THE RHETORIC OF MALCOLM X'S LEGACY:

BY ANY (AVAILABLE) MEANS (OF PERSUASION) NECESSARY

by

DANNY JOE RODRIGUEZ

Bachelor of Arts, 2012
University of Texas at Arlington
Arlington, Texas

Master of Arts, 2014
University of Texas at Arlington
Arlington, Texas

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Danny Joe Rodriguez

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Major Professor

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Chapter 1: Introduction: (G)race

"I am a Muslim. And there's nothing wrong with being a Muslim, nothing wrong with the religion of Islam. . . . Those of you who are Christians probably believe in the same God, because I think you believe in the God who created the universe. That's the one we believe in" (Malcolm X. *February 1965: The Final Speeches* 90).

"I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 3:13 925).
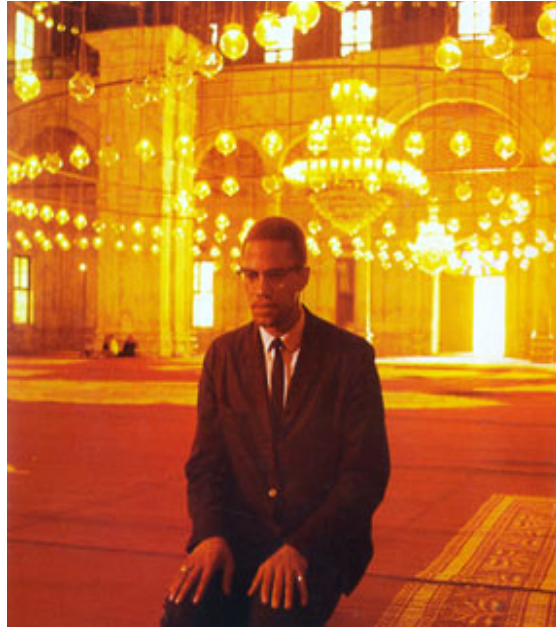
If I explained to a crowd that a black minister who died in the 1960s motivated me to become a Christian, I assume that the majority of this crowd would suppose that I am referencing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In actuality, I am alluding to the contributions of minister Malcolm X, or El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. While I am positive that Malcolm X would laugh while shaking his head at me if he read this sentence, when I struggle to think of someone who has lived Christ-like, I think of Malcolm X. I do not know when I first learned of Malcolm X. It could have been the pilot episode of *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*. I still can vividly picture Will Smith hanging a poster of Malcolm X on his wall. On the other hand, 2Pac could have introduced me to Malcolm X: "Should we cry when the Pope die? My request / We should cry if they cried when we buried

Malcolm X." Regardless of what or who presented this great rhetor to me, I am still very much aware of the effects he has had on my life. For this dissertation project, I illustrate how Malcolm X's legacy is still influential. Furthermore, I also place the legacy of Malcolm X within the race that he championed: the Black race. Therefore, I want to be very upfront: despite how much I admire Malcolm X, he does not belong to me or any other non-black person. He belongs to his people, or the people that Malcolm X referenced throughout his lifetime.

As a Christian, as a heterosexual man of color, who self-identifies as a second-generation Mexican American (i.e., second generation born in the U.S.), and as a scholar, who has remained in the educational system that failed Malcolm X, I have several biases. First, obviously, I am unable to truly understand the black experience. Although I have listened to and read his speeches, listened to his interviews, and watched Spike Lee's biopic and countless other documentaries that cover him, I am not part of his intended audience. I am simply observing this rhetorical ecology as an outsider (see Edbauer). For example, even if I was present for any of Malcolm X's speeches, due to my race and his goals, I am simply examining the exchange between a black rhetor and a black audience. Second, due to how Malcolm X viewed Jesus and how I view Jesus, a disconnect exists. I am assuming that a Muslim experiences the rhetoric of Malcolm X differently than I do. Finally, I am a scholar of color creating a project on someone who is the product of an informal education. Even though I contend that academia is what I do and not who I am, I am very much aware of how easy it is for an academic to distort the legacy of any rhetor or rhetorician, especially Malcolm X. As a result, I hope the 2018 Malcolm X Festival speaks for itself. The Pan-African Connection: Bookstore, Art Gallery, and Resource Center hosts this festival to celebrate the birthday of Malcolm X. As I explain in detail in upcoming paragraphs (and in chapter four), I chose this festival, which is located in a

neighborhood that I grew up near, because it provides a community's understanding of Malcolm X's legacy (i.e., his rhetoric and the everlasting effects of his rhetoric).

Largely due to his black nationalist rhetoric, which many people may interpret as separatist oratory, and his call for self-defense as opposed to what he deemed as passivity or nonviolence, the focal point of most academic research about Malcolm X is on his life. This focus draws on his unpublished manuscripts and unknown or embellished moments from his lived experiences. Despite the benefits of such academic interests, this focus minimizes the larger and longer lasting impact of Malcolm X. This dissertation not only illustrates how we can analyze Malcolm X differently but also demonstrates the rhetorical power and influence of his legacy and the people who preserve it. By doing so, this project provides the field with an approach for revisiting and reanalyzing prominent rhetors and their contributions—situated in their cultural contexts.

Due to the limited, and sometimes reductive, amount of scholarship on Malcolm X, traditional examinations of Malcolm X have constructed a public memory of him that now exists as a dominant narrative. First, biographical scholarship about Malcolm X analyzes a specific portion of his life (see Goldman; Perry), challenges the historical accuracy of Malcolm X's legacy (see Marable; Varda), or critiques research claiming to precisely rehistoricize his legacy (see Boyd). Scholarship concerned with facts about his life minimizes potential misrepresentations of him, thereby producing a limited understanding of Malcolm X. The aims of this scholarship do not consider how people perpetuate his legacy regardless of historical accuracy. For instance, at times, scholars have developed assumptions about Malcolm X's life without providing factual evidence for these working assumptions. Second, rhetorical analysis involving Malcolm X relies heavily on textual analysis through the lens of traditional rhetorical

theory (see Miller; Terrill). Although such analysis expresses the rhetorical value of Malcolm X, this approach restricts his legacy to Western rhetorical paradigms and disregards Malcolm X's target audience and the benefits of interacting with its members. In other words, to expand previous research about Malcolm X, our rhetorical paradigm has to move beyond just Western rhetoric, and researchers have much to learn by interacting with current audiences attentive to Malcolm X as both man and message.

New approaches to examining Malcolm X ensure that we account for the multiple narratives about Malcolm X, particularly within cultural contexts. As Phil Bratta and Malea Powell argue, research about a particular culture should occur from within as opposed to outside the culture of study: "Scholars must be willing to build meaningful theoretical frames from inside the particular culture in which they are situating their work." Cultural rhetorics provides an approach to understand otherwise unheard counternarratives about Malcolm X. The 2018 Malcolm X Festival hosted by the Pan-African Connection Bookstore in Dallas, TX serves as a primary site for my study, placing me as a researcher within an environment that challenges me not only to consider its narratives about Malcolm X but also forces me to consider my own positionality and role throughout my research process. Put simply, this festival offers culturally situated counternarratives to academic conceptions and conclusions. These counternarratives produce rhetorical effects through performances, literacy practices, and visual artifacts. As a result, this festival discloses how people without a traditional academic association practice collective memory to (re)construct Malcolm X, thereby comparing and contrasting dominant and counternarratives about a major rhetor.

Additionally, the area of race and rhetoric within our field deserves expansion in regard to scholarly tradition, sites for research, and the role of the researcher. While certain academics

challenge the conceptions of women of color (e.g., Atwater's *African American Women's Rhetoric*), aim to renarrativize people of color (e.g., Doreski's *Writing America Black*), and examine how race sustains itself (e.g., Lacy and Ono's *Critical Rhetorics of Race*), together they urge our field to continue discussing how and why race and rhetoric relate to each other. My project presents counternarratives about a black orator by creating a space for non-academics to display their rhetorical potency and contributions. However, our scholarly tradition will also likely change if our sites for research encourage researchers to immerse themselves into a local community and its culture. These changes will likely complicate the researcher's role due to concerns about positionality, but such changes can cultivate a research process that requires a researcher to consider both academic and non-academic concerns.

Accounting for positionality directly affects a research process. As a result, a researcher's positionality should be apparent. As the researcher embedded in this project, I grew up in the Dallas area, specifically the Oak Cliff area (before the ongoing gentrification). My education, which is rooted in Western research practices, informs my perspective in this project. Nonetheless, the influence that Malcolm X continues to have on me as both an academic and as a person mitigates the effects of my education. To be pointed, I would not construct any scholarship about this festival that veneers the festival for academic acceptance.

Some cultural rhetorics scholars have constructed methodologies unique to their inquiry (see Mukavetz), but certain general concerns still exist. On one hand, an academic can write about a community, race, nationality, or religion that he or she does not belong to (or has no apparent connections with), but the research could be useful because it exposes our field to other concerns and contributions. On the other hand, misrepresentation can occur from a lack of relationality. As Santos Ramos argues in "Building a Culture of Solidarity," even in the search of

solidarity, an ally may not only misrepresent but also unintentionally replace a marginalized voice. My project employs a methodology that openly considers these concerns and explains my rhetorical choices as I make them.

In sum, we need to recognize how traditional narratives about rhetors can fail or distort a rhetor's legacy and, subsequently, his or her rhetorical potency. As academics, we need to discover a new way that accounts for cultural practices influenced by—and that sustain—significant rhetors. We need to account for counternarrative practices (e.g., nonwestern rhetorics, local/cultural literacies, and the circulation of those rhetors and their rhetoric), but we cannot account for such practices from outside a culture and from a very safe and privileged distance, thus the researcher's role is vital. This dissertation accounts for these needs by illustrating how and why the distance between a researcher and the culture of study affects what he or she can account for and the consequences of his or her research.

The first exigence of this project, then, is the limitations of academic discourse (see Perry; Marable), and the second exigence is the understated and undervalued importance of culture and memory. According to the primary poster of the event, the theme of the 2018 festival— "Using Culture as a Tool for our Liberation"—implies that the organizers and attendees of the festival collectively use their culture to reconnect them with the memory of Malcolm X. To evaluate these connections, I consider the relationship between the rhetorical effects of artifacts, practices, and performances and these reconnections to the memory of Malcolm X. Additionally, Malcolm X functions as the symbol or as a central component of the festival's conception of black culture. By gathering the perspectives of participants, accounting for their stories in their own words, and framing inquiry from the perspective of a participant-observer, we can observe the intricacies of culture in relation to Malcolm X. These differences

become a prime example of the intricacies of culture because culture is not homogenous. Although communities may normalize some cultural practices and discourses, the differences in how a community defines its culture are just as significant as shared similarities of a community.

I argue that the cultural practices of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival disclose how street scholars (re)construct Malcolm X, thus juxtaposing academic and street scholar narratives about a major rhetor. I first used non-academics to describe people outside academia. However, this term conveys a deficit formation that suggests that everyday people are not as prestigious as academics. I elected to use "street scholars" for the following reason. First, this term emphasizes the Detroit Red to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz dynamic in regard to Malcolm X's legacy. Simply put, if academics work within an ivory tower, street scholars roam every city and contribute to socially constructed knowledge without a formal education just like Detroit Red. Because this festival provides street scholars with their own space to (re)construct the legacy of Malcolm X without the interference of our educational system, this festival unknowingly discloses the rhetorical effects of his legacy. To provide a succinct layout of my dissertation, I provide an overview of what follows. First, I explain how my dissertation contains two parts. Then, I break these two sections down chapter by chapter.

The first part of my dissertation focuses on the critical and intellectual history surrounding Malcolm X as a historical, cultural, and rhetorical figure. The central debate regarding Malcolm X involves the credibility of Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As told to Alex Haley*, which contributed to the creation of Spike Lee's classical biopic: *Malcolm X*. The most prominent biographies about Malcolm X argue that Malcolm X was in fact literally living by any means necessary to explain his, at times, contradictive rhetoric and evolving nature (see Goldman); employ oral history to question the authenticity of Malcolm X's legacy as

depicted in Haley's and Lee's work (see Perry); or combine oral history with textual analysis of primary documents, such as unpublished materials of Malcolm X, to provide a fuller representation of Malcolm X's life (see Marable). However, other scholars have challenged the veracity of these biographies (see Boyd). Due to the constructive criticism of biographical works, documentaries, such as *Malcolm X: Make it Plain* and *The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X*, and memoirs, such as *Remembering Malcolm* and *The Other Malcolm*, I intend to repair distortions about Malcolm X. Unlike these works that primarily focus on Malcolm X, other works do gauge the rhetorical effects of Malcolm X (see R. Benson). I extend Benson's work by also examining the impact of Malcolm X today and how people elect to remember him instead of attempting to produce scholarship directly about his life.

The second, and substantially longer, part of my dissertation combines the theories of public memory, specifically the association between culture and collective memory; literacy, exactly an examination of the festival as a literacy event; rhetorical analysis, precisely epideictic rhetoric; and visual rhetoric, particularly the relationship between visual rhetoric and ethos. Each approach addresses the (re)construction of rhetors, their rhetoric, and their rhetorical effectiveness; therefore, these theories inform each other in various ways. Consequently, this theoretical framework illustrates how literacy, rhetorical theory, and visual rhetoric overlap, thus expanding the conception of a theoretical framework within rhetoric.

Chapter two is a literature review of what scholars have said about Malcolm X. In particular, it discusses the rhetorical importance of Malcolm X. I examine the accuracy, mythologizing and historical consensus, biographical debates, available primary and secondary sources, and literal versus rhetorical depictions of this legendary rhetor and rhetorician. Specifically, I analyze what scholars, who primarily produce research outside of rhetoric and

composition, have said about Malcolm X in regard to his life, the interpretations of scholars based on his speeches, and the representations of Malcolm X that documentaries construct and circulate. While the actual life of Malcolm X historically contextualizes his rhetoric, I conclude that scholarship about Malcolm X should not only relate to his life.

In chapter three, I argue that researchers should aim to construct a state of equilibrium by using both western and non-western research strategies when they discuss the rhetoric of non-white individuals, movements, or organizations. Additionally, we cannot whitewash our goal of equilibrium by dismissing a critical component of such individuals, movements, or organizations (i.e., disregard race). I assess what scholars of rhetorical studies have said about Malcolm X and the methodologies and theoretical frameworks that they employ. I conclude by surveying the scholarship that considers the legacy of Malcolm X and its relationship with culture, education, and religion. When studying a rhetor of color, such as Malcolm X, a researcher should develop a methodology or theoretical framework that has recognizes the racial complexities related to this rhetor. Furthermore, if possible, reconnecting this rhetor of color to a community connected to his or her rhetorical legacy should be a priority.

In chapter four, I argue for the incorporation of a rhetorical circle of Positionality, Motive(s), and Community Accuracy (PMC) While the methods of a researcher will change due to how research topics will always vary to an extent, this rhetorical circle prioritizes the integrity and goals of a research topic above a researcher's objectives. Furthermore, this circle of PMC encourages a researcher to determine if his or her research goals celebrate (i.e., cultural *appreciation*) or exploit (i.e., cultural *appropriation*) his or her research subjects if this researcher does not belong to the community, organization, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, etc. of his or her research subjects. The examination of the interconnectedness

of cultural practices expressed at this festival through the legacy of Malcolm X motivates me to utilize this cultural rhetorics methodology. Despite the efficacy of this methodology, I am not suggesting this methodology is a model that will support all research projects. I am claiming, though, that all researchers should consider their positionality and motive(s) as they interact with an unknown culture and/or unfamiliar cultural practices. In this particular case, PMC was a result of my research process instead of a methodology that I forced upon this festival.

In chapter five, I study the literacy practices enacted throughout the festival, especially how these practices contribute to collective memory and the reconstruction of Malcolm X. Utilizing the components that I discuss in chapter four, such as ethnographic research, oral history, and rhetorical analysis, I demonstrate the benefits of immersing oneself in the culture of study. In this chapter, I argue that this festival is a literacy event that expands our conception of literacy in multiple ways. The reconnective racial literacies of this festival reconnect individuals with each other, their community, and their racial history. Since the sponsorship of this festival involves grassroots funding, a collective sponsorship mitigates the potential negative effects of sole sponsorship. Additionally, volunteers, vendors, and attendees all testify to how the literacy practices of this festival resist the effects of colonialism and prompt reconnective processes for them.

