, context to mimic, ideals to achieve, and a will or rationale to persevere. These images foreground the limited Black male superheroes known in society compared to White male superheroes.

The three superheroes are:

Morpheus –a character/figure (upper right corner) – symbolizes the superhero-like power needed to endure invisible labor, doubt, mental anxiety, and the management of perception during all hours in the mind (symbolized by existing inside the mind of the prominent figure in the top-right corner)

Black Panther — a character/figure (lower right) – symbolizes the superhero-like power needed to endure the stereotypes, fear/dehumanization during the night hours (symbolized by the moon in the far-right mid-level side)

Luke Cage – a character/figure (lower left) – symbolizes the superhero-like power needed to endure the bullets/or oppression during the day hours (symbolized by the sun in the far-left corner)

5. **Predominantly White Institution (PWI)** – The George Washington image, the 100-dollar image (Money), the large building structure, the classroom filled with White

students, the word ACADAME, the peering White face, the classical white male sculpture sitting on top of the books, and the small white house-like structures all symbolize the PWI culture. The area around the peering White face notably has various Black men around the perimeter, symbolizing the limited Black men inside the academy, the need and desire for more Black men in the Academy, and the impression or impact that can be seen, felt, or understood when Black men are represented.

6. **The Mortarboard** – This image of a graduation mortarboard cap with the roads coming out of the top leading to nothing specifically symbolizes the (dis)connections from achieving a degree or graduating without the connection to self, a career, a purpose, or a sense of wellness. This (dis)connection is due to the experience of achieving the mortarboard, with limitations on knowing, learning, or receiving intentional resources to prepare where to go, what to do, what purpose to have, or what example to know or follow that has been prepared during the process of learning and gaining a higher education that leads to some known outcome or impact. When this happens, achieving the mortarboard cap can often be a terrifying experience due to only having white-centric theoretical knowledge as a foundation of thinking while being a Black-centric minded individual.
7. **The Empty School Seats** – The images of empty school seats (old wooden seats to the new seats seen in the digital image of seats) symbolize literally and metaphorically empty chairs. The seats are metaphorically empty for collegiate Black men as they often feel “invisible” due to feeling dehumanized, having a lack of connections with the content or

context of learning while in the seat, or having limited points of affirmation or representation during the experience of learning within the content of the curriculum or culture while attending a PWI. This invisible experience is rooted in the context that collegiate Black men feel as if they are not seen (Ralph Ellison – *Invisible Man*), and when they are “seen,” they are still not known. The seats are also empty, symbolizing that collegiate Black men are not in attendance at PWIs in high numbers, causing the seats to be vacant, statistically in small numbers when they are in attendance compared to their counterparts. Black men are often isolated and filled with tension, anxiety, and feelings of otherness. They are left to experience often being the only “Black student” or one of few in a classroom filled with white or other cultures. Along with the seats are two iconic images of educated Black men, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Booker T. Washington. Dr. King appears to be looking contemplatively at an empty seat, symbolizing the lack of knowledge or absence of historical or racial challenges that draw a connection to current learning from the past to inform the future. Washington faces forward, not looking at a seat but instead staring back at the viewer while next to a seat with many colorful rock-climbing handles with a list of letters above it, symbolizing the struggle to achieve academic diplomas and degrees at PWIs. The rock-climbing handles in the seat symbolize the challenge to ascend in society with degrees of knowledge to climb the American mountain of the white social strata. This challenge is having to accept, endure, and experience what feels like a constant climbing experience through discrimination, dehumanization, denigration, and subjugation at times overtly or covertly, while concentrating on elevating oneself to reach a social ability, position or aptitude to achieve some measure of value and resource to create change in America.

8. **The Pillars** – These pillars with faces of young Black men are symbolic, noting that the pillars or pedestal that holds up the bubble with the barbershop chair are the pillars of collegiate black men regarding their desire or needs while attending a PWI. This need or desire is to have a safe place to have the comforts, resources, culture, or experiences to empower our minds, care for our bodies, and elevate our spirits while attending a PWI. The Barbershop chair and the bubble or orb reflect the temporary and limited cultural experiences placed on a pedestal based on their absence or limitations while attending a PWI. The pillars are emblematic of the support collegiate Black men imagine, desire, and often need through their journey at a PWI.

