right to speak. Fortunately, some of this work is already underway among rhetoric scholars. Jacqueline Jones Royster's paper on Maseray or Sarah (1998) has revealed some interesting implications for rhetorical scholarship. And Raka Shome's use of postcolonial theory and criticism in "Postcolonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon: An 'Other' View" (1999) addresses the kind of creolized rhetoric I've briefly touched on here. With such work as a starting point, hopefully, we can further limn out hybrid rhetorical traditions and practices in our studies of rhetorical history and theory. Perhaps then we can, like the heroic figure of John Quincy Adams, be made to understand that "who we are is who we were" (Pate, 1997, p. 299). Or better still, if we truly embraced our creoleness as Americans, we can be made to understand brothas and sistas that "we is who we was."

Note

1. Here, I omit the part of the story that involves their initial capture from their native villages and their rather long transport to Lomboko. For instance, Sengbe's village was reportedly some ten days journey from Lomboko.

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From the Harbor to Da Academic Hood: Hush Harbors and an African American Rhetorical Tradition

Vorris L. Nunley

AS A JURY WEIGHS THE EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM IN A DIVORCE, John Pearson, the itinerate preacher in Zora Neale Hurston's *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934/1990), refuses to call witnesses and refuses to speak in his own behalf. When Hambo inquires about his silence, Jonah's response illustrates what I will argue is a primary strand of an African American rhetorical tradition: "'Ah didn't want de White folks tuh hear 'bout nothin' lak that. Dey knows too much 'bout us as it is, but dey some things they ain't tuh know. Dey's some strings on our harp fuh us to play on an sing all tuh ourselves'" (p. 169).

Pearson's "tactic" of a purposeful, critical silence in front of a racially mixed or White audience reflects a historically significant African American commonplace and rhetorical tactic. The old slave bromide "I'se got one mind for my master, and one for myself" intersects with Pearson's take on when, where, and in front of whom Black folks do what Geneva Smitherman calls "talking that talk" that Black folks don't tend to talk in front of non-African Americans. Though still useful, Habermas's public sphere has been kicked to the conceptual curb. Productively critiqued by Michael C. Dawson (2001), Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham (1993), Nancy Fraser (1990), and others, Habermas's public sphere has not been "safe space" for African American rhetorics and subjectivities. As Doreen Massey (1994), Patricia Hill Collins (2000), Diane Reay and Heidi Safia Mirza (2001), and Carter G. Woodson (1925) have demonstrated, diasporic Africans, women, and others have histories of developing raced and gendered distinctive interpretive communities to offset their exclusion

from the public sphere. Though this study is about the African American versions of these counterpublics, it is my position that it has implications for the rhetorical analysis of the cultural artifacts of these interpretive communities.

In this essay, I identify, historically locate, and theorize about a primary strand of African American rhetoric I call *hush harbor* rhetoric. This study is concerned with hush harbor sites and hush harbor rhetoric. African American hush harbor rhetoric is a rhetorical tradition constructed through Black public spheres with a distinctive relationship to spatiality (material and discursive), audience, African American *nomoi* (social conventions and beliefs that constitute a worldview or knowledge), and epistemology. Rhetorical scholarship has undertheorized how spatiality, the politics and poetics of space, mediate rhetorical performances. Through hush harbor rhetoric, I argue for spatiality as a distinctive fourth term of the rhetorical situation. African American hush harbor rhetoric offers both analytical tool and theoretical lens for the study of rhetoric in general, and for scholars interested in African American rhetoric in particular. After establishing linkages to what I consider to be contemporary versions of hush harbors, this essay will provide examples to illustrate the implications of hush harbor rhetorics for public/civic and classroom pedagogy.

> What does architecture have to do with Blackness?
> —D. W. Fields, *Architecture in Black*

> Race matters, but it is clear that space does too.
> —M. Forman, *The Hood Comes First: Race, Space, and Place in Rap and Hip-Hop.*

Cultural critic Mark Anthony Neal in the superb *What the Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* (1999), convincingly argues that "the initial development and maintenance of covert social or 'safe' spaces of the antebellum South are at the core of the black critical tradition in America" (p. 14). Covert and quasi-public spaces such as beauty shops and barbershops provide safe spaces where Black folks affirm, share, and negotiate African American epistemologies and resist and subvert hegemonic Whiteness. All of the above suggests that scholars interested in rhetoric and in African American rhetoric as practice, tradition, or epistemology must expand the domain of sites and objects appropriate for rhetorical analysis and critique.

From the Enslavement era through the Clarence Thomas–Anita Hill

spectacle, African Americans have utilized camouflaged locations, hidden sites, and enclosed places as emancipatory cells where they can come in from the wilderness, untie their tongues, speak the unspoken, and sing their own songs to their own selves in their own communities. Woods, plantation borders, churches, burial societies, beauty shops, slave frolics, barbershops, and kitchens loosed their words and their rhetorics. African American sororities and fraternities, porches, taverns, and other sacred and secular Black spaces and places served as geographies of resistance where countless known and unknown Black bards temporarily escaped the hegemonic gaze of Whiteness to make themselves a world. Enslaved African Americans referred to these spaces as cane breaks, bush arbors, or *hush harbors*.