In chapter six, I evaluate a prominent oratorical performance at the festival as epideictic rhetoric, specifically its relationship with the (re)construction of Malcolm X's legacy. Specifically, I argue that Nuri Muhammad's oratory, which celebrates Malcolm X, symbolizes how epideictic rhetoric is also a collective experience. Due to Nuri's position as a student minister of the Nation of Islam (NOI) and Malcolm X's complex relationship with the NOI (as upcoming chapters will describe), Nuri creates a collective experience with an audience by using

the community's trust in and knowledge of Malcolm X to praise virtues and condemn vices that will improve this community. My rhetorical analysis of Nuri's speech is a result of transcribing an epideictic performance that I personally heard and recorded. Therefore, researchers should also be willing to immerse themselves in communities that they study.

In chapter seven, I investigate how visual artifacts create their own messages about who Malcolm X is and show how we should remember him. Specifically, I examine five visual artifacts that advertised five different festivals. I argue that these visual artifacts (re)construct the ethos of Malcolm X by persuading attendees to normalize specific habits of Malcolm X in their own lives. Ultimately, this chapter emphasizes the rhetorical value of contemporary visual artifacts that depict Malcolm X. To fully understand how we can (re)construct rhetors, we have to assess how current visual artifacts relate to this particular reconstruction. If we only consider the life of Malcolm X or his words, we prevent ourselves from ascertaining how understandings of his life and words have produced other artifacts, such as visuals.

Ultimately, this project employs intellectual history, rhetorical theory, literacy practices, and public memory theory to inspect how communities construct and/or reconstruct historically significant orators. As a result, this project contributes to the field by explaining how we can employ these multiple lines of inquiry to reexamine *any* rhetor, not just as a historical figure but a key figure in contemporary cultural and rhetorical practices. My methodological choices, which focus on epideictic rhetoric, literacy practices, and visual (re)construction, establish an approach for reexamining any rhetor—one that scholars can elect to modify as needed.

Chapter 2: The Rhetorical Circulation of Malcolm X:
The Man vs. The Legend

This chapter is a literature review of what scholars have said about Malcolm X. The following chapter will discuss the rhetorical importance of Malcolm X. In particular, I will examine the accuracy, mythologizing and historical consensus, biographical debates, available primary and secondary sources, and literal versus rhetorical depictions of this legendary rhetor and rhetorician.

> "I am not educated nor am I an expert in any particular field—but I am sincere, and my sincerity is my credentials" – Malcolm X ("A Declaration of Independence" 20)

The most widely accessible and conventional resources about Malcolm X are Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, published in 1965, and Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*, a biopic, released in 1992, about his life and starring Denzel Washington as Malcolm X. Together, Haley and Lee mythicize Malcolm X, constructing him as a symbol with various meanings. For example, in the assassination scene of Lee's biopic, it takes two shots from a sawed-off double barrel shotgun to knock Malcolm X down. While Malcolm X was shot multiple times by both a shotgun and two handguns, Marable documents that Malcolm X was not shot consecutively by a shotgun (*Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* 437). This exaggeration, however, stresses the herculean life that he led. While I view Malcolm X as an exemplary model of how people of color should carry themselves, it is easy to overlook the fictional components of both the biopic and autobiography if we accept him as a symbol. As I will discuss later in this chapter, many scholars challenge the accuracy of Haley's *Autobiography* and aim to resolve these inaccuracies about his life. These scholars aim to correct the myths about Malcolm X and accurately represent him. Other scholarship, such as the works of Malcolm Jarvis and Paul. D. Nichols and Michael Eric Dyson, questions the portrayal of Malcolm X in Lee's film. As Dyson observes, two objections to the biopic are the influence of Haley's *Autobiography*, which is not a definitive retelling of his life, on the film (134-36) and, possibly due to length, the biopic's conflation of

important people in Malcolm X's life (i.e., Baines embodies the actions of Bimbi, who I will discuss later, and the brothers of Malcolm X in the film) (137-38). Although a complete illustration of Malcolm X is necessary, competing interpretations of him reduce the complexities of his life by concentrating on contestable details about it.

In 1992, Lee was candid about his process for making his film. Sheila Rule reveals the controversy surrounding the film in its premature stages: "The project has been beset by battles over such issues as Hollywood's readiness to deal with a controversial leader . . . and whether a white direction . . . could do justice to the subject" (Rule). The effects of race in regard to interpretation and representation likely motivated Lee to create the film. Who should direct the biopic? Who should write the biography? Such questions reflect the importance of representation and positionality interlocked with race. While many presume that Haley's work is the foundation of the biopic, Lee claims that he interviewed "Malcolm X's relatives and black Muslims who were close to him" (Rule). Additionally, he publicly stated that he did not "believe" Perry's biography about Malcolm X (Rule). He finally explains, "'We make the connection between Soweto and Harlem, Nelson and Malcolm, and what Malcolm talked about—pan-Africanism, trying to build these bridges between people of color . . . He is alive in children in classrooms in Harlem, in classrooms in Soweto'" (Rule). One objective of the biopic, then, is to represent the intellectual and spiritual growth of Malcolm X, who incontestably transformed himself throughout his life and committed himself to black nationalism. While the details within these stages of transformation may be significant to some, Lee concerns himself with the representation of Malcolm X within the product. Although these widespread resources about Malcolm X may not be accurate, likely the result of available biographical materials at the time,

they likely introduced and still introduce people to Malcolm X. However, as this chapter will convey, the circulation of ideas about him can privilege and obscure his legacy.

I argue that the rhetorical historicization and re-historicization of Malcolm X as a person confines his legacy to only his life and disregards how his rhetoric has continuous effects on communities of people who revere him. In this chapter, I review notable publications about Malcolm X. First, I provide a succinct summary of Malcolm X's life for potential readers who may be unfamiliar with his legacy, offering the details about Malcolm X's life that scholars have verified and agree upon. My intent is to emphasize we have an *incontestable version* of his life. I also concisely discuss the history of the Nation of Islam (NOI) to present its history, structure, and rhetorical appeal. Both summaries of Malcolm X's life and the history of the NOI are not meant to be exhaustive but instead offer necessary context to readers. Second, I examine critical biographies designed to concentrate on Malcolm X's life, specifically who he was. I present this academic scholarship to stress how focusing on just his life—literal depictions rather than rhetorical impact—prompts a skirmish over Malcolm X as a man. By literal depictions, I am referring to scholarship concerned with the historical accuracy of the man and his speeches. Rhetorical depictions, on the other hand, consider not only the legacy of this man and his speeches but also the community practices that they influence. I also discuss resources that offer other details and interpretations of him as a man, strengthening his legendary status. What separates these sources from the critical biographies, however, is that these sources operate more from personal experiences informed by knowing Malcolm X personally more than simply analyzing and speculating about him. This distinction highlights the importance of an author's positionality. We should consider an author's positionality, as I will show, when reviewing what an author concludes or focuses on in regard to figures such as Malcolm X. Third, I review

resources, including documentaries and books that include his speeches, that circulate his rhetorical message by allowing the man and the legend to speak for himself. While these sections uncover the informative and yet conflicting contributions of countless scholars, I outline the upcoming chapter as it relates to our field to signal a shift from the man and the legend to purely his rhetorical value.

From Malcolm Little to el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz

While constructing a definitive accurate representation of Malcolm X is not a goal of this dissertation, providing a summary of his life is necessary to establish the accepted, uncontested facts about his life. On May 19, 1925, Malcolm X, who was then Malcolm Little, was born in Omaha, Nebraska to Earl Little and Louise Little (Marable *Portable* xxix). Both Earl Little and Louise Little were dedicated Garveyites (Marable *Malcolm X* 16-21). In Haley's *Autobiography*, Malcolm X recalls the racial climate of Omaha, a racial climate confirmed by an armed faction of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) calling for Earl Little, who was not home, to Louise Little before breaking the windows of the Little's home (3-4). After moving to Lansing Michigan, someone set fire to the home of the Little family (Haley 5-6). While the police who investigated the housefire believed that Earl Little caused the fire (Marable *Malcolm X* 25-26), Marable suggests otherwise by arguing that "the destruction of a black family's home by racist whites was hardly unique in the Midwest" (26). These conflicting accounts reflect the motives of white institutions to protect white institutional structures. After Earl Little was "killed in a streetcar accident" (Marable *Portable* xxix), Malcolm X states that the financial burden, a burden caused by his father's insurance company ruling Earl Little's death a suicide, overwhelmed his family and initiated his mother's mental breakdown (Haley 13-25). Subsequently, "Welfare officials" determined that Malcolm's older siblings were incapable of caring for Malcolm and placed him

in "the Ingram County Juvenile Home in Mason" (Marable *Malcolm X* 36). In a predominately white town, Malcolm experienced discouragement and racism mostly with his teachers, teachers who would dissuade him from educational advancements (e.g., enrolling in specific courses) and from future careers (e.g., aspirations to become a lawyer) due to his race (37-38). Largely due to Malcolm's fascination with "the racially mixed Hill district of Boston," Malcolm moved to Boston to live with his sister Ella in 1941 (37-38). In addition to documenting considerable hardships, these early moments delineate Malcolm X's early experiences with systemic racism and its connection to whiteness.

Upon his arrival, Boston exposed Malcolm to a different environment, an environment involving drugs and gambling. Malcolm admits, "I had never tasted a sip of liquor, never even smoked a cigarette, and here I saw little black children, ten or twelve years old, shooting craps, playing cards, fighting, getting grown-ups to put a penny or nickel on their number for them, things like that" (Haley 51). Malcolm's inexperience with the temptation of such an environment, in addition to the absence of his parents, likely creates the allure of the Detroit Red lifestyle. As I will discuss later, the legend of Detroit Red is highly contested because many people claim that Malcolm X exaggerated his own lifestyle as Detroit Red. Malcolm attributes most of his transition to Detroit Red, a nickname of Malcolm and the title of his era as a criminal, to "Shorty" since Shorty, who openly criticized legal work, introduces Malcolm to the criminal activity of Boston (52-54). In "Detroit Red," "Hustler," "Trapped," and "Caught," Malcolm describes his experiences as a habitual gambler, drug dealer, steerer (i.e., connecting customers with prostitutes), numbers runner, and robber (98-174). On February 27, 1946, Malcolm and Malcolm Jarvis, who partially influences "Shorty" in Haley's *Autobiography*, were "convicted of four counts of breaking and entering" (Marable *The Portable* xxx) and "sentenced

. . . to four concurrent eight-to-ten-year sentences" (Marable *Malcolm X* 68). While prison may seem like the worst outcome of Malcolm's decision to leave for Boston, his prison sentence would truly allow Malcolm to rehabilitate.

Regardless of potential debates about the details of Malcolm's past, the legend of Detroit Red is vital to his supporters and to his legacy for various reasons. First, the more criminal of a lifestyle that he led, the more difficult it would have likely been for him to rehabilitate. To put simply, if Detroit Red could become Malcolm X, any person of color—particularly blacks who live a similar lifestyle to Detroit Red—could revolutionize him or herself. Second, and more importantly, Malcolm's pathway to becoming a renowned historical figure did not involve traditional educational training. Therefore, the magnetism of Detroit Red as a symbol is boundless because Malcolm survived and overcame countless obstacles.

Malcolm's relationships with an inmate and his siblings prompted his education while "seventy-seven months in three Massachusetts penitentiaries" only removed him from his previous environments (Goldman 32). Bimbi, a self-educated prison inmate, conveyed the importance of knowledge and the eloquence that only an understanding of language could provide (Haley 177-79). According to Marable, "John Elton Bembry," who Malcolm refers to as Bimbi, "seemed knowledgeable about virtually every subject and had the verbal skills to command nearly every conversation" (*Malcolm X* 73). As a result of Bembry's intellect, he became a symbol of what Malcolm could become through reeducation. This detail is crucial because Lee's biopic attributes the reeducation of Malcolm X and his introduction to the NOI to Bimbi, which erases the importance of his siblings, who prompted his religious conversion. According to Marable, Malcolm's brothers, Philbert and Reginald wrote letters to Malcolm, hoping to convince him to consider practicing Islam (*Malcolm X* 75). A prison visit with

Reginald, who told Malcolm that God was black, and a prison visit with Hilda, his sister who expressed the biblical myths of the NOI to Malcolm, motivated Malcolm to not only contemplate the words of his siblings but also to write and rewrite a letter addressed to Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the NOI at the time (77-79). Malcolm's subsequent actions would foreshadow his time as a NOI minister. In prison, Malcolm was part of a debate club and was an exceptional debater (90-91). Additionally, "Malcolm had converted several black inmates" and demanded Norfolk prison to modify their prison rules (e.g., dietary accommodations) for Muslims (93-94). Prison rehabilitated Malcolm because it provided him with the opportunity to discover his aptitude for public learning, speaking, conversion, and activism.

On August 5, 1952, Malcolm X was released on parole and met Elijah Muhammad twenty-six days later (Marable *The Portable* xxx). As Goldman chronicles, when Malcolm X was paroled, "Martin Luther King was a Ph.D. candidate at Boston University" and Stokely Carmichael was "a schoolchild in Trinidad" (45). Despite the obstacles that Malcolm encountered, he would accomplish much more in only twelve years than anyone could have predicted. Malcolm X strengthened the NOI in numerous ways, causing the NOI to appoint him as the minister of Mosque No. 7 in June of 1954 (Marable *The Portable* xxx). Because Malcolm X elevated the mosques in Boston and Philadelphia, his success at restoring Temple No. 7 in Harlem, NY was probable (Marable *Malcolm X* 104-11). For the NOI, Malcolm X's work "in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York . . . increased NOI membership by perhaps a thousand followers," but the FBI took notice of his work (111). The dedication of Malcolm X, as well as other members of the NOI, significantly increased the membership of the NOI: "Between 1953 and 1955," membership increased "from about twelve hundred to nearly six thousand members,"

and "From 1956 until 1961," membership would reach somewhere "between fifty thousand and seventy-five thousand members" (123).

As a minister of the NOI, three pivotal moments of Malcolm X life increased his notoriety. First, as scholars have argued, Malcolm X's 1957 confrontation with the NYPD over the issue of police brutality[1] added to his reputation for those who knew him and exposed his name and NOI affiliation for those who did not know of him in New York (see Cone; Goldman; Marable). Second, from July 13 to July 17 of 1959, New York City's WNTA-TV aired "five half-hour installments" entitled *The Hate That Hate Produced*, a series that provided media coverage to Malcolm X and the NOI (Marable *Malcolm X* 161). The rhetoric of *The Hate that Hate Produced* convinced many white and black Americans that the NOI was a hate group, forcing Elijah Muhammad to criticize how the media perverted the goals of the NOI (162). Finally, in 1960, Malcolm X established *Muhammad Speaks*, which was then the NOI's monthly newspaper, exposing non-members to the NOI (Marable *Malcolm X Reinvention* 163). While "Malcolm's schedule of media appearances, college lectures, and speeches grew throughout the 1960," these specific moments—the 1957 NYPD confrontation, *The Hate That Hate Produced*, and *Muhammad Speaks*—permitted Malcolm X to cultivate recognition for the NOI and himself as a rising leader and influential rhetor.

The causes of turmoil within Malcolm X's relationship with the NOI largely vary. According to Malcolm X, many members of the NOI believed that he would try to replace Elijah Muhammad, who was growing ill, as the leader of the NOI (Haley 334-35). In addition to these beliefs, which construct Malcolm X as an internal threat, Elijah Muhammad's private mistakes intensified the growing tension. Malcolm X stated that he heard "hints" about Elijah

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[1] I will cover this incident later in this chapter.

Muhmmad's contradictive actions since 1955 (Haley 340), but these rumors continued until 1962 as Muslims and non-Muslims also expressed allegations about Elijah to Malcolm X (341). In a conversation with Malcolm X, Wallace Muhammad, a son of Elijah, confirmed that his father had impregnated several of his secretaries, prompting Malcolm X to meet with three of the women who informed him that these rumors were actually facts (342-43). In April of 1963, Elijah met with Malcolm X and justified his actions with biblical myths, comparing his lifestyle with the actions of David, Noah, and Lot (344-45). Malcolm X, then, informed "six other East Coast Muslim officials," including a young Louis Farrakhan[2], about what Elijah Muhammad told him (345). Perry alleges, based on the testimony of Lomax, that Malcolm X, even after his conversation with Elijah, intended to "wait things out until he could take over" and revamp the NOI (238).