9. **Arts-Based Pedagogy (ABP)** – The profile of a younger man/figure (lower left mid-level) is filled with images of art forms representing creativity and the experience of Arts-Based pedagogy, as noted by the music notes, color, pencil, paintbrush, trumpet, and other visual contents creatively portrayed the fuel the imagination and creative critical thinking. This figure, colored in warm colors, yellow, orange, and red, has colorful shapes in a row that appear to exit the mouth of this figure; this symbolizes that young collegiate Black men at PWIs speak in code (W.E.B Dubois—Code Switching). These codes are also noted by colorful shapes located in the mind of both figures in the top left and right of the painting, reflecting a knowing or connection to those codes spoken by the figure below. This figure also has bolts of electricity and what looks like a light source emitting from his forehead; this symbolizes imagination that points toward the large orb or bubble-like shape with a barbershop chair inside. The electricity also seems to break apart

the building, symbolizing the predominantly White institution/White hegemony. The electricity of imagination allows the young man to imagine what might be beyond the institutional culture, or that action of imagination and creative thinking permits one to see through the cracks of white-centric curriculum and narrow pedagogical practices.

10. Afro-Futurism (AfF) – The frontal view of a middle-aged man/figure (top left corner) is filled with African design patterns; in the center of his forehead, two large colorful eyes/goggles, an Afro with a pick and the word AFRO, and what appears to be some form of a blended anatomical feature—half cyborg or technology, and the other half human. This image symbolizes Afrofuturism. This figure also holds codes inside the head area, symbolizing a connection to the words spoken by the younger man that is interpreted through creativity, culture, social context, and imagining what possible futures are seen and captured from an ideal, utopic, or simply a sense of futurity and culture that possess the experience of a future with and for those who descend from the African Diaspora.

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APPENDIX A

METHOD - WEEKLY CREATIVE WORKSHOP

- **Week One** (a selected date for 180 mins (3hrs) At the start of the study I will introduce myself, my study, and provide a brief explanation of all aspects of diverse art modalities that will take place during the study (Haiku poems, Fictional writing, Non-objective Abstract painting, Collage making, Music selection, and Exhibition). I will follow this introduction with open introductions, and an Ice-breaker. The purpose of the Ice Breaker will be to get to introduce the participants, open the space for dialogue, and to create a space for reflections and creative critical thinking grounded in the experiences of CBM who attend a PWI and future possibilities for the benefit of the participants and other CBM explored through ABP, AfF, and SpD. Participants will then engage in an open-ended **free-write** [written reflection] to create a base line narrative about their experiences as a collegiate Black man attending a PWI.

Following the free-write, the participants will engage with an open dialogue and reading of their free-write to initiate the context of hearing about the experiences of CBM and to consider “what might be”, if you [the participant] could provide creative solutions, ideas, imaginations, or fictional design narratives that create different experiences for each participant. Following the dialogue, I would provide a brief discussion about “what or how the future might be”. This will initiate dialogue centered on designs, methods, or policies that could be used to create new or different teaching and learning experiences for them, other CBM who attend a PWI, and possible methods of instruction for faculty who engage with CBM at PWIs to consider.

Following this open dialogue, participants would then create the first and second creative artifact, **the Haiku**, and the **fictional future narrative [letter to self, or Son]**. The Haiku, a Japanese form of poetry, is primarily used to include a restrictive method of creativity. The Haiku's method of three phrases [stanzas] composed of a pattern use of five, seven, and then five syllables. The Haiku in this study is used to symbolize the limitations of the learning challenges noted in literature about the experience of CBM who attend PWIs. Simultaneously, the Haiku in this study provides a form of expression that is rooted in the participants individualized experience at a PWI. After writing the Haiku - [typed], the participants will use the Haiku and compose a fictional future [letter to self, or Son] narrative. The fictional future narrative will be a letter from the future, written to self, or Son discussing "what became" in the future from the ideas of "what might be" from the past. This letter will express the ideas and imaginative teaching and learning methods that best served their learning needs, discussing what, how, when, and why these future ideas worked for them. This letter fictionalizes an imaginative way to provide guidance, meaning, and empowerment that would be given to them by them centered on the experiences of being a Black man at a PWI in the future. The fictional future narrative generates ideas, imagination, and language around the experience of learning for CBM who attend a PWI. These creative artifacts are situated to support the participants in utilizing an arts-based pedagogical method, a speculative design, and lens of Afrofuturism to respond to the experiences and thoughts generated by these CBM regarding their attending a PWI.

- *Following the first creative session, each participant would complete an open-ended journal entry [written response] on their experiences of the first creative session prompted by 3-questions.*

- **Week Two** (a selected date during the week for 180 mins (3hrs) At the start of the second week (session) I will provide a brief explanation of the **next art modalities** (**Music selection** and **Non-objective Abstract painting**). I will follow this explanation with an open-ended dialogue about the selected art modalities for the current week to create a space for reflections and creative critical thinking grounded in the experiences of CBM who attend a PWI and future possibilities for the benefit of the participants and other CBM explored through ABP, Aff, and SpD. Participants will again engage in an open-ended **dialogue** about the experiences of CBM who attend PWIs and “what might be”, if you [the participant] could provide creative solutions, ideas, imaginations, or fictional design narratives to create different experiences for each participant. Following the discussion, I will utilize the selected music to foster a reflective, speculative design, and imaginative experience to respond, react, feel, and imagine a future state for these CBM.