As part of a larger project, this essay posits African American hush harbors as historic and contemporary safe spaces and spatial palimpsests through which to begin to map African American hush harbor rhetoric.[1] I will offer a dense definitional formulation of hush harbors and of African American hush harbor rhetoric, which I will unpack throughout. Next, I ground hush harbors historically and situate them within the context of African American rhetorical tradition(s). I will provide historical evidence for my claim about the centrality of hush harbors to African American cultures and subjectivities. Disrupting conventional notions of space will be a central gesture, which illustrates the ideological nature of space, how it is gendered and raced, and how space mediates rhetorical practice. It is in this section where I offer space as an explicit fourth element of the rhetorical situation. African American audience and African American commonplaces are pivotal terms in my hush harbor rhetoric theorizing. In the section aptly titled "Black Audience and Black Commonplaces," I attempt to de-suture the terms *African American* and *audience* from the muscle of phenotype and connect them to the ligaments of rhetoric, epistemology, and identity by grounding the commonplace in a sophistic-influenced definition of nomos. In the following section, I then link historic hush harbor spaces and places to what I argue are their contemporary functional equivalents in locations and places such as certain beauty shops, barbershops, churches, and other African American public spheres. Finally, I provide two examples of how hush harbor rhetoric resources can be utilized in classroom pedagogy.

Hush Harbors, Spaces of Emancipation, Sites of Dread

We is gathated hyeah, my brothahs
In dis howlin' wildaness,

Fu'to speak some words of comfo't
To each othah in distress
Paul Laurence Dunbar, "An Ante-bellum Sermon"

Hush harbor rhetoric is composed of the rhetorics and the commonplaces emerging from those rhetorics, articulating distinctive social epistemologies and subjectivities of African Americans and directed toward predominantly Black audiences in formal and informal Black publics or African American–centered cultural geographies. Hush harbors as genres of Black public spheres are not Black cultural locations solely because they are situated where Black folks live and gather. Rather, hush harbor places become Black spaces because African American *nomos* (social convention, worldview knowledge), rhetoric, phronesis (practical wisdom and intelligence) tropes, and commonplaces are normative in the encounters that occur in these locations. African American subjectivities are negotiated, affirmed, circulated in these Black spaces and Black cultural sites. Although a segment of this examination will provide an example of how African American rhetorical performance differs in Black hush harbor audiences from those in public spheres of White audiences, it is purposely not the primary focus of this study. Instead, this examination will unpack hush harbor theory and illustrate how African American hush harbor spaces and rhetoric are most functional to its occupants.

Hush harbors are functional because they are Black spaces, offering what Reay and Mirza (2001) describe as a "disruptive discursive space," "spaces of radical Blackness" where hegemonic discourse is not unproblematically reinscribed. These spaces allow African American subjects and subjectivities to be "familiar," "hegemonic," and normative (p. 95). Such spaces of radical Blackness are spaces where Blackness is hegemonic, but not static, and where Black subjects challenge and negotiate their various articulations. An illustrative history of African American hush harbor and hush harbor rhetorics will make the cultural and racialized content of hush harbor spaces, and the function of the rhetorics emerging from those spaces, more apparent.

Architectural theorist Brandford C. Grant (1996) in "Accommodation and Resistance: The Built Environment and the African American Experience" describes race as being "architecturally constructed" and "architecture, building and planning" as "inherently racially constituted activities" (p. 202). Spatial organization of the built environment racialized the plantation house and the slave cabin. Racialization of space in the United States arguably began with plantation residential segregation

because as Donald R. Deskins Jr. and Christopher Bettinger (2002) note about the intersection between race and space: "Race is based on exclusion. . . . Space therefore, is an ideal means of creating and asserting racial identities" (p. 57). Even as globalization compresses space thereby increasing mobility and fraying the threads connecting place and identity, Deskins and Bettinger's insight in relation to race, class, ethnicity, and gender is still valid in many parts of the world. Grant (1996) locates the racialization of space as Black within the Enslavement era then links spatial racialization to the habitation of collective Black "neighborhoods" camouflaged from the surveillance of the master and White hegemony in indoor and outdoor communal spaces (p. 206). According to Grant, the enslaved peoples reinterpreted the "communal living in West African villages," to cotton, sugar cane, and rice fields and in the woods and other secret outdoor hiding places (p. 206).