The NOI would claim that Malcolm X complicated matters on December 1, 1963 (Marable *The Portable* xxxiii). After the death of JFK, Elijah Muhammad ordered NOI ministers not to comment on the assassination (Haley 346). At the Manhattan Center, Malcolm X spoke in the place of Elijah, who was unable to attend, and during the question-and-answer portion of his speech, someone asked Malcolm X about his thoughts on the assassination of Kennedy (347). After he told the reporter the assassination was an example of "'the chickens coming home to roost,'" Malcolm X then stated, "'Being an old farm boy myself, chickens coming home to roost never did make me sad; they've always made me glad'" (Marable *Malcolm X* 272-73). With careful analysis, Malcolm X's comment simply means that a U.S. president was a victim of the violent climate that he helped establish. However, Malcolm X was clearly aware of Elijah's order and decided to disregard it. This choice only reinforced evolving rumors that Malcolm X

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[2] Marable claims that Louis Farrakhan told Elijah about Malcolm X discussing Elijah's confession with NOI ministers (*Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* 266)

was already attempting to supplant Elijah. As a result of the media coverage of Malcolm X's

comment, and John Ali[3], Elijah silenced Malcolm X for ninety days, and the media reported the

silencing (Haley 348). In January of 1964, Elijah decided to relieve Malcolm X "of all authority"

(Marable *Malcolm X* 278-79).

During this month, Malcolm X and his family would visit "Cassius Clay in Miami"

(Marable *The Portable* xxxiii). In *Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad*

Ali and Malcolm X, Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith state that Malcolm X attended the

historically notable boxing match between Cassius Clay and Sonny Liston (195). In spite of

Malcolm X's belief in Clay, specifically that Clay was predestined by Allah to become a boxing

champion (which he did become) (185), Elijah Muhammad's doubted Clay's chances against

Liston. In fact, Elijah concluded "what most boxing experts believed: Liston would . . . defeat

Clay" with ease (207). Jim Brown, who celebrated Clay's victory with Clay and Malcolm X

following the fight, indicates that Clay had decided "he could no longer follow Malcolm" due to

his own allegiance to the NOI[4] and the power of Elijah (199-201). Elijah Muhammad would give

Cassius the name of Muhammad Ali (218-19), a calculated decision that would counter Malcolm

X's hopes of using Clay's victory to gain his reinstatement into the NOI (177); arguably replace

Malcolm X's popularity with the fame of Muhammad Ali (272); and, most importantly, ruin the

friendship between Malcolm X and Ali. Unsurprisingly considering his limited options, on

March 9, 1964, Malcolm X announced that he was leaving the NOI and forming the Muslim

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[3] John Ali, who along with Captain Joseph was present when Malcolm X commented on the assassination, telephoned Elijah to expose Malcolm X's decision. Next, Ali allegedly briefed media organizations on the silencing of Malcolm X (Marable *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* 273-74).

[4] Years before Sam Saxon, an NOI member, would discuss the NOI beliefs with Cassius Clay in 1961(Roberts and Smith 12-13), Clay visited "Temple No. 15 in Atlanta" and even enjoyed "A White Man's Heaven is a Black Man's Hell," a musical tribute to the NOI (14-15). In 1962, Saxon invited Clay and his brother to a NOI rally where Clay and Malcolm X would first meet (55). As a result of the public's negative perception of the NOI and how such an association could negatively affect's Clay's boxing career, Clay was ambiguous about his NOI beliefs early in his career (127).

Mosque, Inc. (MMI) (Marable *The Portable* xxxiv), giving Ali another reason to honor Elijah by reminding Malcolm X of his disapproval of his decision to leave the NOI when Malcolm X and Ali later crossed paths (Roberts and Smith 252).

When we consider the next eleven months, Malcolm X would attempt to survive "by any means necessary" as he accomplished more significant milestones. Malcolm would give many of his most popular speeches, including "A Declaration of Independence," "The Ballot or the Bullet," "The Black Revolution," and "After the Bombing" (Breitman). Additionally, Malcolm X traveled abroad from April 13 to May 21, 1964 (Marable *The Portable* xxxiv), a trip that would unveil a wide range of countries and cultural practices to him (Marable *Malcolm X* 297-320). His hajj in particular provoked what Malcolm X would describe as a realization: "My whole life had been a chronology of—*changes*" (Haley 390). In his letter from Mecca, he voiced his amazement at experiencing moments of "'brotherhood'" with Muslims of all races: "Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and even eaten with people who in America would have been considered 'white'—but the 'white' attitude was removed from their minds by the religion of Islam" (390-91). Unfortunately, his international encounters were immensely different than his experiences in the U.S. Several attempts on his life occurred, most notably the firebombing of his home a week before his assassination (see Cone; Goldman; Marable; Perry). Major attempts involved J. Edgar Hoover ordering the FBI to "'Do something about Malcolm X'" (Marable *Malcolm X* 338) and unknown men attempting to attack Malcolm X outside of his home (358, 409), and frequent threats came in the form of anonymous phone calls terrorizing Betty, the wife of Malcolm X (341).

To establish a purely political instead of religious organization, Malcolm X held the "first public rally of his second group, the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) . . . at the

Audubon Ballroom" on June 28, 1964 (Marable *The Portable* xxxiv). As William W. Sales Jr.

argues in *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-

American Unity*, the OAAU possessed several promising components such as both a "Political

Committee and . . . Education Committee" (114), a financial foundation (115-16), *The Blacklash*,

or a newsletter (118-19), and even the "OAAU Liberation School," which offered classes to both

children and adults (120-22). In its early stages, the OAAU exhibited a commitment to

educational, political, and financial empowerment and enlightenment.

Despite these positive attributes, Sales directs academics to major problems with the

OAAU, ranging from the organization's dependency on Malcolm X and his power (149-51) and

the appointments of women in the organization since women who held high positions in the

organization would challenge the traditional beliefs of the MMI relating to women[5] (151-52).

Unfortunately, Malcolm X was unable to elevate the OAAU above these issues. On February 21,

1965, Malcolm X was assassinated at the Audubon Ballroom before he could give his speech to

an audience with his wife and children in attendance (Marable *Malcolm X* 432-49). Because the

life of Malcolm X is both captivating and unimaginable, academic scholarship pertaining to his

life is understandable. However, such academic pursuits involve conflicting interpretations and

reinterpretations of Malcolm X as a man instead of everything else he was and still is.

The Nation Within the Nation

One cannot discuss the Nation of Islam (NOI) without discussing Malcolm X. Similar to

most organizations, the NOI has advantages and limitations, but we cannot deny the appeal of

the NOI. The advancement of the NOI arises from what it offers to its members: a common black

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[5] Despite the OAAU's affiliation "with the MMI," "Malcolm X consciously involved women like Lynn Shifflet and Sarah Mitchell in the leadership of the OAAU," challenging the NOI's "idea that the woman's role was in the home" (Sales 151).

and religious identity, a common enemy (i.e., whites) to reinforce its orientation (see Burke *Permanence and Change*), self-discipline, and predestined black liberation. In C. Eric Lincoln's *The Black Muslims in America*, the historical overview of the NOI contextualizes not only the organization but also Malcolm X's complex relationship with it. Before the existence of the NOI, however, other influential movements prevailed. As Lincoln eloquently expresses, the attraction of the NOI is a result of past black organizations.

Established possibly in 1913, The Moorish Science Temple was led by Timothy Drew who managed to gain a following "as high as twenty or thirty thousand" (Lincoln 48). Convincing black followers that they were "'Asiatics,'" members earned "'Nationality and Identification Cards,'" which displayed an "Islamic symbol" (48-49). This religious movement promoted the belief "that the imminent destruction of the whites was signified by the appearance in the sky of a star within a crescent moon" (49). This "cult split into numerous smaller groups" after the death of Drew (50), an unsolved murder likely associated with the monetary exploitation of members by persuading them to purchase religious items like "charms, relics," and "magical potions" (49-50). While this movement advocated for nationality amongst its members, the movement did not reject the U.S. and encouraged "obedience and loyalty to the flag of the United States" (50-51).

In 1914, the honorable Marcus Garvey created the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA), "a movement devoted to extreme black nationalism and self-improvement" (Lincoln 53-54). Six years later "at the First International Convention of the UNIA," Garvey spoke to a crowd of 25,000, demonstrating his appeal to blacks (55). The UNIA produced a declaration and even a flag, specifically the Red (i.e., symbolizes blood of blacks of the past who have died and of those aspiring for a better future),

Black (i.e., symbolizes pride in one's black skin), and Green (i.e., symbolizes a commitment to a return to Africa) (RBG) flag (55-56). One of Garvey's greatest achievements was gaining financial support for "the UNIA's Black Star Steamship Line—organized to link the black peoples of the world to their African 'home'" (56). Therefore, the basis of the UNIA "was political and social" instead of founded upon a specific religion (57). As a result, Garvey managed to appeal to many blacks without alienating any of them by asking them to adopt a specific religion. A combination of surveillance (58), disagreements with other black leaders (59-60), and Garvey's "own lack of business acumen" led to his indictment "for using the mails to defraud in the promotion of stock in the UNIA's Black Star Steamship Line" (60). Following his sentencing and his appeal, Garvey was deported (61). Consequently, black Americans were anxious for a new organization committed to black liberation.

To summarize the complex and patriarchal[6] organization of the NOI, I will review a few facts about it. First, the alleged founder of the NOI was Professor Fard, who arrived in Detroit in 1930 (Lincoln 11). To add to the myth of Professor Fard, his nationality and race, at the time, were unknown (12). The only certainties for his members then were that Professor Fard established the NOI in Detroit and prepared Elijah Muhammad, known then as Elijah Poole, to lead the NOI (12-15). In June of 1934, Professor Fard disappeared, and despite several assumptions about his disappearance, nobody definitively knew the causes of his disappearance or his whereabouts after leaving Detroit (15). Second, Elijah Muhammad did not have much success in leading the NOI at the beginning. In fact, Elijah traveled to Chicago due to the effects of Professor Fard's disappearance (16). Third, the NOI historically only accepts African-American members (25). Its strict membership guidelines based on race reinforces the NOI's

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[6] While a gender analysis of the NOI is beyond the scope of this project, scholars have examined the gender dynamics of the NOI; see Gibson and Karim (2014); Taylor (2017).

ultimate goal: complete separation between blacks and whites (83). Fourth, while the NOI does worship Allah and labels its members as Muslims, the NOI is not recognized "as a legitimate sect of orthodox Islam" in the U.S. (210) or by "official representatives of orthodox Islam in the United States" (Lincoln 220). To be pointed, the NOI is an organization that extends membership to African-Americans and has strict guidelines for members, such as rules against voting (19), penalties for obesity, and even dietary restrictions (77), but its belief in separatism and Elijah Muhammad restricts its ability to possibly appeal to the orthodox Islam world.

The Fruit of Islam (FOI), a military-style subsection of the organization, was founded in 1937 in response to the so-called threat of anti-NOI citizens and local police (Lincoln 201). Although the FOI is secretive, we know the following facts: (1) FOI members can protect themselves and other members against outside threats and discipline NOI members who disobey rules; (2) the NOI requires every temple to create its own FOI subsection that meets an unknown minimum enrollment; and (3) the total number of FOI members is unknown (201). The FOI's background is essential because, as I will later demonstrate, such members provide every NOI minister, including Malcolm X, with the necessary security and confidence to navigate in public.

Unlike the UNIA, the NOI combines the so-called tension between race, specifically black and white, and religion, or Islam and Christianity (72). To understand these tensions, a complete reading of the NOI's "Yacub's History," written by Fard (Marable *Malcolm X* 86), is essential:

> First, the moon separated from the earth. Then, the first humans, Original Man,
> were a black people. They founded the Holy City Mecca. Among this black race were
> twenty-four wise scientists. One of the scientists . . . created the especially strong black
> tribe of Shabazz, from which America's Negroes, so-called, descend. About sixty-six

hundred years ago . . . among the dissatisfied was born a "Mr. Yacub." He was born to

create trouble, to break the peace, and to kill. . . . Among many other things, he had

learned how to breed races scientifically. (Haley 190)

Despite the problematic nature of this biblical myth, a tribal history explicitly counters a Western

civilization. Additionally, arguing that blacks were the original people cultivates black pride by

encouraging a historically oppressed race of people to recognize themselves as fundamental to

the world. The rhetoric of eugenics, though, reinforces essentialist stereotypes, forwarding a

racial stereotype that whites are inherently evil:

Though he was a black man, Mr. Yacub, embittered toward Allah now, decided, as

revenge, to create upon the earth a devil race—a bleached out, white race of people. . . .

Among Mr. Yacub's 59,999 all-black followers, every third or so child that was born

would show some trace of brown. As these became adult, only brown and brown, or

black and brown, were permitted to marry. . . . Mr. Yacub, except in his mind, never saw

the bleached-out devil race that his procedures and laws and rules created. A two-

hundred-year span was needed to eliminate on the island of Patmos all of the black

people—until only brown people remained. The next two hundred years were needed to

create from the brown race the red race—with no more browns left on the island. In

another two hundred years, from the red race was crafted the yellow race. Two hundred

years later—the white race had at last been created. . . . But finally the original black

people . . . rounded them up, put them in chains. With little aprons to cover their

nakedness, this devil race was marched off across the Arabian desert to the caves of

Europe. . . . When this devil race had spent two thousand years in the caves, Allah raised

up Moses to civilize them, and bring them out of the caves. It was written that this devil

white race would rule the world for six thousand years. . . . It was written that after

Yacub's bleached white race had ruled the world for six thousand years—down to our

time—the black original race would give birth to one whose wisdom, knowledge, and

power would be infinite. (Haley 191-93)

Consequently, the NOI constructs an argument about itself. First, it devises a racial ranking

system: black, brown, red, yellow, and white. To counter naysayers who would question the

validity of this system—since whites possessed, and arguably still do, the majority of the power

in the U.S. and globally—the NOI proposes that the domination of whites was predestined.

Therefore, potential members could likely identify with the NOI formed on the premise that

white domination will eventually end. Second, the NOI endorses an essentialist position on race

by arguing that both blacks and whites possess a past, present, and future contingent on race

(Alcoff 182). Third, whites cause worldwide problems and blacks will solve these issues.

Marable argues, "the demonizing of the white race, the glorification of blacks, and the bombastic

blend of orthodox Islam, Moorish science, and numerology were a seductive message to

unemployed and disillusioned African Americans" (Marable *Malcolm X* 86). In my agreement

with Marable, the NOI would be persuasive if we consider the organizations that existed before

it. Additionally, the predestined birth of a legendary figure of the black race mythicizes Dr. Fard

and empowers his replacement, Elijah Muhmmad, providing NOI members with leadership.

Granting the valid potential criticisms of the NOI in regard to its traditional ideology and biblical

myth, the NOI carved out a black space for blacks like Malcolm to find a voice and purpose.

Building upon the research of Lincoln, I provide in a later chapter relating to epideictic rhetoric a

contemporary example of how the NOI continues to operate and attract constituents.

Correcting Malcolm X's Legacy? Critical Biographies

The examination of Malcolm X as a man has allowed scholars to move beyond the autobiography and the biopic. While the following resources do represent Malcolm X as fallible, as all humans are, as they introduce new details about him, we can appreciate him as a pivotal figure in our history after studying a fuller picture of him. However, searching for the "True" Malcolm X can become counterproductive if we replace critical analysis with speculation. The four critical biographies that I will review discloses the importance of positionality and methodological benefits and limitations of writing about the man to correct the legend.

Peter L. Goldman, a journalist, created an early account of Malcolm X's life in *The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. Unlike other authors who have written biographies about Malcolm X, Goldman met and even interviewed him "between 1962 and 1964," describing his book as "a white book about Malcolm X" (xv). In Goldman's own description of his book, his words demonstrate his true awareness of Malcolm X: Goldman acknowledges that his approach will be informed by his whiteness. Embracing the journalistic style, Goldman uncovers several facts surrounding Malcolm X and the NOI, specifically the adult life of Malcolm X. For example, Goldman reveals a conversation between Elijah Muhammad and Dr. King Jr. (65); the only definitive encounter, and brief conversation, between Malcolm X and Dr. King Jr. in March of 1964 (95); and even the private reflective side of Malcolm X (179-80).[7]

Although the first section discusses Malcolm X's journey to become a NOI minister and his triumph as a minister and the second section examines the events leading up to his assassination after leaving the NOI, a significant contribution of this book is Goldman's report of the trail and conviction of Malcolm X's alleged assassins (See Part III of *The Death and Life of*

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[7] While in Ghana, Taher Kaid, a white African revolutionary and a Muslim, emphasized to Malcolm X that his rhetorical vision based on skin color would not include Taher, forcing Malcolm X to consider his black nationalist agenda (Goldman 179-80).