The creative activity for week two, participants will engage in **music selection, listening, and reflection**. This activity is used to illustrate how music (selected from an online music database - Spotify) can be used to create community, identity, and empowerment. Each participant will add one song to a playlist that would be played aloud in the space for all to hear. This song selection can be from any genre, era, or style. This allows the participants the freedom to choose and to show how they identify through music and how music contributes to a sense of community and a creative learning environment. The lyrics, instruments or sound structure of the music are all relevant in the individualized design and desire to experience empowerment by selecting a song of their choice. Once the songs are selected, each participant will **write a brief explanation** of why they selected their song, including any relevant narrative associated with

their selection and its influence, impact, or relevance to their experience attending a PWI as a collegiate Black man.

Following the music selection, the participants will engage in **the creation of one non-objective abstract painting** (still listening to the songs looped on the playlist) that will accompany their Haiku and future fictional narrative. The use of non-objective abstract painting is centered on the inclusion of abstract expressionism, personal symbolism, emotion, and the use of colors, lines, shapes, value, and texture only. This action is symbolic of the challenges noted in literature regarding the context of exclusion and limited environments that center cultural narratives, cultural thinking, imagination, and the opportunity of empowerment. The removal of objective imagery and text is to invite the opportunity to provide symbolism generated by the participants. The non-objective abstract painting symbolizes limited learning and creativity to liberate ideas, imagination, and visual language around the experience of learning of CBM at PWIs. This creative artifact is situated to support the participants in utilizing an arts-based pedagogical method, a speculative design, and lens of Afrofuturism to respond to the experiences and thoughts generated by these CBM regarding their attending a PWI.

- *Following the second creative session, each participant would complete an open-ended journal entry [written response] on their experiences of the second creative session prompted by 3-questions.*
- **In week three (a selected date during the week for 180 mins (3hrs),** At the start of the third week (session) I will provide a brief explanation of the **next art modalities (Visual art and Film observation and Collage making)**. I will follow this explanation with an open-ended dialogue about the selected art modalities for the current week to create a space for reflections and creative critical thinking grounded in the experiences of CBM

who attend a PWI and future possibilities for the benefit of the participants and other CBM explored through ABP, Aff, and SpD. Participants will again engage in an open-ended **dialogue** about the experiences of CBM who attend PWIs and “what might be”, if you [the participant] could provide creative solutions, ideas, imaginations, or fictional design narratives to create different experiences for each participant.

The creative activity for week three, **participants will engage in the** observation of visual art and film, and collage making to capture ideas and critical thoughts centered on the narrative of their fiction future narrative through an Afrofuturistic lens. The visual content of videos and artistry are used to spark a contextual relationship to forms of creativity, and imaginative experience as a process to respond, react, feel, and speculate a design associated to an Afrofuturistic state of being for these CBM.

The collage will incorporate color, lines, imagery, text, texture, and any other form of two-dimensional content to achieve the desired correlation to the fictional narrative. This allows the participants the freedom to visually identify the context of their future narrative through collage making. This process is relevant to the individualized design and desire to experience empowerment by selecting images, words, colors, texture, and visual content of their choice. Once the collage has been completed, each participant will write a brief explanation of what their collage means in reference to their fictional future narrative associated with their experience attending a PWI as a collegiate Black man. The collage symbolizes learning and creativity to liberate ideas, imagination, and language around the experience of learning at a PWI. This creative artifact is situated to support the participants in utilizing an arts-based pedagogical method, a speculative design, and lens of Afrofuturism to respond to the experiences and thoughts generated by these CBM regarding their attending a PWI.

- *Following the third creative session, each participant would complete an open-ended journal entry [written response] on their experiences of the third creative session prompted by 3-questions.*
- **Week Four (a selected date during the week for 180 mins (3hours),** The participants will create an exhibit of their creative artifacts as a method of analyzing, examining, designing, and displaying their own process and responses regarding their learning experiences at a PWI. This creative artifact will be used to explore personal discoveries expressed through dialogue and creative production. At the start of the fourth week (session) I will provide a brief explanation of the **next art modalities** (Exhibition). I will follow this explanation with an open-ended dialogue about the exhibiting ideas, designing installations, and the act of creating an immersive experience with art, text, narratives, and digital media to create a space for reflections and creative critical thinking. Like the prior creative sessions, week four will be grounded in the experiences of CBM who attend a PWI and future possibilities for the benefit of the participants and other CBM explored through ABP, Aff, and SpD. Participants will again engage in an open-ended **dialogue** about the experiences of CBM who attend PWIs and “what might be”, if you [the participant] could provide creative solutions, ideas, imaginations, or fictional design narratives to create different experiences for each participant.