Previously listed locations are described in numerous books, novels, and histories as bush arbors, cane breaks, or hush harbors. Lawrence Levine's germinal text on African American cultural history and practice, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (1997) situates hush harbors historically, verifies their physical existence, and bears witness to their use as geographies of camouflage and resistance. Levine points out that hush harbors were sites where "[s]laves broke the prescription against unsupervised or unauthorized meetings by holding their services in secret, well hidden areas" (p. 41). To be caught was to risk severe punishment because of the hidden transcripts circulating in the spaces. Meetings had to be held in secret. Thus, African American hush harbor rhetoric emerges from the distinctive social epistemologies and subjectivities of subaltern and counterdiscourses. Minister and ex-slave W. B. Allen alludes to the hidden transcripts and the danger associated with them when slaves dared to attend clandestine hush harbor meetings:

> The slaves had turned a large pot down in the center of the floor to hold the sounds of their voices within. But, despite their precaution, the patrollers found them and broke in. Of course, every Nigger present was in for a severe whipping." (qtd. in I. Berlin, 1998, p. 56)

James Scott defines *hidden transcripts* as "non-hegemonic, subversive discourse generated by subordinate groups and concealed from certain dominant others" (1980, p. 14). Slaves of African descent in America

constructed a sense of their own subjectivity through these hidden transcripts. At times, slaves feigned ignorance of certain skills to decrease plantation production. Other times, certain objects were left on the grave of the deceased so that they might return and utilize them. All of the above tactics reflect hidden transcripts deployed to retain African retentions in the culture of enslaved Africans.

In hush harbors, slaves did not only address sacred or esoteric issues. Hush harbor spaces enabled enslaved Africans in America to address secular as well as sacred concerns. Eric Sundquist (1993) describes both the sacred and secular functions of Frederick Douglass's version of a hush harbor space where Douglass secretly taught slaves to read and provided them with instruction in politics. Sundquist is worth reading for two reasons. First, he directly utilizes the term *hush harbor* not only as a physical space but as a conceptual metaphor for various sites of "subtle strategies of masquerade" often hidden in plain sight (p. 83). Second, Sundquist alludes to the alternative knowledges, values, and commonplaces making hush harbors productive, generative, and resistant Black public spheres. Nat Turner and Denmark Vesey are believed to have hatched their rebellions in such spaces. While the above examples refer to informal sites, hush harbor sites sometimes transformed into more formal formations as did that once "invisible institution," the traditional Black church, makes evident.

Ira Berlin in *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1999) describes how new institutions, which addressed the problems of formerly enslaved people, rose from "informal, clandestine, associations of Black people created in slavery" (p. 251). White Northerners excluded Blacks from White burial grounds, so "their burial grounds, the graveyard, became the first truly African American institution in the Northern colonies, and perhaps in mainland North America" (p. 62). Roberta H. Wright's and Wilbur B. Hughes III's *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries* (1996) outlines a specific burial practice alluded to by Berlin that reflects alternative worldviews occurring underneath the gaze of White hegemony. Wright and Hughes describe how plots in Braddock Point Cemetery where African Americans were buried in the 1800s faced toward the ocean, "with a view over the sound, since it was believed that their spirits would return to Africa if buried near the water" (p. 65).

Berlin, Wright and Hughes, and others suggest a history, a tradition, an epistemic ground of African and African American discourse and

rhetoric, from which a distinctively African American hush harbor rhetorical tradition might be mapped. Formal institutions such as the National Colored Woman's Association, the Black Panthers, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference all emerged from sequestered or hidden Black public spheres of African American hush harbors. Keith Gilyard's contribution to this volume posits Carter G. Woodson's *Negro Orators and Their Orations* (1925) and *The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis 1800–1860* (1926) as "[t]he first standard reference work[s] on African American oratory." Gilyard's contribution is of vital import to hush harbor concerns, as Woodson refers to sequestered spaces in which Black folks speak to each other. Given the apparent importance of spatiality to rhetoric in general and African American hush harbor rhetoric in particular, a discussion about space, ideology, and rhetoric might prove useful.

Space, Place, and Camouflaged Rhetoric

> A whole history remains to be written of spaces.
>
> —Michel Foucault, *Eye of Power*

Quintilian long ago recognized how spatiality informs the distinctiveness of rhetorics and arguments emerging from particular localities, habitats (places), and haunts.[2] Calling for an examination of rhetoric in relation to space creates a disciplinary location to discuss the spatial (geographical) in the rhetorical and the rhetorical in the geographical. In human and critical geography, it is axiomatic that the spatial is socially constructed and that the social is spatially constructed. Soja (1998), McDowell (1995), and others have written scholarship that does not ignore the materiality of space and the built environment. However, it does recognize how atavistic is the positivistic-Kantian notion of space as abstract, fixed, and outside of social relations. So although Kenneth Burke's (1945) pentad certainly takes space seriously, he does not explicitly theorize space as ideological and discursive and how spatial subjectivity might mediate his pentad.

Architecture theorists Beatriz Columbia (1992) and J. Yolande Daniels (2000), and others writing about architecture have theorized about the ideological nature of the built environment, the physical environment, and the meanings produced by both discursive and physical space. Space is important. Literary theorists such as Raymond Williams and Edward Said (1993) have commented on the importance of space to contempo-

rary theorizing. There is a spatial turn that rhetorical scholarship inadequately addresses. Hush harbor theorizing proceeds by explicitly addressing spatiality.