Malcolm X). Goldman explicitly states that the assassination was not a result of a grand "state-conspiracy theory" due to the police offering Malcolm X protection and discusses Malcolm X's "list of suspects," a list that "named only Muslims;" how Malcolm X was assassinated; and the mistakes of his assassins (e.g., leaving behind weapons) (360-73). Additionally, Thomas Hagan, or Hayer or Mujahid Halim, admitted that he did participate in the assassination in response to Malcolm X's rhetoric concerning Elijah Muhammad, but he still argues that the other two convicted assassins, Norman 3X Butler and Thomas 15X Johnson, were not guilty (409-10).[8] According to Goldman's research, "the Muslims killed Malcolm," challenging any argument that non-Muslims murdered Malcolm X (423). As Goldman argues himself, when we think of Malcolm X after the NOI, we should consider his commitment to remaining "*flexible*," or to use his popular slogan, Malcolm X was literally surviving "*By any means necessary*" (221-22). Unlike several authors, Goldman expresses his positionality by stating that we cannot ignore how whiteness affects his research. Unfortunately, Goldman concerns himself more with a literal depiction of Malcolm X, or who is Malcolm X and what can we definitively say occurred in his life, than the rhetorical depiction of Malcolm X. In other words, he fails to consider that Malcolm X can also function as a symbol, a symbol for a plethora of abstract concepts such as manhood or blackness, to people.

In 1991, Bruce Perry published *Malcolm X: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America*, which develops Goldman's work. In his book review for *The Baltimore Sun*, Gregory P. Kane described Perry's biography as "a critical biography" that borders on "character assassination" ("Detailed"). Perry conducts an oral history of Malcolm X by examining Malcolm X's prison record and conducting interviews with allegedly "more than four hundred and

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[8] Hayer refused to name his accomplices; therefore, during his trial, the jury did not view his statement, which he said his co-defendants were innocent, as credible (Goldman 422-23).

twenty" people who range from purportedly childhood friends to family members (xii-xv). What separates Perry's work from Goldman's own biography are Perry's unsubstantiated but massive allegations and attention to Malcolm X's childhood. First, Perry suggests that Malcolm X engaged in non-heterosexual behavior as a child (28-29) and in his years of hustling as Detroit Red (82-83). The problematic nature of such a claim is the evidence. In each case, Perry states that a friend of Malcolm declares that Malcolm himself said he participated in such behavior. While it should not matter to followers and academics if he was heterosexual or not, Perry does construct a massive claim as a result of purely hearsay.

Second, Perry incorporates information from his interview with Malcolm Jarvis, who, according to Perry, is one of the many people combined to construct Shorty in Haley's work (xii). In addition to not explicitly explaining his evidence for another substantial allegation, an allegation that would challenge what we believe to be the life and legacy of Malcolm X, Perry contradicts himself by saying Shorty is a fusion of "two or three men" (xii) to "a fictional composite of a number of real-life people" (50). Although Haley's *Autobiography* could have created a fictional Shorty, Perry, again, fails to include concrete evidence to defend his theory and is unclear about how many different real people contribute to the creation of Shorty as a character.

Third, Perry suggests that Malcolm X never truly abandoned his manipulative ways. Perry argues that prisoners stated Malcolm X embellished his Detroit Red years (105-06); he adjusted his rhetoric with media members, which reflects his "Hollywood actor" ambitions (174-75); he arranged for men with knives to pursue him outside of his house to give his babysitter details for a police testimony, which fueled the feud between Malcolm and the NOI (307-08); and he even set his own house on fire in 1965 to either create publicity for himself (as well as

negative publicity for the NOI) or to prevent the NOI from regaining the property, which did not belong to him (351-56). Ultimately, Perry's entire argument about Malcolm X appears in an alleged quotation of Malcolm Jarvis: "Malcolm Jarvis does not believe Malcolm had changed. 'He wanted to be top man in anything he did,' says Jarvis, emphasizing how Malcolm had insisted on running his burglary team and his prison debating team" (227). In other words, Malcolm X never stopped being Detroit Red because every move was part of a calculated hustle rather than genuine persuasion. Unfortunately, Perry defends his argument with hearsay and assumptions as opposed to concrete evidence and grounded analysis. Unlike Goldman, Perry ignores his own positionality. Also, Perry's corrective approach is a research practice that embraces a power dynamic that further divides academia from local communities because he appears more interested in definitively revealing who Malcolm X was as opposed to how he still uplifts his followers.

Despite such criticisms, the usefulness of Perry's biography is not widely contested. Other significant works, including Walter Dean Myers's *Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary*[9] and Andrew Helfer's *Malcolm X: A Graphic Biography*[10], (uncritically) cite *Malcolm X: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America*. Additionally, *Malcolm X: In Our Image* includes Arnold Rampersad's "The Color of His Eyes: Bruce Perry's *Malcolm* and Malcolm's Malcolm," an article that constructively scrutinizes Perry's speculative biography (117-34), and Ron Simmons's and Marlon Riggs's "Sexuality, Television, and Death: A Black Gay Dialogue on

[9] Although *Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary* is significantly shorter compared to other biographies, the combination of his succinct and captivating writing style and primary sources (e.g., photographs, newspaper articles, letters, and certificates) creates a biography that reads like a narrative. In addition to this biography, Myers also created *Malcolm X: A Fire Burning Brightly*, a children's book about Malcolm X.

[10] *Malcolm X: A Graphic Biography* utilizes black and white visuals to emphasize the importance of crucial moments of Malcolm X's life. For example, six panels, each a different depiction of Malcolm X's turned face, create a closer and more faded snapshot of Malcolm X, demonstrating the stress and tension affecting his life in 1964 (4).

Malcolm X," which assesses the implications of people rejecting Perry's allegations as well as reductive interpretations of Malcolm X's legacy (135-54). To put plainly, while some academics, such as myself, may not value unfounded assumptions about Malcolm X, Perry's biography does indirectly raise important questions concerning potential homophobic reactions among people of color to non-heterosexual men of color who are considered leaders.[11]

James H. Cone also published *Martin & Malcolm in America: A Dream or a Nightmare*, but, as his book's title explains, one significant distinction between *Martin & Malcolm in America* and previous works about Malcolm X is Cone's well-balanced assessment of both Dr. King Jr., and Malcolm X. A central argument of Cone's is that "Martin and Malcolm represented the two sides in W. E. B. Du Bois's concept of double identity—they represented, respectively, the American and African, the two warring ideas struggling to make sense out of the involuntary presence of Africans in North America" (270). The implication is that to understand either Malcolm X or Dr. King, one has to understand both leaders. In a succinct overview of Dr. King's life in "The Making of a Dreamer (1929-55)," he illustrates how King's upbringing, which includes a middle-class family, a Christian background, and academic excellence, excellence which introduces him to Gandhi, affected his integrationist outlook (19-37). In his overview of Malcolm X's life, particularly from 1925-1952, Cone conveys that Malcolm X's early life consisted of parents who were Garveyites, a sudden exposure to racism, a life of poverty, crime, and prison, and self-education as a result of being exposed to the NOI (38-57). As a result, Malcolm X embraced his African roots and rejected any American identification. Despite their

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[11] I am not stating that Malcolm X was gay or engaged in non-heterosexual acts but rather focusing on hypothetical responses to discovering that any man of color is a non-heterosexual.

discernable lives, Cone argues that they had similar strengths[12] (290-314) and identical

weaknesses[13] (272-87). Fully understanding the context for Dr. King Jr's and Malcolm X's

rhetoric would then display that they supplement, instead of counter, each other. While Cone is

not necessarily incorrect about the similar strengths and weaknesses of Malcolm X and Dr. King

Jr., he avoids fully addressing how the educational system affects the context that he describes.

As I will later discuss, the educational system's representation of Dr. King can strengthen his

impact and weaken the appeal of Malcolm X. However, Cone analyzes both Dr. King and

Malcolm X, unlike Goldman and Perry, emphasizing the historical connection between black

leaders and their literal lives.

  Since Malcolm X, as Goldman argued, began living by any means necessary, many have

different perspectives of Malcolm X. While these perspectives relate to the literal depiction of

Malcolm X, these perspectives also correlate to the rhetorical depiction of Malcolm X. In

Malcolm X: Black Liberation & the Road to Workers Power, Jack Barnes, the "national secretary

of the Socialist Workers Party" who interviewed Malcolm X "for the *Young Nationalist*

magazine" in 1965 (11), argues that Malcolm X adopted a socialist philosophy in his later life.

Before emphasizing his argument about socialism, Barnes discusses Malcolm X's growing

consideration of women's oppression (85-94) and Malcolm X's commitment to not allowing

religious differences to divide his people (94-99). These changes, according to Barnes, reinforce

the assumption that Malcolm X changed his view of black nationalism. For example, Barnes

argues that Malcolm X was transitioning to Pan-African socialism based on his statement that

"'You can't have capitalism without racism'" (104), in addition to Malcolm X's inability to

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[12] See "Culture," "Politics," "Critique of American Christianity," "Qualities as Leaders," "Self-Criticism and Humility," "Non-Violence and Self-Defense," "Militancy and Humor," "Solidarity with the Masses," and "Link with other Liberation Movements" (290-314).
[13] See "Sexism" and "Classism" (272-87).

formulate a definition for black nationalism after learning that his original definition alienated allies (47-48) and his declaration that the "clash between the oppressed and those that do the oppression" will not "be based upon the color of the skin" (103). In Barnes's address to potential opponents, such as George Breitman who would argue that Malcolm X died a Black nationalist, Barnes calls attention to how "Malcolm had . . . stopped using the term 'Black nationalism'" and "'white revolutionaries'" (330-35). When we reflect on Malcolm X's life after the NOI, we can, then, accept Goldman's position (that Malcolm X was attempting to not alienate anyone to gain allies and Malcolm X died a black nationalist) or Barnes's argument (Malcolm X realized the limitations of black nationalism and understood that socialism was a more unifying philosophy). On one hand, Barnes's methodology is useful as he concerns himself with questions about philosophy, ideology, and politics regarding Malcolm X. On the other hand, narrowing down an accurate label, such as a socialist or black nationalist for Malcolm X, questions the credibility of other labels that people may associate with him. Additionally, if we as academics and followers accept that Malcolm X was indeed a socialist or becoming one, Malcolm X's legacy, then, signifies socialism on some level to everyone who studies him. Therefore, by arguing for a definitive label that Malcolm X should signify, we overlook how this label will always vary.

Manning Marable, a professor of history at Columbia University, produced one of the most recent biographies in *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*, arguing that he was intending to only "recount what actually occurred in Malcolm's life," or the literal depiction of Malcolm X (12). However, Marable's implicit argument, which the title suggests, is that Malcolm X relied on the method of "self-invention . . . to reach the most marginalized sectors of the black community," a method that relates to the rhetorical depiction of Malcolm X regarding legacy and community practices (11). For example, Marable claims that Malcolm X likely exaggerated his

life as a criminal (e.g., the number of robberies that he committed) even citing a friend of

Malcolm X's who confirms the exaggeration (61). Marable then makes strong allegations about

Malcolm X's sexual orientation. First, he claims that Malcolm X likely worked for a William

Paul Lennon and posits that the sexual experiences of Rudy described in Haley's *Autobiography*

were "probably" based on Malcolm X's "own homosexual encounters with Paul Lennon" (65-

66).[14] Second, Marable reveals that after getting arrested for robberies that he committed,

Malcolm X avoided a gun charge by providing police authorities with the names of his

accomplices (67-68).[15] Third, he challenges the fidelity of Malcolm X's and Betty Shabazz's

marriage by alleging that Betty Shabazz had an affair with an MMI member (379-82) and that

Malcolm X even had an affair while overseas (392-94). Unfortunately, Marable's grand

allegations about Malcolm X and Betty Shabazz overshadow countless other riveting facts, such

as Haley describing Malcolm X as a "'demagogue'" (248), the background information

regarding the changes that Haley's *Autobiography* underwent (259-61), and Malcolm X's

reading of Che Guevara's support of Harlem and the unproven meeting between Malcolm X and

Che (396). These discoveries are more credible than Marable's allegations because these

discoveries are founded upon more concrete evidence.

Notwithstanding the many revelations of Marable's *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*,

the biography experienced ample criticism. In *A Lie of Reinvention: Correcting Manning

Marable's Malcolm X* (ed. Ball and Burroughs), a collection of essays, nineteen authors offer

constructive criticism. Notably, Raymond A. Winbush offers the shortcomings of *Malcolm X: A*

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[14] Marable describes his proof as "circumstantial but strong evidence" (66).

[15] Malcolm Jarvis never mentions that Malcolm X provided the police with any information regarding the robberies and instead that address books that Malcolm X had on him revealed the information that the police needed (52-53). However, Marable does include Malcolm X's statement, which has been redacted, in *The Portable Malcolm X Reader* (44-45).

Life of Reinvention, including the absence of evidence to verify Malcolm X's relationship with

Paul Lennon (i.e., "Marable provides no facts, no primary sources, nor even any secondary

sources for this remarkable assertion" [109]) and Marable's inability to secure interviews with

Malcolm X's living family members, such as Betty Shabazz (111). Similarly, in a second

collection of essays, *By Any Means Necessary: Malcolm X: Real, Not Invented* (ed. Boyd et al.),

thirty-nine authors also evaluate Marable's work. Abdul Alkalimat, for example, also examines

the lack of evidence in Marable's footnotes to defend many of his own claims (40-42). Although

Marable may have been unable to credit the FBI for giving him access to specific documents,

Marable appears to offer accusations and theories instead of facts without any clear evidence.

Together, these responses to Marable illustrate how a critical biography can, then, become flimsy

if it restricts itself by endorsing the utilization of speculation.

Both collections of essays also include Karl Evanzz's essay "Paper Tiger." In 1993, Karl

Evanzz *The Judas Factor: The Plot to Kill Malcolm X* published a biography with a unique aim

expressed in the introduction: Evanzz focused on "Who killed Malcolm X" instead of "Who was

Malcolm X?" (x-xxi), narrowing the text's aim to how we should literally represent the death of

Malcolm X. The incorporation of visuals, such as mugshots of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm

X (98-101), federal documents (e.g., FBI documentation of an interview between FBI agents and

Malcolm X in 1955) (112), newspaper articles (255), and pictures of central subjects (e.g., a

photograph of Malcolm X standing in front of the County Borough of Smethwick) (408),

inundates potential readers with visible evidence. Evanzz states, "The FBI wanted Malcolm X to

be its 'Judas Factor'" due to its commitment to destroying the NOI (112). After the FBI

uncovered "that Wallace D. Fard was actually Wallace Dodd Ford," who had a prison record,

was born in Afghanistan, and applied for U.S. citizenship in 1909, the FBI allegedly provided

these discoveries to several newspaper outlets in 1963 (229-38). These discoveries challenged all myths concerning the divinity of Wallace D. Fard, but Malcolm X, after speaking with Elijah Muhammad, publicly labeled these reports as false (238). According to Evanzz, Malcolm X became the Judas factor because the FBI infiltrated the NOI. Specifically, John Ali[16], who was the national secretary of the NOI, was supposedly an FBI agent (299-13). Ali was the announcer of Malcolm X's suspension and even expressed that Malcolm X's comments about JFK were not reflective of the ideas of the NOI (255). Before Philbert, Malcolm X's brother, compared Malcolm X to Judas for leaving the NOI, Philbert joined John Ali and others at Elijah Muhammad's dining room (333). Additionally, John Ali pressured "an assistant minister to condemn Malcolm" in "his sermons" and "during any conversations with the media" (333). In other words, Malcolm X became the Judas factor since NOI members, such as John Ali, incited tension between Malcolm X and the NOI. One of the most captivating disclosures of Evanzz's biography does not relate to Malcolm X's assassination but to Malcolm X and Dr. King. Evanzz explains that a lawyer of Dr. King attempted to organize a meeting between Malcolm X and Dr. King in 1964, hinting at an alliance that we can only theorize about (352).