The exhibit and the exhibit statement symbolize the immersive spaces that surround the participant and CBM who attend PWIs. The exhibit becomes a creative action associated to the experience of learning and creativity. The exhibit documents and displays all the creative artifacts to liberate ideas, imagination, and visual language around the experience of learning the participants desire and designed. This structure reflects the limitations and possibilities noted in

the challenge of (dis)connection between pedagogical practices and CBM that are situated in this study. This creative artifact is situated to support the participants in utilizing an arts-based pedagogical method, a speculative design, and lens of Afrofuturism to respond to the experiences and thoughts generated by these CBM regarding their attending a PWI.

The exhibit will be located inside a hallway on Campus in Miller Hall. Because the participants will create the exhibit, they can list their names during the exhibit, as their works of art and creative expression will be displayed. The exhibit data would be generated by exhibit guests, faculty, staff, and students. The data collection will be using open-ended prompts captured on note cards to generate reflective ideas, comments, or brief responses that will allow me to capture the responses of guests quickly in real time after guests observe the exhibit. An example of the open-ended prompt for guest to respond to would be.

1. How have these images and written reflections inspired you to think about your learning environment?
2. What are the ways you imagine learning that explores your future, culture, or identity?
3. Discuss the ways meaningful ideas, imagination, or creativity impact how you are included in the process of achieving your higher education.
 - *Following the fourth creative session, each participant would complete their final open-ended journal entry [written response] on their experiences of the last creative session prompted by a summary of all the creative modalities and a reflection of their experiences of throughout the study.*

APPENDIX B

METHOD - WEEKLY JOURNAL ENTRIES

- **First Interaction (Baseline - Individual in Class Free Write) – Week one**
 - As a collegiate Black man, describe what going to a PWI is like.
 - Tell me about academic learning experiences in your college career that holds the most and the least value.
 - Talk about why these experiences of learning are benefits and share what activities, class environments, and communication methods are used.
 - Tell me what it means to you to be a collegiate Black man at a PWI.
- **Journal Entry 1 – Week One**
 - As a Collegiate Black man, describe what a positive learning experience at a PWI would be like.
 - Reflect and comment on your learning experiences in the creative workshop this week.
 - Talk about why learning interaction with or without creativity and reflective thinking are valuable.
 - **Rationale** – The first interactions (baseline) free writing aims to explore the participant's responsive thinking on being a Black man at a PWI, and any tensions experienced during their college career. This will lead to the first journal entry that supports the participants' experience with an open dialogue to provide an opportunity for reflexive thinking and internal dialogue that is aimed at defining and navigating their experience with the

art modalities of each week during the study. This introductory dialogue and discussion will position participants with exposure and explanation to clarify and enhance their learning experience throughout the study.

- **Journal Entry 2 – Week Two**

- Describe your pedagogical experiences with visual art in your college career.
- Discuss what thoughts surfaced when you engaged with visual art during that creative session for this week.
- Tell me why your thoughts regarding your engagement with visual art and learning this week were important or valuable?
 - **Rationale** – The second journal entries aim to explore the participant's responsive thinking about their involvement with the study, what they find valuable and important, and what they believe is useful in the exploration, utilization, and production of creativity to enhance their learning experience at PWI. These questions create a follow-up narrative to observe how their thinking is generated around the use of art methods to foster learning.

- **Journal Entry 3 – Week Three**

- Describe your experiences or thoughts about empowerment during your college career.
- Describe what surfaced about learning during the creation of your collage and abstract painting during the creative session.
- Through collaging, and abstract painting discuss why what surface was important about learning?

- **Rationale** – The third journal entry aims to explore the participant's responsive thinking about their pedagogical experiences at a PWI through collage making and abstract thinking [imagination]. These questions create a narrative to observe how their thinking is generated around the use of creativity and imagination and how these methods help foster images, narrative, and a resource that could help formulate new ideas for learning.
- **Journal Entry 4 – Week Four**
 - Describe your pedagogical experiences or thoughts about empowerment during your college career.
 - Describe what surfaced about learning during the creation of your collage painting during the creative workshop.
 - Through collaging, and painting discuss any thoughts about your teaching and learning experiences that caused you to emote or reflect and why?
 - **Rationale** – The fourth journal entry aims to explore the participant's responsive thinking about their pedagogical experiences at a PWI through collage making and abstract thinking [imagination]. These questions create a narrative to observe how their thinking is generated around the use of creativity and imagination and how these methods help foster images, narrative, and a resource that could help formulate new ideas for learning.
- **Journal Entry 5 – Week Five Haiku poems, Fictional writing, Collage Painting, and Exhibition.**
 - Describe what surfaced about using photovoice as a method to transform learning pedagogical experiences.

- Please reflect and comment on your experiences in the work this week.
- Tell me about what it felt like to capture your experiences, thoughts, life and to create images and ideas as a process to engage your learning?