As a term, *spatiality* disrupts the aforementioned sedimented conceptions of space. Pia Christensen, Allison James, and Chris Jenks's (2000) understanding of spatiality in "Home and Movement: Children Constructing 'Family Time'" intersects with hush harbor theorizing in that it is concerned with explicitly theorizing society and spatiality: "Spatiality is used to capture the ways in which the social and spatial are inextricably realized one in the other: to conjure up the circumstances in which society and space are simultaneously realized by thinking, feeling, doing, individuals" (p. 142).

If the spatial is ideological, then both space and, of course, ideology possess a rhetorical component. In a thoughtful, provocative article, "On Gender and Rhetorical Space," Roxanne Mountford complicates the separation of material and discursive spatialities directly linking the spatial to the rhetorical. For Mountford, rhetorical space is "the geography of a communicative event and like all landscapes, may include both the cultural and material arrangements, whether, intended or fortuitous of space" (p. 42). Renditions of hush harbors in novels are a type of communicative event that justify Mountford's (and my own) use of novels and other texts to illuminate the importance of spatiality and hush harbors. Informed by Henri Levebre and work in cultural and feminist geography, Mountford (2001) argues that the material configuration or spatial location of a site mediates rhetorical performances which enable certain kinds of discourses and rhetorics while constraining others. This is a line of inquiry in understanding African American hush harbors and hush harbor rhetoric. Space, in Mountford's view, both "produces" and "embodies" meaning (p. 42).

However, Mountford overlooks how performances in some African American rhetorical spaces are expressions of a textual and rhetorical tradition. Hush harbor rhetoric and the theorizing I am performing around it explicitly foregrounds radicalized geography, asymmetrical power relations, hidden transcripts, and the traces of historic oppression. For example, one of the works in which Mountford anchors her examination of spatiality, gender, and rhetoric is Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), in which a character, Baby Suggs, delivers a sermon in the woods/wilderness. Mountford understands Baby Suggs's sermon and the trope of the woods as embodying an undomesticated, unofficial, counternarrative outside the bounds of institutionalized, traditional, and patriarchal religious dogma.

My project extends Mountford's specific reading and is concerned with understanding the woods/wilderness trope as spatial and rhetorical palimpsests historically situated within a matrix of African American rhetoric, audience, and commonplaces. Melvin Dixon (1987) in *Ride Out the Wilderness* identifies the wilderness, the mountaintop, and the underground as central tropes in the, African American "search for self and home" (p. 3). Wilderness tropes permeate the African American social-expressive imagination in literature, music, religion, and art. Often viewed as uncultivated, undomesticated, and uncivilized and grafted to dark, othered bodies, the wilderness was constructed as a geography of physical, discursive, and spiritual possibility in the minds of many enslaved African Americans. For example, "Negro" spirituals consistently invoke the wilderness as an emancipatory Promised Land.

> Jesus call you. Go in de wilderness
> Go in the wilderness, go in the wilderness
> Jesus call you. Go in de wilderness
> To wait upon the Lord.
>
> (Dixon, 1987, p. 53)

Hush harbors are temporary homes of emancipatory politics suffused with particular forms of agency and identity. Baby Suggs testifies to the importance of place and identity in Black folks creating themselves a world anchored in the wilderness of their own experience and history. Suggs walks to "a wide open place cut deep in the woods," an outpost where, "She told them that the only grace they could have was the grace they could imagine. That if they could not see it, they would not have it" (Morrison, 1987, pp. 88–89). African American hush harbors are spatialites where Black folks go to affirm, negotiate, and reproduce culture, epistemology, and resistance and to find sacred and secular grace.

African Americans are able to find grace in these spatialities in part because they often circulate outside the gaze of hegemonic relations. I do not claim that these epistemologies are never heard by non–African Americans. Indeed, globalization and technology increase the commodification and the surveillance of rhetoric and the knowledges intertwined within it as the global-local binary collapses. Such a collapse makes a claim for complete cultural and spatial suture problematic. Nevertheless, hush harbor spaces are sites where certain African American counternarratives and narratives are acknowledged, privileged, and spoken and performed differently. My primary concern is to posit hush harbors as offering a resource or location for rhetorical theory, epistemology, and

history, and to resist having hush harbors trivialized into little more than sites of social pathology and difference. One specific example of a hush harbor tactic and rhetoric is the speech "The Ballot or the Bullet."

Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements (Malcolm X & Breitman, 1965/1990) describes the speech "The Ballot or the Bullet" as one of Malcolm X's most memorable. "The Ballot or the Bullet" was delivered at the Cory Methodist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, April 3, 1964, before a predominantly Black hush harbor audience at a Black church during the era's Civil Rights Movement. Declaring his independence from Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X established the Muslin Mosque, Inc. As part of his independence, Malcolm X began accepting speaking engagements outside of New York, developing and formulating new ideologies while continuing to perform at several rallies in Harlem. Malcolm often spoke about and developed the same themes in front of African American and non–African American audiences.