Marable's biography, however, should not be evaluated without attending to a critical source that should accompany it. While *The Portable Malcolm X Reader* does not provide all the evidence that critics may demand of Marable, Marable states that *The Portable Malcolm X Reader* "has been designed as a companion volume to the biography" (xxvi). Divided into four parts, "Part I: Documents" includes primary documents about Malcolm X, his parents, and

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[16] To emphasize the value of *The Malcolm X Encyclopedia,* an exceptional resource that offers definitions for terms and people associated with Malcolm X, Malcolm X and John Ali's friendship encouraged Malcolm X to nominate "Ali to the National Secretary Post," but their friendship likely ended as a result of incompatible points of views on how the NOI should use its funds (i.e., Malcolm X opposed the NOI misusing its financial resources by spending funds on themselves) (66).

central moments of his life (e.g., court documents) (1-406). "Part II: Oral Histories" contains

Manning Marable's interviews with Gerry Fulcher (409-26), a former member of "the NYPD's

special unit BOSS" (409), Abdullah Abdur-Razzaq (427-36), a former associate of Malcolm X

(427), Herman Ferguson (437-64), a former NOI member, MMI member, and OAAU chair of its

educational committee (437-38), and Khalil Islam (465-82), one of the convicted assassins of

Malcolm X (465). "Part III: Articles" provides readers with secondary sources written by well-

known authors including James Baldwin and Eldridge Cleaver (483-600). Largely due to limited

space, Marable may have not provided much of his sources in *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*

but offers academics arguably the greatest resource on Malcolm X in *The Portable Malcolm X*

Reader. However, likely due to Marable's discipline, he attempts to create an unerring account

of Malcolm X's life.

What is evident is that critical biographies are susceptible to formulating conjectures if

they attempt to recreate the True Malcolm. Cone and Goldman share one crucial methodological

practice that Perry and Marable do not always apply: they support their analysis of Malcolm X

with an abundance of evidence and resist the temptation to speculate about truths that we may

never know about Malcolm X. The motivation of scholars to reinterpret or to complete the story

of Malcolm X causes others who knew him to expand such reinterpretations and completed

stories.

Those Who Knew Him: The Real Malcolm X

Accounting for our own positionality and our own experiences affects our scholarly

engagement with topics. While Goldman did know Malcolm to some degree, he acknowledged,

as I stated in the previous section, that he was working from a space of whiteness. Unlike

previous texts that I discussed, the works in this section reinterpret Malcolm X as both a man and

a legend, but many of these authors reimagine him by recalling their own personal experiences with or personal connections to him. While knowing him clearly stresses the presence of bias in their accounts, they can also confirm or deny what others may speculate about him. Finally, these texts attempt to provide a literal depiction of Malcolm X while circulating the legend of him.

In *Malcolm X: The Man and His Times*, which includes six parts, many of the contributors of this work are writing from their personal experiences with Malcolm X. In the first part, eight authors, such as C. Eric Lincoln, reflect on Malcolm X. In "Myths About Malcolm X," a printed speech of Reverend Albert Cleage, Cleage states that Mecca did not change Malcolm X's perspective on white people, Malcolm X did not believe Islam would resolve racism, and Malcolm X did not endorse the internalization of "the black man's struggle" (14-18). Cleage is upfront about his intended audience consisting of only black people as he declares: "We have got to become the custodians of our own heroes and save them and interpret them the way we want them interpreted" (20). As Betty Shabazz concisely recounts her time with Malcolm X in "Malcolm X as a Husband and Father," she restates a similar argument: "Malcolm's basic goal or objective never changed. . . . Malcolm's feeling was that if a group has an answer to the problem of black people, then they should help solve the problem without having all black people join that group" (141), forming the foundation of the second part, or "Malcolm X at Close Range—Personal Views" (79-143). The third part transitions from secondary sources to primary sources as it contains a transcript of a panel that included Malcolm X in 1961 (149-67), Kenneth B. Clark's interview with Malcolm X in 1963 (168-81), a recorded conversation between the FBI and Malcolm X in 1964 (182-204), and a telephone conversation between Carlos Moore and Malcolm X in 1965 (205-11). When the FBI pressured Malcolm X to give them information about the NOI, Malcolm X replied, "There is no Government agency that

can ever expect to get any information out of me that is in any way detrimental to any religious group or black group for that matter" (193). His words show he was both publicly and privately committed to his people. Part four, "Malcolm X Abroad," comprises the arguments of three authors, with two authors communicating their personal experiences with him overseas (213-67). Part five includes the rhetoric of Malcolm X, highlighting the importance of seven of Malcolm X's lesser-known speeches (269-332). The final part, which likely targets those interested in performing research about Malcolm X, presents the "Organization of Afro-American Unity: A Statement of Basic Aims and Objectives," "Outline for Petition to the United Nations Charging Genocide Against 22 Million Black Americans," and a bibliography (333-56). Collectively, these six parts, written by authors who prioritize blackness and who reflect the importance of personal experience, construct a resource, aiming to accurately depict Malcolm X for generations to come.

Individuals who personally knew Malcolm X presented their experiences with him[17], adding to the legend of Minister Malcolm X. In *Remembering Malcolm*, Benjamin Karim recounts his transition from serving for the United States Air Force to meeting Malcolm X (41-44). On April 14th, 1957, Hinton Johnson, who was a NOI member, vocally criticized two white police officers who were assaulting a black man who the officers had arrested. Allegedly, the police officers then assaulted Hinton Johnson as well and arrested him (47). Malcolm X and members of the Nation of Islam, specifically Fruit of Islam members, marched to the 28th Precinct and demanded medical attention for Hinton Johnson. While Malcolm X was inside of the precinct, the crowd of his followers increased with "young Harlemites . . . Many of them had never before heard of Malcolm X" (47). According to Karim's account, police officers of the 28th

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[17] In the first part of *Malcolm X: As They Knew Him*, David Gallen and Peter Skutches assemble a chapter that synthesizes the memories of many people, such as Ralph Wiley, Charles Kenyatta, and Sonia Sanchez, who knew him in various ways (i.e., by listening to him or interacting with him) (27-97).

precinct provided a "police ambulance" to transfer "Johnson . . . to Sydenham Hospital" because

the police officers were alarmed by the crowd of protestors (48). After the police guaranteed

Malcolm X, who went to the hospital with his crowd of followers, that Hinton would continue to

receive medical treatment, Malcolm X dispersed the crowd with a hand gesture, prompting a

police officer to express, "'This is too much power for one man to have'" (48).[18] Within a single

night, the story detailing Malcolm X's and the NOI's victory and the NYPD's loss traveled

through Harlem (49). Karim states, "The more I heard about the whole episode the more I

wanted to be one of those men" (49-50). Unlike Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*, which suggests that a

protestor that night later became a student minister of Malcolm X, Karim does not state he was

present during the standoff. Instead, the accounts of the incident prompted him to attend one of

Malcolm X's sermons (50-57).

In addition to explaining why he joined the NOI, Karim divulges particulars about

Malcolm X as a teacher. Karim attended "Malcolm X's public speaking class," which "had

syllabuses, assignments, reports, book lists" (97). This class incorporated history (e.g.,

"Chaldeans, Hittites, Egyptians, and Dravidians"), contemporary events (i.e., the class read and

discussed information that they gathered by reading primary sources, such as *New York Times*

and *The Times*), philosophy, and religion (97). After their first session, Karim recalls the items

that Malcolm X encouraged all students to obtain: "a notebook, a dictionary, a thesaurus, a book

of synonyms and antonyms, an etymology text, a library card, and an open, willing mind" (98).

As a rhetorician, Malcolm X suggested that any speaker associated with him had to be

knowledgeable about several areas of knowledge. Karim explains that Malcolm X as a rhetor

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[18] Several authors disagree on certain details surrounding the NYPD incident. *Remembering Malcolm* states that "well over two thousand" people protested outside of the 28th precinct (48). Marable places the number of protestors at "four thousand" (*Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* 128). "A chairman of the 28th Precinct Community Council" estimates the number of protesters to be "2,600" (57).

"would write down a cue to" an idea "on a three-by-five index card," consider the arrangement of his speech, and, then, focus on delivery, almost mirroring the classical five canons of rhetoric. While most people are likely familiar with Malcolm X as a rhetor, Malcolm X as a rhetorician strengthens his legend because he is not merely a minister and orator but also a teacher (which I will take up in the next chapter).

Despite the rumors concerning Elijah Muhammad and his former secretaries, Karim reveals, Malcolm X "did ask us to introduce into our lectures stories that showed holy men in not altogether favorable light" (154). Such stories would likely condition NOI members to accept the number of affairs of Elijah Muhmmad and demonstrate Malcolm X's willingness to protect Elijah Muhammad. Malcom X's attempts failed, creating turmoil within the NOI. In fact, after Captain Joseph encouraged ministers to criticize Malcolm X during his suspension, Karim informed the mosque about Captain Joseph ordering a NOI member "to plant a bomb on Malcolm X's car" (158-60). Karim then proceeded to leave the mosque, and a "third of the audience" promptly followed him out of the NOI (160). Ironically, Karim illustrates how we can continue to arrange and rearrange Malcolm X's life for historical accuracy or aim to uncover his pedagogical, rhetorical, and religious importance by examining the effects of his legend.

In *The Other Malcolm— "Shorty"—Jarvis*, Malcolm Jarvis and Paul D. Nichols address Jarvis's relationship with Malcolm X, thereby contributing to the legend-building of Malcolm X. Jarvis begins by setting "the record straight" in regard to key misconceptions or unknown facts, such as how he assisted Malcolm X during their debates at the Norfolk Prison Colony by "keeping him on track and by providing strategically poignant facts" (8-13). Jarvis does not downplay the experiences of Detroit Red. Following his first encounter with Malcolm X at a pool hall, which involved Jarvis accusing Malcolm X of stealing his watch and Jarvis admiring

Malcolm X's composure (37-38), together, they established reputations for themselves within Boston. According to Jarvis, Malcolm X assisted a black woman who was being harassed by a white police officer. In this alleged incident, Malcolm X referenced he, like the police officer, possessed a firearm. Simultaneously, Jarvis bumped into the police officer from behind him (41-43). While Jarvis confirms Malcolm X's position in a numbers racket (46) and the burglarizing of unoccupied houses (50), Jarvis argues that Abdul Hameed, a musician from India, taught Malcolm and Jarvis about Islam before they were incarcerated (55-56). Hameed even provided both of them with "Muslim prayer books" when they were in prison (125). While Jarvis is not arguing that Hameed triggered Malcolm X's identification with Islam, he does distinguish Malcolm X's exposure to Islam from his introduction to the Nation of Islam (125). Although *Malcolm X*, the biopic, and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* are popular resources, Jarvis raises concerns about both resources. According to Jarvis, Betty Shabazz "was the main consultant" of the biopic even though she did not know Malcolm X until 1956. Additionally, Jarvis explains that Haley's work does not include several details because, Jarvis believes, Malcolm X elected to be private about specific experiences (136-37). Though I understand why Jarvis was concerned with the accuracy of Malcolm X's story, he reinforces accuracy as a goal of research.

Seeing, Hearing, and Reading Malcolm X

Documentaries and selected speeches of Malcolm X circulate him by sharing his voice in his own words. Together, the documentaries and the selected speeches have a different purpose than the previous scholarship that I have covered because they allow his words to speak for themselves or offer conflicting positions on Malcolm X. While the interpretations of academics do have some value, certain habits of academics, such as their methodology as I have discussed, produces their reading of Malcolm X. Documentaries (that contain lesser known statements of

and crucial details about him) and selected speeches allow viewers and readers to reach their own conclusions about Malcolm X. While some academics may argue that these interpretations of viewers and readers would likely be limited if they do not have access to all primary and secondary sources about Malcolm X, coming to one's own understanding of him should begin with seeing him, hearing him, and reading his words because this approach would likely allow them to develop their own understanding of and relationship with him.

In 1972, Arnold Perl directed *Malcolm X*, a documentary about his life. Because the narrator reads excerpts from Haley's *Autobiography* throughout, Haley's work heavily influences this documentary. Despite the influence of Haley, the documentary utilizes specific footage to highlight the importance of the words of Malcolm X. For example, images of black men using drugs follows footage of Malcolm X criticizing the "vices of white men." Such visual rhetoric humanizes the oratory of Malcolm X and others. Instances of John Ali announcing the suspension of Malcolm X or labeling Malcolm X a "Judas" intensifies the position of the NOI since even Elijah Muhammad claims that the death of Malcolm X is an example of him becoming a "victim of his own preaching." *The Lost Tapes: Malcolm X*, a recent documentary about Malcolm X, reuses some footage of Perl's documentary. However, *The Lost Tapes* primarily focuses on the timeline of 1959-1965, providing text to complement footage and to direct viewers to major events of Malcolm X's life. This documentary also emphasizes Malcolm X's growing relationship with Dr. King with actual footage as Malcolm X states, "I think that people in this part of the world would do well to listen to Dr. Martin Luther King and give him what he's asking for and give it to him fast before some other factions come along and try to do it another way." Before concluding with Ossie Davis's eulogy for Malcolm X, the documentary briefly mentions after Elijah Muhammad's death, Wallace Muhammad, one of Elijah's sons,

modifies the NOI and embraces Sunni Islam teachings. Louis Farrakhan commits himself to returning the NOI "to its original theology" in 1981.

While other programs, such as NBC's "Malcolm X: In His Own Words,"[19] only use Malcolm X's rhetoric, Orlando Bagwell's *Make it Plain* covers the entire life of Malcolm X by creating an oral history. *Make it Plain* includes interviews with several people who personally knew Malcolm X and could attest to his legacy. The interviews include testimonies of Maya Angelou, Peter Goldman, Peter Bailey ("Harlem Resident"), Cyril McGuire ("Childhood Friend") who even wrote to Malcolm X while he was in prison, siblings (e.g., Philbert Little and Ela Collins) of Malcolm X, Malcolm Jarvis ("Shorty"), Betty Shabazz, Ossie Davis, Sonia Sanchez ("Harlem Activist"), John Henrik Clarke, Alex Haley, and Gene Roberts, who confirms that he infiltrated Malcolm X's organization on behalf of the NYPD. William DeFossett, an NYC police officer, confirms that the 1957 police standoff as a result of the police attacking Johnson Hinton did happen. Robert Mangum, a NYC Police Deputy Commissioner, verifies Malcolm X waving his hand to disband protestors and a police commissioner replying, "That's too much power for one man to have." Malcolm X's combative approach was not simply a public performance. After Malcolm X pressed Peter Goldman to state his own solution to racism within the U.S., Goldman expressed his agreement with Dr. King's solution. Malcolm X replied, "You're dreaming. I haven't got time for dreams."

However, Captain Joseph was not as enthusiastic about Malcolm X by offering a more critical interpretation of Malcolm X. In Captain Joseph's retelling of a conversation with Malcolm X, Joseph told Malcolm that he was more political than religious in his speeches and

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[19] NBC only includes footage of Malcolm X speaking. The majority of the program is a version of "The Ballot or the Bullet."

that his rhetoric did not have the same emotional effects on Joseph like they used to. Captain

Joseph denies knowing who actually firebombed Malcolm X's house but confirms Malcolm X

was in danger due to how NOI members felt differently about Malcolm X's comments about

Elijah Muhmmad. Joseph states, "I wasn't remorseful. I wasn't sorry. For what? And as Mr.

Muhmmad said, he taught violence, and he died violently. And he was a hypocrite. And I say

that he was a Benedict Arnold." Other testimonies and footage provide evidence of the

controversy surrounding Malcolm X's assassination. A day before Malcolm X's funeral, Philbert

X and Wilfred X, brothers of Malcolm X, spoke about his assassination on behalf of Elijah

Muhammad and the NOI at the Savior's Day Convention. In addition to the awkward decision of

family members to publicly align themselves with an organization accused of conspiring against

Malcolm X, Gene Roberts states he told NYPD that he was not sure but expected that the NOI

would attempt to assassinate Malcolm very soon.[20] Despite the controversy surrounding his

death, this documentary conveys Malcolm X's lesser known statements, statements that provide

solutions: "First, the white man and the black man have to be able to sit down at the same table.

The white man has to feel free to speak his mind without hurting the feelings of that negro, and

the so-called negro has to feel free to speak his mind without hurting the feelings of the white

man. Then they can bring the issues that are under the rug out on top of the table and take an

intelligent approach to get the problem solved." Documentaries are not merely resources but

visual rhetorical artifacts, or artifacts that attach visual representations of Malcolm X to his

rhetoric and artifacts that offer crucial details about him. These artifacts become the foundation

of the visual circulation of him, offering viewers a vivid representation of both the man and the

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[20] William W. Sales Jr. confirms that Gene Roberts "reported to his superiors one week before Malcolm's assassination what he and several OAAU members thought was a dry run of his assassination," a dry run that even included men yelling, "'Get your hands out of my pocket'" (156). This detail strongly implies that Spike Lee likely performed more research than what we may believe to direct *Malcolm X*.

legend. Although all the information of these documentaries is pivotal, the images and audio of

Malcolm X attach facial expressions, a voice, and body language to the name, the speeches, the

man, and the legend.