- **Rationale** – The fifth journal entry aims to explore the participant's responsive thinking about the teaching and learning methods they experience now and what could be experienced now or in the future. These questions aim to understand how the participant has experienced the use of all art modalities and the impact it has had on their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and what they have created as a creative artifact and what the artifact means. These questions create a narrative to observe how their thinking is generated around the use of creativity and imagination and how these methods help foster images, narrative, and a resource that could help formulate new ideas for learning and teaching practices.

- **Workshop Supplies** – canvas boards, poster board, glue, paint, paint brushes, scissors, magazines, framing wire and eyes, colored pencils and pens, sharpies, miscellaneous material (mixed media), varnish.

APPENDIX C

Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

for

Astral Projections: Examining Arts-Based Pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and Speculative Design (SpD) as methods to process *(Dis)connections* between pedagogical practices utilized at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Collegiate Black Men (CBM).

Investigator: [Hasaan Kirkland, hkirk007@uw.edu, 916-612-3081]

Faculty Advisor: [Dr. Charles Peck, capck@uw.edu]

Investigator's Statement

I am asking you to be in a research study I am completing as part of my dissertation at the University of Washington. The purpose of this consent form is to give you all the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is unclear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide whether you want to be in the study. This process is called “informed consent.” I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine arts-based pedagogy (ABP), Afrofuturism (AfF), and speculative design (SpD) as tools to support solutions, critical thinking, inclusivity, and teaching methods to process learning tension, distractions, exclusion, or racial(ised) aggressions between teaching methods utilized at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) and collegiate Black men.

Arts-based pedagogy (ABP) is instruction with the use of diverse forms of art (visual art media, linguistics, film, poetry, music, dance, and the exploration of fiction and concepts conceived through speculative design) where in a curricular structure is combined with cultural ways of thinking, problem-solving, a democratic method of education.

Afrofuturism (AfF), This teaching strategy entails envisioning possible African and African American futures explored through technoculture [examining computers, technology, media, film, TV, digital art, and video animation and its effect on the body, culture, and society] and speculative fiction examines concerns of living, imagination, the future state of being, fantasy, and society.

Speculative design (SpD) is a process of thinking, critical investigation, and practice concerned with future design ideas, proposals, and the capacity of lived or imagined experiences; a

recommended teaching strategy based on providing a process incorporating ABP and AfF to design, imagine, and conceive a physically non-existent experience that can provide guidance, affirmation, cultural empowerment, and inclusive thought leadership.

PROCEDURES

If you choose to be in this study, your consent is the following [I would like to participate in a focus group discussion, semi-structured interview(s), and formal or informal observations, creation of diverse art modalities (Haiku poems, Fictional (make-believe) writing, Collage making (the pasting, gluing, or taping of pictures, words, text, clippings from books, magazines, photos, cloth, paper, or other flat two-dimensional material to a two-dimensional surface), and Exhibition (the organization of images, written content, or narrative for visual display)].

Focus group discussions are casual, open, flexible discussions related to the topic of this research with a non-structured format. This discussion would have all participants at one time on a schedule occurrence. This experience would take place in a public location, classroom, discussion room or auditorium, or public location i.e. restaurant, casual meeting space, sports facility, library, UW HUB etc.

Semi-structured Interview(s) discussions are casual, open, flexible discussions related to the topic of this research with semi-structured selected questions (structured) and non-structured questions set to investigate the research topics. These interviews would take place during the scheduled, 3-hour creative workshops. This experience would take place in a public location, classroom, discussion room or auditorium, or public location i.e. restaurant, casual meeting space, sports facility, library, UW HUB etc.

Observations are casual, open, flexible observations related to this research topic and the creation of creative artifacts. The creative workshops are set to observe the participants' interactions while engaging in educational experiences, creative art production, and the discovery of learning ideas, teaching methods, or experiences that are engaging and speculative within the topic of this research. Workshops would not exceed 3 hours unless first approved by the participant. Creative Workshops would be scheduled. This experience would take place in a public location, classroom, discussion room or auditorium, or public location i.e. restaurant, casual meeting space, sports facility, library, UW HUB etc.

Semi-structured question Example: Tell me about your learning environments at a predominantly white institution. What topics and methods of teaching affirm your identity? Do you have concerns about identity and its impact on your life? Do you feel challenged, affirmed, or included by certain instructional methods? Do your learning experiences prepare you for social and civic engagement after college?

Non-structured question Example: describe your experience with the creative workshop. What did you learn about yourself during the creative workshop? Where are you from? What ideas did you have about your educational experience? Did your parents go to college? etc.

With your permission, [I (Primary Investigator) would like to audio tape, video record, or write notes (Field Notes) on or about your interview, journal entries, and art creation so that I can accurately record our conversation, interviews, and interactions during the creative workshop. I will transcribe these notes and or recordings without identifiable information and destroy the notes and or recordings after the study is over. Only I will have access to the notes and or recordings, which will be kept securely. If you would like a copy of the interview transcript, I will gladly provide one.]

RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below. Some people feel self-conscious when notes are taken or interviews are recorded.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may not directly benefit from participating in this research study aside from receiving one (1) Independent Study (IS) credit toward your academic transcript and a UW gift card for \$250. The purpose, function, and benefit of this study is, [proposed to provide perspective analysis to the field of education regarding the effectiveness of ABP, AfF, and SpD as tools for examining (dis)connections between pedagogical practices at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) and Collegiate Black Men (CBM) and imagining possibilities for pedagogical innovations. This primary investigator (PI) seeks to provide data from creative artifacts, lived narratives, personal histories, casual conversations, speculative designs, free-write reflections, spoken ideas, journal entries, and documented moments of imagination about educational experiences aimed at elevating Black male students' academic, social, cultural, and civic experiences at a PWI. The benefit of this study is designed to affirm, empower, include, humanize, and prepare Black male students with positive academic and socio-cultural educational experiences for those who attend PWIs, discover educational ideas regarding teaching and learning methods from the mind and imagination of collegiate Black men for collegiate Black men who attend PWIs, as well as support predominantly White institution's dominant cultural faculty in their efforts to create methods of learning, and pedagogy for socially just inclusion of Black male student educational experiences with intentions on supporting long term cultural, social, and academic sustainability in both the classroom and institutional environments.]

OTHER INFORMATION

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate and withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Information about you is confidential. I will assign you a pseudonym and code within the study information and research. I will keep the link between your name and the pseudonym code in a secure location until the study is complete. Then, I will destroy the information linking your information to the pseudonym. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name or any other identifying information.

I may want to contact you for future related studies. Please indicate below whether you permit me to re-contact you. Permitting me to re-contact you does not obligate you in any way.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact [Hasaan Kirkland, hkirk007@uw.edu, 916-612-3081] at the telephone number or email at the top of this form. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact either of my doctoral advisors, overseeing this project: [Dr. Charles Peck, capck@uw.edu].

 _____ Signature of investigator	_____Hasaan Kirkland, Printed Name	1/17/2024_____ Date
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Participant's statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research, I can ask the investigator listed above. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can contact one of the course instructors. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

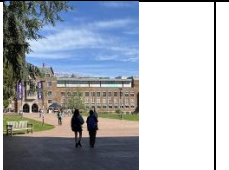
- _____ I give permission for this researcher to audiotape my interview.
 _____ I do NOT give my permission for the researcher to audiotape my interview.
- _____ I give permission for the researcher to re-contact me to clarify information.
 _____ I do NOT give permission for the researcher to re-contact me to clarify information.

_____ Signature of participant	_____ Printed Name	_____ Date
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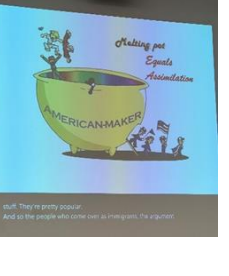
APPENDIX D