Five days after establishing the Muslim Mosque, Inc., Malcolm X delivered a speech, "The Black Revolution," sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum (a socialist organization) before a 75 percent White audience at Palm Gardens, New York. Although differently titled, both speeches were concerned with many of the same themes. Malcolm X begins both speeches before both audiences with the phrase "friends and enemies" (pp. 24, 45). This gesture immediately disrupts any notion of a narrow Black Nationalism or Black essentialism often attributed to Malcolm X and other Black rhetors who struggled not just over civil rights but over language, power, and definition.

"The Ballot or the Bullet" and "The Black Revolution" both address Black nationalism, self-defense, White liberal complicity in African American oppression, and the internationalization of African American struggle; but Malcolm X establishes his ethos quite differently with the predominantly African American audience than he does with the White audience. With the White audience, immediately after the friends and enemies reference, he addresses White liberal fears: "Tonight I hope to have a little fireside chat with as few sparks as possible being tossed around" (p. 45). Of course, there is some signifyin' going on because no matter the audience, Malcolm X is the fire in the flint of normalized discourse. Sparks are de rigueur with a Malcolm speech. Nevertheless, Malcolm X does try to become consubstantial with the predominantly White audience, since for the next few minutes of his oratory he invokes the names of Everett Dirksen, George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Abraham Lincoln. It is an appeal to what David Howard-Pitney describes

as America's civil religion. In "The Ballot or the Bullet," Adam Clayton Powell, Martin Luther King Jr., and Reverend Galamison are immediately deployed to the predominantly African American audience. His concern is not White fear; it is Black oppression and self-defense against that oppression. In addition, references to enslavement/segregation occur more often in "The Ballot or the Bullet" oratory than in "The Black Revolution." Finally, Malcolm provides a definition of, then an explanation of, the goals of Black nationalism to the Black audience; no such explanation is provided the White audience. Malcolm's pedagogical goal differs for the hush harbor audience.

Too often, African American and other "subaltern" rhetors gain legitimacy in the public sphere through domesticating their rhetoric into the bounds of acceptable debate by appealing to notions of civility and tolerance. Of course, civility and tolerance are needed, but that often camouflages the politics. Civility tends to privilege the politics and the values of those already benefiting from the dominant discourse. Bold, brazen, assertive, insolent, edgy, wild, rhetorically nappy rhetors such as Maria W. Stewart, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ida B. Wells, Martin Delaney, Minister Louis Farrakhan, Malcolm X, and countless others are often supported by significant numbers of Black folks not because they necessarily agreed with their claims or politics but because these speakers are willing to "tell it like they think it is" in front of a White audience. This element of African American rhetoric and epistemology is often misunderstood by the general public as angry, hostile, uppity, arrogant, and uncivil rhetoric.

Malcolm X affirms African American culture and experience in the hush harbor spheres in a different way than he does in non–hush harbor spaces. Hush harbors are Black public spheres because as Michael Warner (2002) illustrates, in public spheres there is a "relation among strangers," "self-organized," "public and personal," a "social space created by the reflexive circulation of discourse" (p. 65). In "Message to the Grass Roots" (1965), Malcolm X argues that Black folks should disagree at home in the closet of the private sphere but present a united front in the public sphere (assumed to be hegemonically White). Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass, and bell hooks all have theorized how racial composition of an audience mediates the performance and reception of African American rhetoric and epistemology. If Aristotle is correct that rhetoric is not persuasion but about finding available means to persuade, then how may scholars find what persuades African American hush harbor audiences?

Black Audience and Black Commonplaces

What do we mean when we say Black audience? Certainly, phenotype is a consideration. But this can hardly suffice. For a speaker or rhetor to become what Kenneth Burke terms "consubstantial" with an African American hush harbor audience, the skin one is in is no guarantee. Phenotype may get you a passport, but African American commonplaces, tonal semantics, mascons, and the tropes and epistemologies connected to them are what get your rhetorical documents stamped and approved. Consequently, my conceptualization of an "African American audience" in relation to African American hush harbor rhetoric includes, but extends beyond, phenotype. Arthur L. Smith's (1972) (Molefi Asante's) concept of hearership is a rhetorically oriented concept that seems to navigate the tension between the Charybdis of the audience as coherent and homogeneous and the Scylla of the audience as idiosyncratic and fragmented.

Smith defines *hearership* in *Language, Communication, and Rhetoric in Black America* (1972) as "[c]ollections or gatherings of persons who maintain, if only for the duration of the speech occasion, a special relationship with each other, if only in the hearing of a speaker" (p. 286). While useful, Smith's definition is not a snug fit with my notion of a hush harbor occasion because as an artifact of a Black public sphere, the rhetor's text alone is not enough to create a public. Hush harbor rhetorics are more socially dense than the hearership definition suggests. Michael Warner contends that texts themselves do not "create publics" and that only when a previously existing discourse can be supposed, and when a responding discourse can be postulated, can a text address a public" (2002, p. 90). Warner's definition suggests a historical resonance not reflected in the Smith explanation. Nevertheless, Smith's concept of hearership is very useful in relation to rhetor, audience, and identity (p. 286).