Attaching versions of speeches[21] and interviews of Malcolm X to his legacy add to his

rhetorical story because his words, responses, and growth have context. Un-paraphrased and

contextualized, Malcolm X can be interpreted and reinterpreted by countless readers. *Malcolm X

Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements* includes "the major ideas Malcolm expounded and

defended during his last year" (vii). Although this selection contains renowned speeches of

Malcolm X, such as "Message to the Grassroots," "A Declaration of Independence," "The Ballot

or the Bullet," and "After the Bombing," George Breitman[22] presents Malcolm X's "Appeal to

African Heads of State," or his address to the African Summit (72-87), "With Mrs. Fannie Lou

Hamer," or his oration after Mrs. Hamer's speech (105-14, and "To Mississippi Youth," or his

alleged words to teenagers who were on a trip in New York (137-46). An important section,

"Confrontation with an 'Expert,'" offers a discussion between Malcolm X and Gordon Hall, who

accuses Malcolm X of identifying with communism since he worked with the Socialist Workers

Party (178-79). Malcolm X's response unintentionally confronts theories about his socialist

conversion: "Just because you speak somewhere doesn't make you that. . . . If speaking on the

socialist platform makes me a socialist, then when I speak in a Methodist church . . . I was in

Selma, Alabama, last week, speaking in Martin Luther King's church. Does that make me a

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[21] In addition to Marable's findings about how Malcolm X would revise his speeches (*Malcolm X* 303), the Schomburg Center also possesses proof of how Malcolm X had different versions of the same speech.
[22] In *The Last Years of Malcolm X: The Evolution of a Revolutionary*, Breitman states that he and his co-editor, "Malcolm's associate," had conflicting perspectives on Malcolm X after his split from the NOI (8-9). Therefore, *The Last Years of Malcolm X: The Evolution of a Revolutionary* offers Breitman's interpretations of Malcolm X, specifically after the NOI. While he acknowledges Malcolm X's radical approach in "Radicalism" (39-56), Breitman does make rather large claims, such as suggesting that Malcolm X never had to "think for himself" until his final year (33), that he develops based on his analysis of the final years of Malcolm X's life.

follower of Martin Luther King?" (179). The parallel that Malcolm X introduces, his willingness to speak along with socialists and Christians, stresses his receptiveness to allyship and increasing his audience.

Malcolm X: On Afro-American History[23] presents the full version of Malcolm X's first of three talks at the Audubon Ballroom on January 24, 1965. "The first talk was to focus on Afro-American history . . . the second, to discuss current conditions; and the third, to discuss the future of the Black struggle and present the new program" (9). Due to a series of events, presentations in Europe, the firebombing of his house, and his assassination, Malcolm X was never able to give all these talks (9-10). In his overview of African-American history, Malcolm X criticizes "Negro History Week" over its limited coverage of African-Americans: "So Negro History Week . . . doesn't remind us of past achievements, it reminds us only of the achievements we made in the Western Hemisphere under the tutelage of the white man" (26). A central point of this speech is a cultural and historical reawakening for African-Americans, which requires a close reading of history (41-54). In this speech, Malcolm X also confirms his telegram to George Lincoln Rockwall, demonstrating his rejection of the so-called NOI's pact with white supremacists and his overlooked love for Dr. King[24] (60). Furthermore, Malcolm X reflects on witnessing Dr. King being physically assaulted on television[25] as he states, "I saw the man knock him in his mouth. Well, that hurt me, I'll tell you. Because I'm Black and he's Black" (61).

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[23] Selections of the *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* construct the second section of *Malcolm X: On Afro-American History* (73-78) while the third section uses excerpts of Malcolm X's speeches (83-96).
[24] His telegram reads: "To George Lincoln Rockwell: This is to warn you that I am no longer held in check from fighting white supremacists by Elijah Muhammad's separationist Black Muslim movement, and that if your present racist agitation against our people there in Alabama causes physical harm to Reverend King or any other Black Americans who are only attempting to enjoy their rights as free human beings, that you and your Ku Klux Klan friends will be met with maximum physical retaliation from those of us who are not handcuffed by the disarming philosophy of nonviolence, and who believe in asserting our right of self-defense—by any means necessary" (60).
[25] John Herbersspecial states that "The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was punched and kicked by a white man today while he was registering as the first Negro guest of a hotel" in Selma, Alabama.

However, he still distinguishes his approach from Dr. King's approach by evoking applause with the following assertion: "And if I was there with King and I saw someone knocking on him, I'd come to his rescue. . . . I'd show him, see, he's doing it the wrong way—this is the way you do it" (61). In other words, Malcolm X would respond to the attacker of Dr. King with physical force, showing Dr. King through personal experience that Malcolm X's philosophy is necessary. These texts that document the oratory of Malcolm X possess both an educational and cultural value.

By Any Means Necessary also consists of a wide range of Malcolm X's rhetoric in the forms of speeches, interviews, and even letterform during the last year of his life (9). In "Harlem and the political machines," "a radio program broadcast" (97), substantiates Malcolm X's ongoing transformation as he states, "We are going to encourage our people to register as independent voters" (99). Beyond his commitment to actively reject the NOI ideology, Malcolm X's noncommittal stance in regard to political parties eliminates any theories about a developing political ideology. Ironically, considering the 2016 United States Presidential Election," "At a meeting in France" details a Q & A session, which involves someone asking Malcolm X about his thoughts on President Johnson (145). He replies, "It's the same system. It's not the President who can help or hurt. And this system is not only ruling us in America—it's ruling the world" (145-46). He inadvertently expands on his position concerning independent voters by openly criticizing the system as opposed to the elected officials. In other words, Malcolm X suggests that changing the system will produce more results than concentrating on elected officials.

Unlike the two previous texts, *February 1965: The Final Speeches* organizes the speeches and interviews of Malcolm X's last three weeks alive (9). According to Malcolm X's "I Live for Change and Action: *Interview with 'Flamingo,'*" his perspective of race had

significantly changed: "I adopt a judgment of deeds, not of color. In this respect I cannot be termed a racialist" (45). First, his philosophy of evaluating people based on their actions instead of their race further separates him from his time with the NOI. Second, his use of "racialist" and not "racist" exhibits the thoroughness of his racial awareness. In his other speeches and interviews, a theme of globalization is common: "The West Indian in England faces a covered and subtle form of discrimination," (47), the current black man is aware of his "brothers on the African continent" (69), and "Those brothers in Africa and Asia . . . they have some brothers on the inside of the house" (137). Malcolm X shifts from a localized struggle, or the Nation of Islam rhetoric, to a globalized struggle that recognizes allies based on race. Additionally, he was very open about his criticism of the Nation of Islam for allegedly making a deal with the KKK (146). When he informs an audience member that her nephew should be in Alabama instead of Vietnam, he is openly criticizing the Vietnam War and subtly condemning blacks, specifically the NOI, for not addressing racial attacks in the South (155). Malcolm X is very clear about his current stance: "'I haven't changed . . . I just see things on a broader scale'" (272). He still claims that "'Bayard Rustin . . . talks white'" (272), still disagrees with the nonviolent approach of Dr. King Jr., (75), still denounces interracial marriages (46), and still condemns identification between blacks and whites (46). "By any means necessary" suggests that it is impossible to pinpoint his true views at the end of his life because his stances were still expanding and were fluid. These selected speeches, along with the documentaries, circulate parts of Malcolm X, snippets of his speeches or key moments of interviews, but they also, like previous scholarship that I have covered, provide people who are intrigued by or who respect Malcolm X with resources to compare to other interpretations of him, allowing people to develop their own conclusions about him.

As I have discussed, several resources about Malcolm X portray and recharacterize him as a person. These attempts at historicizing and re-historicizing Malcolm X give precedence to details and alleged facts involving his life. Inadvertent effects of concentrating on his life neglect what he could offer to specific fields, especially in the humanities, and how we can produce scholarship that moves beyond his life. In the upcoming chapter, I will centralize my review by focusing on the fields of communication and rhetoric and composition and by examining research that inspects Malcolm X as a cultural figure.

Chapter 3: The Rhetorical Circulation of Malcolm X
as a Teacher, Rhetor, and Cultural Figure

"Caller: Hello, Malcolm . . . The Ku Klux Klan should get you. [*Malcolm laughs*]"
(*February 1965: The Final Speeches* 248)

In the spring of 1966, John Illo, who was a professor of English, inspected the rhetoric of Malcolm X, roughly a year after his assassination. Throughout the majority of his essay, Illo appears to praise Malcolm X but a closer look reveals his bias. His rhetorical analysis of Malcolm X alerted academia about the rhetorical potency of Malcolm X but accentuated the need for Greco-Roman rhetoric: "Cicero would have approved Malcolm's discourses," which implies that Greco-Roman rhetoric is the measuring stick of all rhetoric; "At worse, Malcolm X, like St. Alphonsus Liguori, taught the ethic of self-defense," a statement which Illo follows by pointing out that Dr. King Jr. was an activist and Malcolm X was not; and applauds Malcolm X's use of metaphors before stating these metaphors were "less frequent than in the elevated tradition of Pitt and Burke." Illo also does not conceal his own interpretation of Malcolm X: "The achievement of Malcolm X, then, though inevitable, seems marvelous. . . . But it was unexpected that the speaking should be done with such power and precision by a russet-haired field negro translated from conventional thief to zealot and at the end nearly to Marxist and humanist." Illo's reading of Malcolm X reveals the complications of race relating to his interpretation. While he expresses how Malcolm X impressed him with his oratory skills, Illo seems more surprised by the fact that a black rhetor with Malcolm X's background could be as rhetorically gifted as Malcolm X was. Finally, his viewing of Malcolm X as almost a Marxist illustrates how Malcolm X as a cultural figure signifies a range of ideologies (e.g., black nationalist, Marxist, and socialist) for academics and how even rhetorical critics without any concrete evidence speculate about who Malcolm X would have become.

When scholars like these, specifically white academics who embrace a Greco-Roman tradition and Western-research paradigm, write about people of color, racialization and racism can be hidden beneath superficial applause and intent. The conclusions that these academics draw about people of color are results of these methodologies and potential blind spots that they may have. The issue, then, is not necessarily *who* writes and studies Malcolm X but rather *what* methods we use to accomplish our goals. Although Illo's close reading of Malcolm X as an orator positioned Malcolm X as a significant rhetor in academia, Illo evaluates him based only on what a close reading offers. A close reading of anything related to Malcolm X limits him to a particular text, disregarding how several texts about him can collectively reconstruct his legacy via their effects on potential readers. In my previous chapter, I analyzed what scholars have discussed about the life of Malcolm X and what collections of his speeches and documentaries offer. In this chapter, I continue my analysis by examining how scholars in rhetoric and composition choose to assess Malcolm X. Ongoing cogitation from other scholars about Malcolm X's relatedness to technology[26] and naming[27] signal rhetoric and composition's desire to grow through Malcolm X. Therefore, examining how our field has examined Malcolm X could encourage us to alter our approaches.

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[26] In chapter three, Adam Banks uses Dr. King and Malcolm X to define "Black digital ethos," or "a set of attitudes, knowledges, expectations, and commitments that we need to develop and teach and bring to our engagement with things technological" (48). For example, Malcolm X's interviews reflect a level of "'cool'" that allows him to "force his opponents onto the defensive" and "to justify their ideological assumptions" while remaining "reserved" (53). "Regardless of the differences of power," Malcolm X and Dr. King demonstrated that black rhetors and rhetoricians have to use "whatever tools," which include an "interview" or a "weblog," "to carry one's message to the people" (67).

[27] Robert Eddy argues that "the rhetoric of renaming involves admitting our almost infinite complexity and embeddedness in many intersecting and also conflicting groups." Positing that the "renaming of Malcolm X," or using "X" to replace his original last name of "Little," entails "a series of attempts to resist and if possible reconfigure the conversation of white dominance," Eddy states that failing to "collectively rename the USA" will result in us remaining "locked into a non-adaptive rigidity at a time."

In regard to what methodologies we use, we have to recognize how scholarship provides examples and creates standards for future generations. In a graduate seminar I took themed around Modern Rhetoric, we focused on the timespan 1931-1974, which would include Illo's work on Malcolm X. I was hesitant to examine Malcolm X within the scope of Modern Rhetoric, a scope that incorporates the prominent scholarship of rhetoricians such as I.A. Richards, Kenneth Burke, Susanne Langer, Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, and Wayne Booth, because this examination would identify him through white eyes and terminology for a white professor who would likely only recognize his value based on his academic currency within a white field.

The motivation for my research, completing a major project to earn a grade, contradicted my motivation for even considering academia as my career. Bringing people of color into academia on their own terms has always been my academic goal, but graduate seminars like this one forced me to diverge from my scholarly pursuits. Although highlighting the connections between Malcolm X and any of the foundational rhetoricians that I previously referenced could develop our field, particularly scholarship relating to Modern Rhetoric, interpreting Malcolm X with a Western methodology or theoretical framework would be limiting. Since I would be using a methodology or theory rooted in Western rhetorical practices, I would risk not examining non-western rhetorical techniques.

In the sections that follow, I convey that a mixed-selection of methods does exist as we continue to reflect on Malcolm X not only as a rhetor but also as a cultural figure and teacher. We are, then, burdened with the responsibility not to select the same methods or methodologies of the past because discovering and using new methods and methodologies will likely produce new interpretations and ideas. Additionally, we will likely evaluate rhetors and rhetoricians, such

as Malcolm X, within the context of their own culture instead of our own. In this chapter, I explore academic projects in a chronological order that examine Malcolm X, primarily in the fields of rhetoric and composition and communication, over the past fifty years. First, I review how traditional approaches of scholars, such as using a theorist like Burke or Foucault to inform our methodology or theoretical framework, expand our understanding of Malcolm X but limit him only to his oratory or his life. Developing research standards of equilibrium requires academics to utilize both western and non-western research strategies and lenses. Next, I study scholarship that evaluates the legacy of Malcolm X by concentrating on the effects of his life instead of only his life and his oratory. Following new paths of research will advance our understandings of him by allowing us to see how he as a rhetor, teacher, and cultural figure has influenced black culture, academia, and even religion. Because many scholars have already communicated how specific academic approaches foster fundamental perceptions of Malcolm X and embrace his legacy, I argue that current and future scholars who research Malcolm X should embrace this shift in scholarship about him—concentrated on how his legacy affected and still affects various lives.

Academia and Malcolm X

The field of communication continues to recognize Malcolm X's legacy as a rhetor and his importance inside and outside academia. In 1974, Thomas W. Benson's "Rhetoric and Autobiography: The Case of Malcolm X" offers a method of rhetorical analysis to gauge the "rhetorical action" of Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, arguing that this autobiography "achieves a unique synthesis of selfhood and rhetorical instrumentality" (1). Adopting a traditional approach grounded solely in biography and rhetorical analysis, Benson argues, "literature may always be in part rhetorical," and the "set of conventions helps to create the

context for a response" (7). Because Haley's work displays how "Malcolm's life is a drama of enlargement" (9), potential readers "assume their roles as actors in the drama of enlargement and reconciliation" as Malcolm X's "rhetorical sphere" and "worldview" enlarges (13). As a result, Benson's close reading of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* reemphasizes the interconnectedness of literature and rhetoric and helps to establish a space for Malcolm X for communication scholars. As Edwin Black argued in 1965, a Neo-Aristotelian reading like Benson's may dismiss other relevant historical information due to its limited scope (42). Benson does not account for how *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* may be rhetorical outside of the artifact. Simply put, as this particular artifact enters new classrooms, homes, and communities, its rhetorical value transforms, thereby creating a rhetorical ecology that cannot be truly assessed by a means of Neo-Aristotelian Criticism (Edbauer).

Through her analysis, Jenny Edbauer posits that rhetorical situations can create other rhetorical situations that modify the meaning of the original rhetorical situation, thus proving that rhetorical situations are fluid networks instead of stagnant moments. Essentially, rhetorical situations do not simply contain just an "audience, text, or rhetorician," but rather are part of the process of promoting, producing, and sharing information (20-21). In relation to *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, perceiving this biography as having a single message as a product of a close reading disregards how this artifact circulates accepted and new messages about who Malcolm X is and what he means. For example, my reading of this artifact constructs one rhetorical situation, but as an attendee at a festival for Malcolm X coupled with the generations of readers since Benson, my interpretation of Malcolm X is one of dozens that exist in a network. In other words, the meaning of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* cannot truly be observed without recognizing the intricacies of the ecology that it sustains.