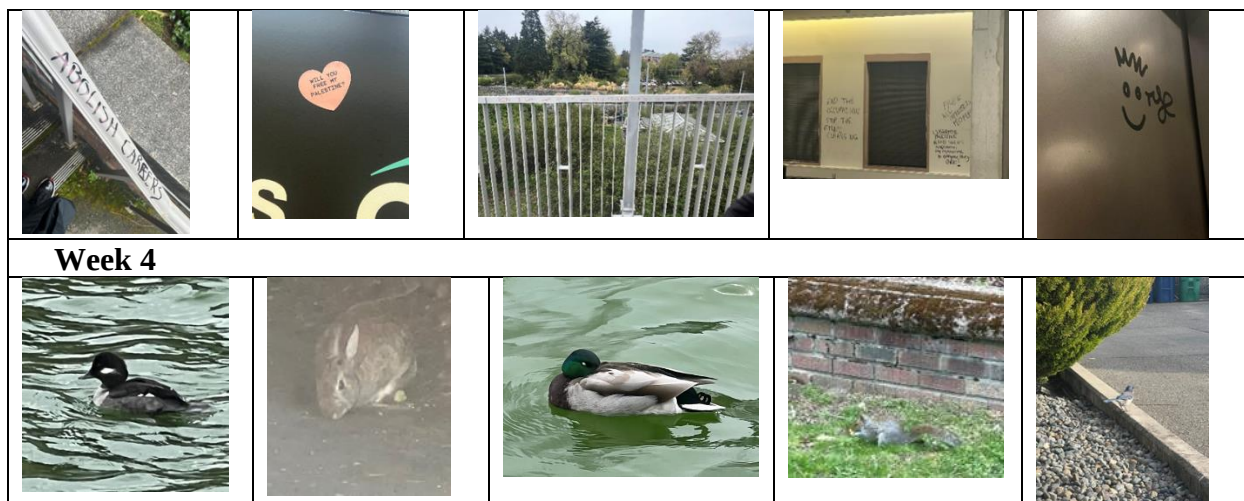
Participant Photo-Voice Images

Andy

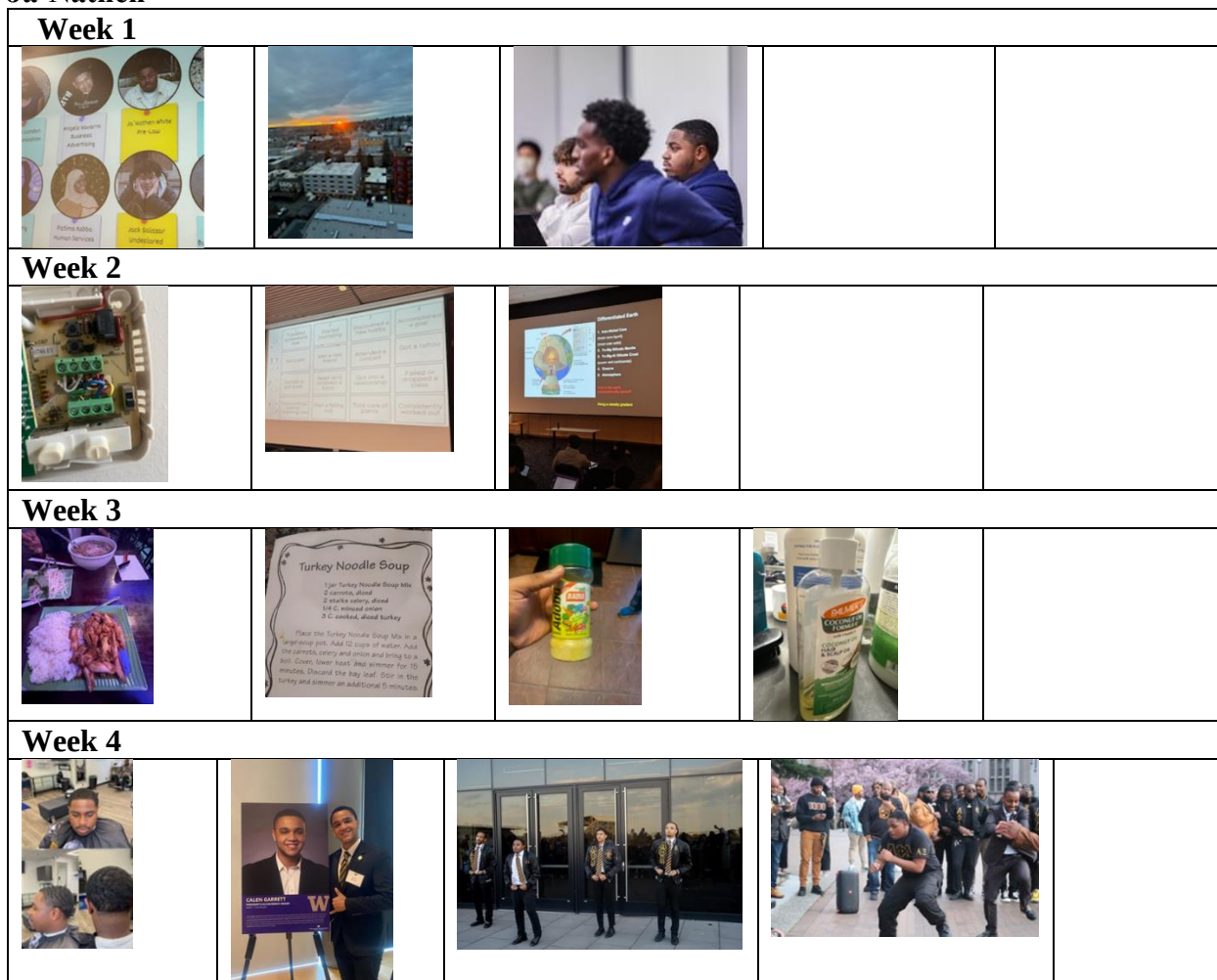
Week 1				
				
Week 2				
				
Week 3				
				

Devin

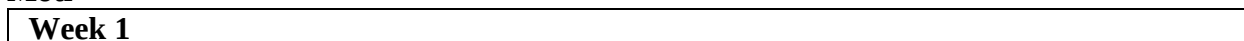
Week 1				
				
Week 2				
				
Week 3				



Ja'Nathen



Moti

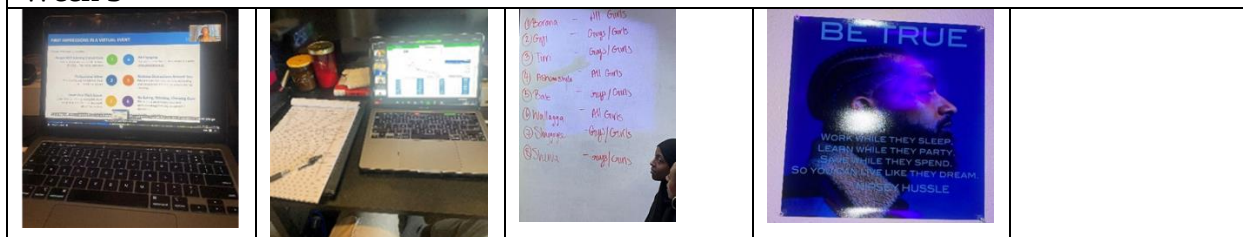




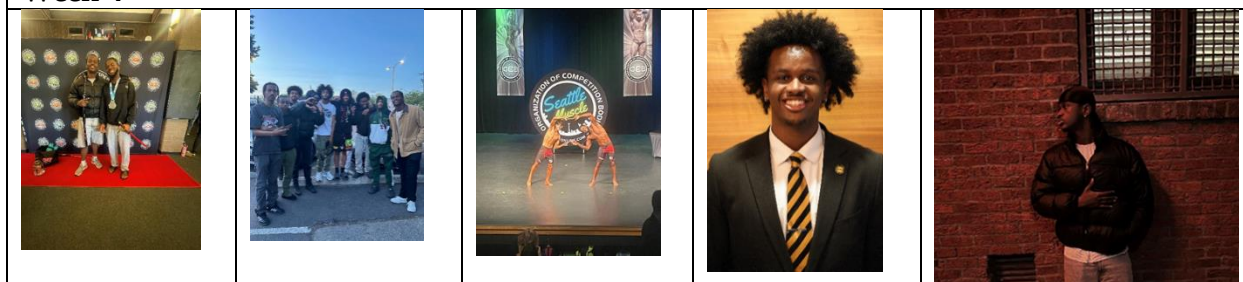
Week 2



Week 3



Week 4

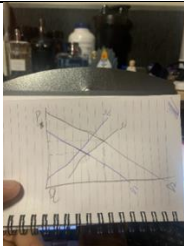


Trevon

Week 1



Week 2

				
Week 3				
				
Week 4				
				

APPENDIX E

TERMINOLOGY

Afrofuturism (AfF), a term coined by Mark Dery, an African diasporic-centered genre of speculative fiction [fantasy or alternate history] that incorporates aesthetic, philosophy, and cultural wealth history

Arts-based pedagogy (ABP) is instruction with the use of diverse forms of art (visual art media, linguistics, film, poetry, music, dance, and the exploration of fiction and concepts conceived through speculative design) where in a curricular structure is combined with cultural ways of thinking, problem-solving, a democratic method of education, the confluence of imagination and creativity and the development of critical consciousness

Astral Projections (also known as astral travel, soul journey, soul wandering, spiritual journey, or spiritual travel) is a term used in esotericism to describe an intentional out-of-body experience that assumes the existence of a subtle body, known as the astral body or body of light, through which consciousness can function separately from the physical body and travel throughout the astral plane.

Black critical theory (BlackCrit) is referred to in the field of education as the framework for areas of community practice to demonstrate its practical value for interpreting the mechanics of black social life beyond the discipline of education.