African American hush harbor audiences then are constructed as Black through experience and the tactics, commonplaces, and *nomoi* reflecting that experience. Certain commonplaces, tropes, and figures circulate with such volume in African American communities that they become entangled with African Americans' subjective experience of themselves. Call and response, signifying, the African American sermonic form, homelitics, the bad man/bad woman trope, are commonplaces that produce and construct Black subjectivities. The commonplace as marker of identity is an important element of hush harbor rhetoric.

The Commonplace and Identity

Sharon Crowley in *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students* (1994) tweaks the current-traditional description of rhetoric. Crowley provides a conceptualization of the commonplace which seems to implicitly take into account modern insights into language and social epistemology. For Crowley, a commonplace is "Any statement or bit of knowledge that is commonly shared among a given audience or community" (p. 335). Crowley's notion of commonplaces posits them in a generative relation to social practice, doxa (belief), and knowledge. Commonplaces and phronesis de-center the positivistic science notion of knowledge as abstract, theoretical and objective; Crowley's sophistic take on the commonplace re-inserts the social into an epistemological frame.

Commonplaces are more than just sources of argument. Commonplaces connect to experience in such a specific, distinctive manner that the same commonplace may be understood differently in response to various *nomoi.* Susan Jarratt defines *nomos* (pl. *nomoi*) as "[a] self conscious arrangement of discourse to create politically and socially significant knowledge . . . thus it is always a social construct with ethical dimensions" (1991, p. 42). Jarratt links this term to the sophistic tradition and its understanding of the social situatedness of knowledge. African American commonplaces resonate with African American experiences and knowledges and are therefore understood differently and are more likely to be persuasive within African American hush harbors. For instance, sermons derived from the commonplace of the homiletic tradition of borrowing are understood and valued differently in African American culture. Different culturally mediated evaluations and receptions of the sermons of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. offer a compelling example.

Dr. King has been accused of plagiarizing particular speeches, essays, and so on, by David Garrow and others because he utilized material from other preachers without acknowledgement. Keith Miller's (1998) *Voice of Deliverance: The Language of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Its Sources* recognizes African American homiletics as distinctive oratorical commonplaces within American and African American rhetorical practice. In homiletics, truth is understood as "repeatable" as "shared," and as "truth as best communicated orally, and truth as expressed in story" (p. 115). Truth as shared and repeatable is the important characteristic in the context of my hush harbor exploration. Both Black and White preachers borrowed from other preachers because in this American/African American hush harbor form distinctiveness of articulation, use,

and function of rhetoric and its performance are valued by these audiences, not source of origin.

As Miller recognizes, King affirmed much of the traditional Christian message through borrowing: Borrowing "granted his (King's) sermons a ritualistic quality that resonated with those who had heard or read similar or identical themes" (p. 117). African American ministers in the homiletic tradition often utilize material from other ministers. Although African American audiences often expect and celebrate this commonplace of creative borrowing, wholesale lifting (sampling) for its own sake is not condoned. Ministers are required to insert the material into a unique rhetorical performance. Improvisation on preexisting material is rewarded in the African American oral and musical traditions. Thievery is not. Like borrowing, improvisation is well known to be highly valued as a commonplace and as a rhetorical tactic in African American communities. Borrowing enables improvisation. Black hush harbor audiences are persuaded by rhetorical performances that effectively deploy Black commonplaces linking the performed identity of the rhetor to the subjectivity of the audience through culturally derived African American commonplaces.

While the discussions of Baby Suggs, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr. were anchored in the past, contemporary versions of hush harbors do exist.

Hush Harbors as Contemporary Safe and Unsafe Spaces

Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (1998) understands that as we enter the new millennium, globalization and technology, for all their obvious benefits, can polarize as well as democratize society: "It emancipates certain humans from territorial constraints and renders certain communication generating meanings extra-territorial while denuding the territory, to which other people go on being confined, of its meaning and its identity-endowing capacity" (p. 18). Hush harbor theorizing allows rhetoricians to take into account the identity-endowing capacity of these spatialities through the everyday rhetorics and practices of people who occupy these sites.

Contemporary versions of hush harbors where African Americans temporarily escape the disciplining gaze of the guardians of dominant culture are barbershops, fraternity and sorority houses, beauty shops, book clubs (mostly women), Hip Hop free-style throw downs, churches, pool halls, front porches, liquor stores, and jook joints. In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2000), Patricia Hill Collins theorizes what I posit are contemporary versions of the hush harbor. Collins examines hush harbor spaces as locations where "domination may be inevitable as a social fact, but it is unlikely to be hegemonic as an ideology within that social space where Black women speak freely" (p. 100). Collins's account of hush harbors rightly disidentifies them as separatist. While some may be, most hush harbor spatialities, elements of what Collins describes as "Black civil society," are places of cultural and political reinvigoration, enabling hush harbor occupants to re-enter society with a sense of themselves as subjects not as objects. Collins is well aware of the importance of spatiality to African American women. African American women have a long history of utilizing informal sites such as beauty shops and formal organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women to challenge Black male and White domination. Hush harbors reconfigure and flatten out asymmetrical power relations to provide a measure of safety and solace through authorizing and legitimizing voices that typically lack jurisdiction in non-hush harbor spaces. "This space is not only safe—it forms a prime location for resisting objectification as the other," notes Collins (p. 99). Hush harbors authorize the unofficial, the underground, and under the radar rhetoric and epistemology.