To fast-forward to more contemporary scholarship to provide another example similar to Benson's work, in 1993, Celeste Michelle Condit and John Louis Lucaites, who both are communication scholars, conduct an additional close reading of Malcolm X's life and rhetoric. Condit and Lucaites argue that Malcolm's "rhetoric of dissent" encountered limitations over the course of his life (293). They label his early life before the NOI as "Dissent Without Vision," stating:

> He rejected both the racial role assigned to him and the prevailing White social system, the first by trying to be White, and the second by hustling against it rather than living within it. His dissent, however, was extremely limited, both in scope and effectiveness. This kind of dissent is the first resort of most of America's oppressed men (read "men"), and so it is the sort with which the prevailing social and political institutions are most skilled in dealing. (294-95)

Besides the racial stereotypes of both authors, their premise about his early life ignores the effects of his parents, who were both Garveyites. Additionally, they fail to consider how their reading of his life will likely have blind spots. Viewing this portion of his life as an attempt to "hustle" against a White social system instead of resisting the system fails to consider how he continued to resist the system later in his life. As I discussed in the previous chapter, several academics still dispute if he was becoming a socialist or communist, which would suggest that he would be resisting the political and economic structure of this so-called white social system, or died a black nationalist, which would mean he was still resisting the control that this system had over black communities.

Since these authors are focusing on *The Autobiography of Malcolm X,* we should consider the research materials that they would have available to them. In 1993, Condit and

Lucaites would have had access to Goldman's *The Death and Life of Malcolm X* (1973*)* and Cone's *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare* (1991), which are two central biographies about Malcolm X (as I discussed extensively in my previous chapter). By utilizing the views of a white journalist who had interacted with Malcolm X and a black theologist, respectively, Condit and Lucaites could have strengthened their own methodology because it would not be based only on their own rhetorical analysis as two white authors. Additionally, the historical findings of both Goldman and Cone could have affected the interpretations of Condit and Lucaites more generally.

Condit and Lucaites then label Malcolm X's time with the NOI as "Dissent with a Mythic Vision," arguing that this vision "removed the possibility for collective human action in the world" (297); therefore, the solutions of the NOI were infeasible (297-98). Condit and Lucaites claim that Malcolm X's proposal for "a revolution of identity" (302) after his time with the NOI lacked "a positive program for achieving that change" (303). Upon Malcolm X's return from Mecca, his so-called shift in perspective led to his new approach, or his "by any means necessary" philosophy, and his abandonment of black nationalism (303-05). Consequently, Condit and Lucaites argue that "the limits that Malcolm X ultimately faced were inherent to revolutionary rhetoric of dissent that leaves language in control" (308) and propose that we utilize "constructive rhetoric" instead (309). According to Condit and Lucaites, the "revolutionary rhetoric" of Malcolm X aimed to "change an entire social and political system at one move," but "constructive rhetorics require a commitment on the part of both speakers and audiences" and possess "a greater appeal than the enactment of violence" (309). Their conception of revolutionary rhetoric in relation to Malcolm X is concerning simply because, as several biographies have documented, Malcolm X possessed a level of understanding with his

national and international audiences that had less to do with his so-called "violent appeal" and more so with his rhetorical message. While they do recognize blackness and whiteness in relation to Malcolm X, Condit and Lucaites never consider their own positionality. Operating from their perspective as white critics, they concern themselves only with an assessment of his rhetoric during his own time instead of how his life has influenced countless others. A rhetorical analysis of the life of Malcolm X limits his legacy to his lifetime, neglecting that his legacy does continue.

It is difficult to judge the revolutionary rhetoric of Malcolm X without considering how various communities, specifically communities that are part of Malcolm X's target audience, continue to interpret and uphold his message. Ironically, Condit and Lucaites open their article by theorizing about "the correlation between the recent revival of interest in Malcolm X among America's Black male youth and the Los Angeles riots of 1992" (291). Instead of inquiring about this possible connection by interviewing this abstract representation of "Black male youth," they, instead, seek to "understand . . . the full relevance of his life and words for contemporary times" with a traditional research approach (293). Consequently, this approach has several limitations. First, it impels them to draw conclusions about the contemporary relevancy of Malcolm X from their utilization of rhetorical analysis. Furthermore, this approach does not fully consider scholarship about him available at the time of this publication.

Other communication scholars have also analyzed speeches of Malcolm X, offering other contributions. In "Engaging Parrhesia in a Democracy," David R. Novak, who is a professor of communications, adopts Foucault's interpretation of parrhesia[28] to examine three speeches[29] of

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[28] While I do not use the term, Novak defines parrhesia, or "'free speech'" (26), as "a verbal activity" that requires "frankness," the correspondence of "belief and truth," "danger," "criticism," and "truth-telling as a duty" (28-29).
[29] In "The Black Man's History," Malcolm X attempts to convert his followers to the NOI by arguing that blacks do not know their true history but could discover it by embracing the ideology of the NOI (Malcolm X *The End of*

Malcolm X: "Black Man's History," "The Ballot or the Bullet," and "After the Bombing."

Novak contends that Malcolm X "engaged in each of the features of parrhesia in 'After the

Bombing'" (40), developing Foucault's position (i.e., "true parrhesia . . . cannot exist in a

democratic society") (27). On an academic level, Novak suggests that Malcolm X's rhetorical

potency should "inform our knowledge of" parrhesia as an "underutilized rhetorical tool" (26).

Commenting on how academics should influence and assess contemporary rhetors, Novak

claims, "Parrhesia should be a quality emulated by current speakers and demanded by those who

listen" (41). On one hand, Novak conveys that attention to Malcolm X, as well as to other rhetors

of color, strengthens the academic production of knowledge and enhances the effects of such

knowledge production. Employing parrhesia as the guiding concept of his argument to inspect

these speeches of Malcolm X can assist us in how we continue to use the term, thus

demonstrating the academic value of rhetors of color. On the other hand, I would argue that a

Foucauldian reading of Malcolm X unfortunately suggests that academia can only comprehend

and appreciate his value if he is read with a white lens. The implication is that orators of color

only have academic value as long as academics assess them through Western coined concepts of

traditional white scholars such as Foucault.

     To ideally discontinue such practices, we have a few options. First, we could investigate

Malcolm X without only using a singular white methodology or theory. Instead, we can use both

a western methodology or theory and a nonwestern methodology or theory to augment our

research about Malcolm X. Second, we could use only a nonwestern methodology or theory to

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White World Supremacy (47-122). In "The Ballot or the Bullet," Malcolm X conveys how he is no longer restricted
by the NOI as he endorses black nationalism and highlights the importance of both political and economic
empowerment instead of only religious enlightenment (Breitman 23-44). In "After the Bombing," Malcolm X, who
is still recovering from the firebombing of his home, expresses his belief in global coalition-building between
African, Asian, and Latin American countries (Breitman 157-77).

evaluate Malcolm X to underscore his global academic value. For example, Jeffery Lynn Woodyard uses an Africological theory informed by "Nommodic Rhetorical Behaviors," such as "Use of Indirection," "Repetition for Intensification," and "Lyrical Approach to Language," to evaluate Malcolm X's "Message to the Grass Roots" (133-54). Because potential readers of my project may want to know what scholarship rooted in nonwestern methodologies or theories may look like, Woodward has already addressed this curiosity. Ultimately, both options would also teach us about what other non-western theories and methodologies have to offer. Before exploring these options further, though, we need to see other limitations of western approaches.

Robert Terrill, a professor of English, offers several useful ideas about Malcolm X for rhetorical critics. Terrill is a prime example of what a western methodology can offer. While I am not criticizing his ideas, I intend to reveal how and why his approach to Malcolm X demonstrates the best of a Western methodology or theory. However, his approach has some limitations due to his overreliance on Western rhetoric. In "Colonizing the Borderlands: Shifting the Circumference in the Rhetoric of Malcolm X," Terrill examines Malcolm X's "Rochester Address" (67). In his Burkean examination, Terrill postulates that in this speech Malcolm X is "constantly shifting scenes," or constituting "future acts" by "promising emancipation through the alchemical potential of transgression" in his speech (78), thereby "expanding and contracting the scenic circumference within which African-Americans are invited to define themselves [which] breaks the confining boundaries and opens the possibility of a new self-definition" (79). To state simply, Terrill perceives this speech as an example of decolonizing and colonizing simultaneously because Malcolm X psychologically decolonizes "the Black mind" while establishing or colonizing a new "space" for "African American identity" (78). Terrill's awareness of decolonization validates a Burkean approach to Malcolm X as a worthy approach.

Without such awareness, however, a Burkean lens may not result in an anti-colonial interpretation of Malcolm X. Additionally, only using Burke reaffirms Greco-Roman rhetoric and overlooks the importance of non-western rhetoric (e.g., African American rhetoric).

Terrill also recognizes the academic merit of other speeches. In "Protest, Prophecy, and Prudence in the Rhetoric of Malcolm X," Terrill contends that "The Ballot or the Bullet" exhibits "oppositional prudence" (27) as a rhetorical technique to persuade his audience to endorse black nationalism (35-41). According to Terrill, "Malcolm X produces a rhetoric of *oppositional* prudence, demonstrating for his audience members a prudential reasoning that invites them outside the confines of the dominant culture" (34). He concludes that this strategy trains the audience of Malcolm X to "become cultural critics, able to view their relationship to a dominant *other* from a position outside that dominance" (45). While such research evinces that studying Malcolm X broadens the terminology and modes of rhetorical exploration, the speeches of Malcolm X should not be the conclusion of discovering the benefits of decolonial approaches but the beginning because we can continue to study his rhetoric in other contexts and occasions.

Continuing his research in *Malcolm X: Inventing Radical Judgment*, Terrill claims that "Malcolm X enacts in and through his discourse *emancipatory strategies of radical judgment*, modes of interpretation and critique that invite his audiences to come to reasoned assessments without being constrained by the paradigms and formulas associated with the dominant culture" (9). As Terrill asserts, it is impossible to accurately study Malcolm X without monitoring constraints. Considering the drawbacks of the NOI, particularly how orthodox Muslims rejected the legitimacy of the NOI and how the NOI refused to engage in politics, Malcolm X understood the repercussions of constraining one's rhetorical vision and potential actions (152). Terrill concludes that his assessment of the rhetorical history of Malcolm X produces a "triangulation,"

a triangulation that includes "constitutive rhetoric, trickster consciousness, and prudential

performance"[30] (162-63). Since constitutive rhetoric relates to "Native American rhetors" (163-

71), trickster consciousness correlates to "trickster tales told by African slaves" (172), and

prudential performance embraces classical rhetoric (176-77), Terrill establishes a balance

between western and anticolonial methodologies, thereby creating an equilibrium. This

framework displays how Malcolm X when alive "was constituting subjects" and "continues to do

so into the present day" (169). He concludes, "Malcolm is making his audience into rhetoricians,

and he is doing so in the only way that it can be done—by offering them models of critical

interpretation that they themselves must critically interpret" (191). Malcolm X is not only a

rhetor but also a rhetorician to people who have heard his speeches or read his work because they

have to critically analyze not only what he is saying but how he is expressing his message. To

expand the aims of Terrill, I also intend to unveil how Malcolm X's persuasiveness, as a rhetor

and rhetorician, is ongoing in other sites and contexts. However, I do depart from Terrill's

statement about race: "I do want to argue that Malcolm's influence should not be limited to one

side of the color line and not even confined to the realm of race relations" (8-9).

Confining Malcolm X to only race would restrict our understanding of him because we

may only examine him with a racial lens. However, anyone who has studied Malcolm X and

truly understands him should concede that Malcolm X belongs to the black people that he

represents. Since Malcolm X is a cultural figure, rhetor, and teacher who is synonymous with

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[30] First, Terrill asserts that if we examine Malcolm X based on constitutive rhetoric, academics would find that his rhetoric was a success (163-171). Second, he states, "When Malcolm X repeatedly pushes his audience across the boundaries usually established for them until those boundaries become so destabilized that they might themselves become resources of empowerment, he is performing trickster work" (172). Consequently, Malcolm X convinces his audience to "embody trickster consciousness while yet always collectively seeking a common goal," (176). Third, "Malcolm presents an updated prudence" because "he presents his auditors, regardless of their race, with an invention of prudence that takes contingency into account while escaping both radical relativism and prophetic prescription" (182).

blackness, removing him out of the context of race is an act of colonizing a person of color even

when the author has the best intentions (i.e., attempting to create an equilibrium). The erasure of

race begins with separating prominent figures of color from their race. While I am not arguing

that Terrill misrepresents Malcolm X, he does not acknowledge his own positionality in regard to

the potential consequences of a white academic committed to moving beyond race in his

scholarship about a rhetor of color. Furthermore, even when using both western and non-western

research methods or methodologies, removing an identity marker that clearly relates to the

person of study, in this case Malcolm X and race, the state of equilibrium limits itself from

within.

The living legacy of Malcolm X allows rhetorical critics to revisit him with contemporary

methodologies and theoretical frameworks. As an editor of *The Cambridge Companion to

Malcolm X*, Terrill writes, "This volume is intended to represent and to encourage the

continuing, overlapping, and interdisciplinary interest in Malcolm X that is helping to keep his

legacy alive" (8-9). These fourteen essays dissect both his life and rhetoric within both a literary

(e.g., a literary analysis of Haley's biography) (26-38) and rhetorical (e.g., applying Richard

Lanham's understanding of *homo rhetoricus* to Malcolm X) circumference (113-24). Brian

Norman broadens conversation about Spike Lee's biopic when Norman interprets the

complexities of the biopic, specifically the involvement of James Baldwin[31] (39-50). Sheila

Radford-Hill also advances scholarship about Malcolm X as she shifts the focal point of our

analysis about Malcolm X to gender. By highlighting how "women significantly influenced the

history of Malcolm Little and later that of Malcolm X and El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (65)," she

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[31] "In 1968 . . . Columbia Pictures asked famed writer and civil rights spokesman James Baldwin to adapt *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*" (39). To Norman, comparing and contrasting Baldwin's and Lee's "film-script versions" reveal that "Malcolm's story is widely digestible once the immediacy of his protest recedes and he emerges as a past American hero the current mainstream can celebrate" (40-41).

illustrates how we cannot detect the complete history of Malcolm until the women who were crucial in his life are visible (65-75). Although this collection, as an artifact, has particular goals, research centered around the life of Malcolm X authorizes the construction and rehistoricization of Malcolm X within the context of his life and oratory as the most salient scholarship. Contrary to this companion, a collection that undoubtedly presents contemporary scholars with contemporary interpretations of Malcolm X, my personal, scholarly interpretation of Malcolm X, as I will argue in later chapters, is less important than how local communities interpret and reinterpret this living legacy.

Understanding from these communities cannot come from a distance or be filtered through "expert" accounts, even from the accounts of those that try to be objective. In recent research, Josh Grimm inspects primary sources in "Hegemonic Framing of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr., in Northeastern Newspapers." His exhaustive study consists of 931 "articles, editorials, and columns" published in the *New York Times*, 269 published in the *Washington Post*, and 35 published in the *Boston Globe* written about Dr. King Jr., (319) compared to 233 publications in the *New York Times*, 72 publications in the *Washington Post*, and 14 publications in the *Boston Globe* about Malcolm X (320). Grimm discovers that these northeastern newspapers provided Dr. King with "nearly four times as much news coverage as Malcolm X" (320). Additionally, articles rarely referred to Malcolm X as "'Minister Malcolm X'" while the majority of articles about Dr. King make reference to King's credentials (e.g., "'Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.,'" "'Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,'" or "Dr. King") (321). Grimm concludes that these specific newspapers framed King "as a strong leader for the Civil Rights Movement worthy of both admiration and respect," but they framed Malcolm X "as an enigmatic but dangerous leader who should, at best, be viewed with caution, and, at worst, as a

hateful instigator" (326). Due to the effects of media framing, Grimm suggests that we should

consider context and coverage as we reflect on leaders of color. In agreement with Grimm, I

argue that bias and distortion can also occur even in scholarly attention to Malcolm X. As I

convey in this project, to counter such repercussions of distortion, we should allow local

communities to frame Malcolm X for us.