Critical race theory (CRT) Critical race theory is an academic concept that race is a social construct, and that racism is not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice, but also something embedded in legal systems and policies. The basic tenets of critical race theory, or CRT, emerged out of a framework for legal analysis in the late 1970s and early 1980s created by legal scholars Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Richard Delgado, among others asserting a theoretical claim that racism is inherent in the law and legal institutions of the United States insofar as they function to create and maintain social, economic, and political inequities between whites and non-whites especially African-Americans.

Liberatory Pedagogy is rooted in self-determination, derived from an understanding that all human beings have the right to participate in shaping a world that is constantly shaping them. Collective participation in governance amongst a community or people with shared interests is a mainstay of this concept, and it should be an integral part of all education.

Misandry is the hatred of, contempt for, or prejudice against men or boys.

Pedagogical Practices are generally defined as the theory and practice of teaching, methodology, and the process of how instructors approach teaching and curriculum.

Priming is a psychological concept that describes how exposure to one stimulus influences a response to another stimulus.

Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data.

Speculative design (SpD) is a process of thinking, critical investigation, and practice concerned with future design ideas, proposals, and the capacity of lived or imagined experiences. The term "speculative design" was popularized by Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby as a subsidiary of critical design. Speculative design emphasizes design as a method for solving problems that plague society, hoping to create creative solutions that benefit society through imagining speculative fiction.

White-centric (White centering) is the centering of white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else." White centering can manifest as anything ranging from tone policing and white fragility to white exceptionalism and outright violence.