Nevertheless, hush harbor spaces are not utopian respites free from internecine conflicts and contradictions. Space and culture are sites of the entanglements of power around class, race, and gender. Dunbar's "An Ante-bellum Sermon" illustrates how that even during slavery, hush harbor spaces were not entirely safe. Hush harbor spatialities offer possibilities and containment. Since racialized subjects are constitutive of and by the discourses of the dominant culture, traces of hegemonic thinking may take up residence in hush harbor spaces.

As Dunbar complicated antebellum hush harbors, Florence Griffin's (1995) *"Who Set You Flowing?": The African American Migration Narrative* complicates contemporary hush harbors. Recognizing their progressive potential, Griffin believes that "at their most reactionary" these safe havens are " potentially provincial spaces which do not encourage resistance but instead help to create complacent subjects whose only aim is to exist within the confines of power that oppress them" (p. 9). Griffin understands that "hegemonic ideology can exist even in spaces of resistance" (p. 9). She does not trivialize the distinctiveness of African American culture in these Black geographies, but Griffin's interrogation does destabilize romantic, monolithic, and culturally and politically innocent conceptions of hush harbors. Hush harbors are not uniform in rhetorical or political content nor in their capacity to resist hegemonic practices.

The Classroom as Contact and Combat Zone

Most rhetoricians in the academy are required to teach composition. Therefore, it seems necessary to discuss what implications, if any, hush harbor rhetoric and African American hush harbor rhetoric have for the classroom. Language, rhetoric, and composition classrooms provide fertile ground for hush harbor theory and rhetoric. Composing theory takes up the spatial turn and most explicitly engages the politics and poetics of spatiality in relation to the composition classroom. Mary Louise Pratt's (1992) notion of the "contact zone" is illustrative. In *Imperial Eyes,* Pratt defines contact zones as "an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect" (p. 6). Classroom contact zones are often more like combat zones whose discursive territory and boundaries of karotic appropriatenesses are mediated too often by combatants who under the guise of broader concerns with class, gender, or French theory trivialize or jettison discussions about race.

There are, of course, ruptures and lines of flight for creating new emancipatory possibilities within any classroom and curricula because while power may be everywhere so is resistance. What gets constructed as acceptable debate, constructed as the sound of reasonableness and not as the noise of special pleading, tends to be overdetermined by what is institutionally normative or theoretically sexy. Therefore, discourse in agonistic contact zones tends to reproduce hegemonic constructions due to asymmetrical power relations particularly around the subject positions of some participants based on gender, race, class, or language. Patricia Hill Collins tells how her training as a social scientist inadequately prepared her to examine the subjugated knowledge of African American women because "subordinated groups have long had to use alternative ways to create independent self-definitions and self-evaluations and to re-articulate them through our own specialists" (2000, p. 252).

Collins's insight illustrates how pervasive and insidious are the institutional reproductions of hegemonic relations. Yet even when the discourse in a composition classroom is temporarily tilted toward the interest of the "other," those who benefit from or support dominant epistemologies too often continually try to restore hegemonic relations to the classroom. A personal anecdote will illustrate how well-intentioned individuals can discipline resistant voices into compliance.

As writing instructors at Penn State University, all graduate students in the rhetoric program are required to enroll in a yearlong course in

which they address pedagogy, curricula, student management, and other classroom concerns. The year I matriculated through the course, each member of the class was assigned the task of reviewing a rhetoric reader and determining its appropriateness for the teaching of a rhetoric-based writing course. Two of my classmates chose to review a multicultural reader. Although thinking the text was useful and supporting its argument for diversity, the two students critiqued the text for being too race based. They made their argument, with the silent complicity of nodding heads in the class, without interrogating Whiteness as unmarked and normative, without defining their use of the term *race,* and without offering criteria for what makes a text race based or raceless. My colleagues, while offering a perfunctory nod to the nobility of the desire to increase textual diversity, reduced, trivialized, and dismissed the text to the theoretical hinterlands. Of course, one could argue that the students were critically unreflexive and therefore unaware of my aforementioned critique. This is exactly my point. They can be unaware of such a basic critique in ways that one could not be unaware of continental philosophical critiques of Enlightenment concepts of history, truth, and language, and still be taken seriously as scholars. And when I did offer my critique, in an attempt to complicate their McDonalds brand of diversity— diversity as consumption decoupled from power and concerns about who determines what gets consumed as diverse—they countered with examples of Eastern Europeans left out of the diversity loop.

Later, I discussed what happened in class with two African American professors and another colleague. After closing the door and dropping the level of their voices, the professors and my colleagues went on to relate their own stories of how White, male, and class privilege is too often argued for and supported under the guise of complicating race, identity, and diversity in the contact zone of the classroom. Subaltern folks must often construct our own hush harbors within the university (stopping conversation in midsentence, looking down the hall, then closing the office door to ensure the lack of surveillance) in order to assert African American subjectivity without hegemonic intervention from well-intentioned folks. Bearing witness to the unsaid and underrecognized in academic hush harbors is necessary because too often the slightest assertion of a distinctive African American identity and knowledge is met with a "vogue statement"[3] that elides as much about the discourse of race and gender as it reveals: you are essentializing. Hush harbor epistemologies are not inherently essentializing gestures. However, they typically do not privilege the conventional knowledge validation process

located outside the thoughts, experience, strategies, and tactics of African Americans and others who occupy hush harbor sites. If pedagogy is more effective when it takes into account the cultural terra firma students bring to class, then hush harbors may offer useful pedagogical and rhetorical possibilities that allow instructors to avoid pedagogical hallucinations, in relation to race, gender, class, and ethnicity.

Hush harbor rhetorics and epistemologies may create a transgressive classroom space because a pedagogy informed by such epistemologies might disrupt notions of civility, consensus, tolerance, and the comfort zone of both teachers and students in contact zones. Nevertheless, instructors willing to expend the extra effort may find useful pedagogic treasure, as did linguist John Baugh and magnet program coordinator Beverly Silverstein with their students.

Shuffling Lyrics, Ellison, Morrison, Thinking Critically

In "Reading, Writing, and Rap: Lyric Shuffle and Other Motivational Strategies to Introduce and Reinforce Literacy" from his book *Out of the Mouths of Slaves: African American Language and Educational Malpractice,* linguist J. Baugh (1999) utilizes a game he developed from years of fieldwork called the "Lyric Shuffle" to assist children in acquiring literacy in reading and writing. Baugh developed the game in response to parents he interviewed who "adopted communal strategies to combat illiteracy" and for children who wanted to improve their reading and writing skills but did not want to have to leave their identities at the hegemonic gate (p. 32).

Lyric Shuffle encourages students to choose songs from popular culture as a starting point. Students from different discourse communities choose different songs, which are transcribed into texts for student use. The game requires the students to rearrange the words into new sentences, new lyrics, or new poems. The game can also be used for basic phonic lessons or sentence formation, vocabulary, and a myriad of other language exercises. Lyric Shuffle can be altered for a variety of student competencies and instructor goals. Baugh shares variations on Lyric Shuffle (sentence shuffle, poet shuffle, grammar roulette, story shuffle) to demonstrate the flexibility of the game's basic concept. As students choose the songs utilized for the game, so they tend to be more invested and motivated in the game.

While first constructed with the concerns of African American parents and students in mind, Lyric Shuffle has obvious applicability in a number of contexts. In the case of African American students, the game

is effective in part because it is apparent to the students that the singers/rappers effectively utilize so-called standardized English without erasing African American cultural referents (jargon, commonplaces, tropes, cadence, etc.). Standardized English and success are decoupled from cultural erasure and linked to student agency. As a result, Baugh believes "these materials can be used to introduce Standard[ized] English without the corresponding stigma of texts that many African Americans directly associate with the dominant culture" (p. 34). The classroom is transformed into a hush harbor site, a safe site, because the rhetoric, pedagogy, and knowledge circulating in and through the site reflect an attempt to inhabit the ground of the students before taking them on a journey to a new territory. Teacher authority is not relinquished; rather, it is used to enable the students to assume agency. Black culture in Baugh's class becomes a generative, productive site. While Baugh linked the students to familiar hush harbor cultural formations that have migrated into mainstream culture (Rap, R & B, and other popular music) to enhance student acquisition of literacy, Beverly Silverstein's version of a service learning program utilizes African American literary texts to enhance critical thinking and reading skills while broadening student knowledge of African American culture.

In Los Angeles, at Crenshaw High School in conjunction with California State University at Los Angeles, Beverly Silverstein developed a service learning program to introduce critical thinking, reading, and writing skills to students.

Using literature and critical theory to traverse the landscape of folklore, music, and the cultural traditions of African Americans, students and adults are constructed as both hush harbor dwellers and hush harbor tourists. Silverstein disrupts the boundary between school knowledge and community knowledge to accomplish her goal. Once a week, a two-hour block of class time is held off campus at a residential home for local residents aged sixty-five or older. Program participants listen to music, read articles, and critically discuss African American literary texts such as Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* or Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man.* Instructors develop knowledge about the participants through school records, meetings with parents, and discussions with the participants. Instructors assist the students and adult residents to excavate the continuities, extensions, and evolutions of African American rhetoric, culture, and social knowledges. Such knowledge often hides in plain sight within rap, jazz, the blues, sermons, and other sites of Black cultural production. Snoop Doggy Dogg's lyrics become a modern varia-