Within the field of rhetoric and composition, Keith Miller's "Frederick Douglass, Martin

Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X Interpret the Declaration of Independence" considers other

legendary black leaders in his analysis of Malcolm X. Miller argues that Malcolm X employed

Burke's "perspective by incongruity" to establish identification. Malcolm X interpreted "white

patriotic symbols" as examples of white hypocrisy that conditioned black people to ignore the

true nature of the U.S. (170-72). Additionally, in "Plymouth Rock Landed on Us," Miller posits

that Malcolm X's utilization of "perspective by incongruity" illustrates how "public rhetorics"

permit "alternative literacies" to thrive (216-17). Applying a rhetorical lens to the oratory of

Malcolm, as other scholars have (see Varda[32]), we ensure that Malcolm X remains part of our

field's conversations. However, an exclusively Burkean reading of Malcolm X further prioritizes

Western methodologies and theoretical frameworks; therefore, establishing research practices of

equilibrium, as Terrill accomplishes in *Malcolm X: Inventing Radical Judgment*, demands non-

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[32] In *A Rhetorical History of Malcolm X*, a dissertation, Scott Joseph Varda argues that the oratory of Malcolm X created "a new people with an international awareness and militant attitude" and established Malcolm X "as a radically flexible, internationally aware, pan-African who should be understood as one of several productive leaders of his people" (5). Varda substantiates his position by providing a historical context for the rhetorical strategies of the NOI (43-90), analyzes the rhetorical tactics of Malcolm X while he was part of the NOI (91-148), situates the North of the U.S. by describing the rhetorical climate of the Civil Rights Era (149-224), and examines the relationship between the development of Malcolm X's rhetorical practices after he broke away from the NOI and American liberalism (225-349). Varda utilizes a rhetorical history, or "the historical study of rhetorical events and the study of historical events from a rhetorical perspective" (5), that was coined by David Zarefsky who endorses Western rhetoric (e.g., classical rhetoric and even Burke) (26-32).

Western methodologies and theories, such as the utilization of African-American rhetorical theory or, at the very least, a combination of both.

As a natural rhetor, Malcolm X displayed his ability to appeal to international audiences. While Edward E. Curtis IV, a professor of religious studies, mainly analyzed "how Malik Shabazz constructed an Islamic ethics of liberation" during his trip to Cairo, Egypt in 1964, Curtis opens his article by listing "nine different points" about "the Egyptian president and Third World hero Gamal Abdel Nasser" in Malcolm X's speech to the "Young Men's Muslim Association": "1. Your President is my President," "2. A Man: fearless, far-reaching (wise)," "3. Uncompromising on the side of freedom," "4. Supports (always) African Freedom Fighters," "5. Supports freedom everywhere" and "1. Brought freedom to Egypt (Africa)," "2. Returned The Suez to Africans," "3. Defeated the foreign invaders," and "4. Good man, good Muslim—may God bless him" (775). Curtis calls these stages of invention, arrangement, and delivery[33] as "rhetorical gestures of praise and thanks tailored for his hosts and their leader," disclosing Malcolm X's "thinking about how Nasser exemplified the religious and political identities to which Shabazz himself ascribed" (776). In addition to Curtis's astute observation, I would argue that Malcolm X evidently contemplated his own ethos, or "moral goodness . . . practical intelligence . . . and goodwill toward the audience" (Mirhady 121), and *kairos*, or recognition of the "importance of the . . . rhetorical situation of the moment" (Enos). Without any rhetorical training from a higher education institution, Malcolm X was still capable of understanding and implementing rhetorical strategies. This fact underscores why we should examine the cultural

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[33] Corbett defines invention as discovering "arguments that would support whatever case or points of view" that a rhetor champions, arrangement as "the effective and orderly arrangement of the parts of a written or spoken discourse," and delivery as "concern for the management of the voice and for gestures" (22-28)

practices of people who embrace his legacy to gain a better understanding of their comprehension of rhetoric.

Malcolm X exemplifies the hybridity of a rhetor and a rhetorician since he naturally weighs his options as a rhetorical critic before articulating his message. As a result, using non-western and western research strategies may highlight past and present effects of this hybridity. As academics have shown, we can analyze the rhetoric and/or life of Malcolm X with any academic methodology or theoretical framework to draw conclusions about him and his rhetoric. However, these methodologies and theoretical frameworks cannot only embrace Western rhetoric if other non-western methodologies or theories are available. Additionally, the legacy of Malcolm X within an academic circle is not the only perspective of him. To further survey this hybridity, other academics have scanned the appeal of Malcolm X's legacy as a cultural figure.

Beyond His Life

In this section, I will discuss the scholarship of academics who consider the legacy of Malcolm X away from him as a historical figure. In other words, these scholars illustrate how his legacy relates to black culture, social movements, education, and religion. As both a rhetor and rhetorician, Malcolm X affected black art (i.e., black films and black music), the pedagogies and educational goals of academics, and even the religious lives of contemporary Muslims. My dissertation project will develop the research terrain of these scholars as I focus on Malcolm X's legacy and what it potentially creates, instead of just what his twentieth-century rhetoric and life mean to us in the twenty-first century.

One of the earliest texts that explores how and why Malcolm X continues to resonate with a mixture of interpretations and emotional connections is Michael Eric Dyson's *Making Malcolm: The Myth and Meaning of Malcolm X*. In "Part I: Malcolm X's Intellectual Legacy,"

Dyson's literature review incorporates an effective critique of major works about Malcolm X (19-76). Most notably, Dyson refers to Perry's biography as an "uneven psychobiography study": Perry's allegations about Malcolm X create "a rhetorical low blow" because Perry fails to consider the relationship between toxic masculinity and homophobia in black culture (55-59). Instead, as Dyson suggests, Perry commits himself more to exposing Malcolm X's so-called true identity instead of dissecting the ramifications of homophobia for past, present, and future communities, particularly communities of color. In addition to an engaging review, Dyson prepares academia for future research by explaining how hip-hop culture has endorsed Malcolm X (77-106) and how the representations of black men in black films reveal "the burden of Malcolm X's presence in every frame" (107-28). Since Malcolm X "for many . . . embodied the primordial, quintessential Real Man," black films relating to the oppression of black men, masculinity, and black nationalism reaffirm the magnitude of Malcolm X for listeners and viewers (126). Attention to such magnitude diversifies our academic knowledge and conversations relating not only to Malcolm X but to the listeners and viewers connected to him. Embracing Dyson's commitment to placing how Malcolm X permeates black culture at the forefront, I localize the influence of Malcolm X by observing and learning from a single community event.

In addition to influencing activist movements such as #BLM (see Corrigan), Malcolm X triggered educational effects at both institutional and local community levels. In *Fighting for Our Place in the Sun*, Richard D. Benson II reveals how much more work needs to be done on Malcolm X. He analyzes Malcolm X as "*the teacher*," arguing for the "often-underrated importance as a force for social pedagogy" (3-5). Benson posits that Malcolm X's educational pedagogy consists of an "affinity for learning" (13), "the critical study of history" as "a way to

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connect to contemporary phenomenon" (17), an "ability to relate to the Black community"

largely due to his Detroit Red background (18-19), and, arguably the most important, "the ability

to be self-critical" (21). This social pedagogy, as Benson labels it, enables Malcolm X to appeal

to non-academic communities and provides an alternative to established institutions. In 1967

black students, for example, who developed a working coalition with "service workers,"

demanded Duke University to provide educational opportunities that reflected their interests,

constructing a social pedagogy (84). Two years later, black students challenged Duke University

by barricading themselves inside "the Allen Building," which prompted a police invasion and the

creation of "a banner that read 'Malcolm X Liberation School'" (85-87). On October 25, 1969,

the Malcolm X Liberation University (MXLU) was established in Durham, North Carolina (112-

13). We should not restrict Malcolm X's appeal only to students though. As Robin D. G. Kelley

explains, Owusu Sadaukai was not only the "director of Malcolm X Liberation University" but

also a leader of "a group of black nationalists" who assisted in the establishment of the "African

Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) in 1971" (104). Sadaukai's support of an organization

like the ALSC[34] displays his diligence as a director of a traditional space of education and a

supporter of international education.

The significance of Malcolm X's social pedagogy affected the entire infrastructure of this

university, but MXLU even endorsed communal practices of Malcolm X. Scholarship documents

Malcolm X's grassroot initiatives. His emphasis on open dialogue with the community

dominates Malcolm X's rhetoric. As a result of this component, MXLU created policymaking

guidelines that reflected Malcolm X. According to Benson, "The policymaking body of Malcolm

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[34] After its establishment in 1972, the ALSC dedicated itself to strengthening allyship between blacks "in the United States and Africa" by creating clear objectives (i.e., "conduct educational seminars and programs on racism, feudalism, imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism, and its effect on the continent of Africa, especially southern Africa and Guinea Bissau") that endorse Pan-Africanism via a social pedagogy (30-34).

X Liberation University included the Mwalimu Mkuu, or master teacher, the Council of Elders, community input, and student input . . . for the selfless purpose of aiding the progress of African communities both domestic and transnational" (155). Policies were then the result of an ongoing relationship with the community and a commitment to Pan Africanism, thereby reflecting the social aims of Malcolm X's educational philosophy entrenched in MXLU's structure. In other words, MXLU was not a product of Malcolm in name only.

The educational pursuits of MXLU shaped teachers who ideally would maintain this social pedagogy. "MXLU's teacher training program, the Teacher Corps" encouraged teachers to perform community outreach practices (Benson 163). For example, Teachers Corps participated in assisting the "Durham community organizations" with the development of "African Children's Education Centers," "sponsored canned food drives for the community," and the creation of an "adult education," which focused on "community seminars on topics" that reflected "MXLU curriculum" (162-65). Such activities removed teachers in training from only an academic setting to a communal setting. This communal setting reminded teachers that education did not begin and end in a classroom or on a campus but could expand into nearby communities.

The curriculum of MXLU did not abandon these social goals. Benson states that during a three-year "course of study for MXLU," curriculum would address "(1) history; (2) development of Black political thought; (3) language; (4) cultural expression; (5) speech; (6) seminars," which address the "development of the colonized mind, community organization, and political systems," and "(7) physical development" (168). To succinctly emphasize the social commitment of this curriculum, I will only analyze some parts of the curriculum. While many university curriculums may share a language requirement, MXLU required students to learn

either "Swahili, Hausa," or "Yoruba" because these "'African languages' can provide the . . . cultural impetus for African independence" (170). Since language has cultural and ideological connotations and effects, MXLU recognized how African languages could reconnect their students, and arguably nearby communities, with their history and themselves, reiterating a goal that Malcolm X advocated for as a Pan-Africanist. Additionally, although many universities may include speech in their degree plans, MXLU utilized speech differently: a MXLU speech course required students to employ their speaking skills "related to the liberation of Black folks" (173). On the one hand, some may interpret such goals as antisocial due to the sole commitment to blacks. On the other hand, if we consider the legacy of Malcolm X and what he used his speaking skills for, a sole commitment to each other is what they need and reflects their commitment to Malcolm X's vision.

If we consider the scholarship of Benson, Malcolm X did not simply affect educational settings. Instead, he was the exigence for a university, demonstrating why academics should evaluate how people and places remember him and/or embrace his legacy.[35] As other scholars have noted, this example is not an anomaly. Carmen Kynard traces the connection between composition studies' "Students' Right to Their Own Language" (SRTOL) ("Students' Right to Their Own Language") and Black Power Movements (73-74). Kynard states, "I want to argue that Black Power invigorated new rhetorics and political perspectives on Black English, that quite contrary to our current incessant critiques of essentialism, situated the language of the masses of black folks as a critical source of its own knowledges" (78). Developing Kynard's claim, a discussion of Malcom X as a rhetor and rhetorician does not necessarily need a western

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[35] For teachers who are interested in exposing their students to Malcolm X, *Teaching Malcolm X*, edited by Theresa Perry, displays the educational value of Malcolm X for all students ranging from students who are part of elementary and high school to higher education.

interpretative frame but definitely should involve African-American rhetorics and non-white methodologies and methods. Furthermore, as she explains, the relationship between "Black Radical tradition" and the "design of SRTOL" relates not only to Black Power revolving around the Black Panther Party[36] (BPP) but other expressions of Black Power: "study sessions and rallies such as the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), Student Organization for Black Unity (SOBU)/Youth Organization for Black Unity (YOBU); community organizers such as Freedom Now Party (FNP), Group on Advanced Leadership (GOAL) . . . Institute of the Black World (IBW), and Malcolm X Liberation University" (81-82). While Malcolm X was not the sole influence of these paramount organizations, as Kynard implies, Black Power as an expression is a collective expression that includes Malcolm X.

While I do not intend to offer an extensive examination of Malcolm X's influence on the BPP, David Hillard chronicles the community uplifting, including a "Free Breakfast for Schoolchildren Program" (30-34), a "People's Free Clothing Program" (66-68), and even a "Free Plumbing and Maintenance Program" (69-70), performed by the BPP. One salient contribution of the BPP was its "Community Learning Center," a center that endorsed child and adult education (10-13). Since "Eldridge Cleaver claimed that Huey Newton was the true heir to Malcolm X" (Bloom and Martin 146), members paraphrased and publicly praised Malcolm X (153), and members read Malcolm X (232), Malcolm X did not only clearly affect the construction of the MXLU but also influenced organizations such as the BPP and their own educational projects. Discovering the continuous influence of Malcolm X compels us to search for not only educational programs but also his religious impact.

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[36] Acknowledging the Black Panther Party's contributions to the black community should also entail recognizing Malcolm X. As Kynard reiterates, "Malcolm X was still the biggest ideological influence on" the Black Panther Party (90).

Other scholars remind us that we cannot reduce Malcolm X's effects to a single area, such as education. While examining his life through a religion lens (see DeCaro) is necessary to fully understanding him, a religious inquiry should also measure his religious impact—not just the religious elements in his rhetoric. In *Malcolm X: From Political Eschatology to Religious Revolutionary*, a collection of twelve essays, editors Dustin J. Byrd and Seyed Javad Miri argue, "It is the responsibility for scholars, activists and followers of Malcolm X, regardless of whether they are Muslim or not, to bring his thought to the next generation" (1). Accomplishing this goal, John H. McClendon III and Stephen C. Ferguson II conclude that "Malcolm's intellectual effort unfolds as a dialectical process of development" (37). As I expressed earlier, these authors recognize Malcolm X's struggle to employ race as the foundation of black nationalism; therefore, according to McClendon and Ferguson, "Malcolm's evolving view of Black Nationalism is best understood as successive motion toward 'left-wing' nationalism," recognizing the intersections of an "anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist" philosophy (55). Even when these authors acknowledge Malcolm X's unfolding left-wing nationalism, they accentuate that they "are not arguing that Malcolm adopted a form of scientific socialism or communism" since he "did not have the opportunity to systematically study Marxist political economy" (57). To assume that Malcolm X at the end of his life was certain about his definition of black nationalism in relation to socialism or communism (as I discussed in my previous chapter) would dismiss that his "dialectical process of revolutionary formation remained an ongoing project" (86).

Identifying with Malcolm X also inspires at both the artistic and personal level. Yolanda Van Tilborgh examines the "signification of Muslim human rights activist al-Hajj Malik al-Shabazz" by analyzing the artistic expressions of Muslims artists (273). Amir Sulaiman, who is

an "African-American performance poet," and his connection to "the radical *Black Art Movement* that was inspired by Malcolm's activist teachings," shaped his poem "*Danger*" (284). Some of his lines include, "So I say down with Goliath / […] we must learn, know, write, read / we must kick, bite, yell, scream / we must pray, fast, live, dream / fight, kill. And die free" (284). Due to the combative rhetorical vectors of this poem, likely stemming from Malcolm X's "by any means necessary" approach, his presentation of this poem for "the HBO television series *Def Poetry*" horrified his audience (284). The audience's shock conveys that Malcolm X's approach has a similar effect now as it did during his time. Additionally, Van Tilborgh illustrates how the rhetorical narrative of Malcolm X incites transformation even for hip-hop culture, a transformation that functions as an example of "critical recognition" (294-95). As Van Tilborgh discusses, Mutah Wassin Shabazz, "a former rap artist" who was part of the Outlawz, or a rap group that 2Pac created, "followed Malcolm X's example and went on *hajj*" in response to Spike Lee's biopic (295). On an individual level, we cannot ascertain the impact of Malcolm X without, as Van Tilborgh conveys, allowing these individuals to express their own perspectives. Additionally, when we study a community event that does not have a single religious foundation, such as Islam, the interpretations, constructions, and reconstructions of Malcolm X multiply and diversify.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, we can question the authenticity of Malcolm X's life narrative, a narrative that resources such as Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* likely establish. Correcting or updating this narrative can encourage present and future generations to enlarge their understandings of a historical figure. On the other hand, committing ourselves to only historical accuracy impedes the emergence and the awareness of research dedicated to the rhetorical circulation of Malcolm X on a personal level, a

level that reconnects his legacy with the grassroots as Malcolm X would have likely wanted. In this chapter, I argued that rhetorical critics who have analyzed the rhetoric of Malcolm X do not always incorporate a methodology or theoretical framework that considers race or the limitations of western research strategies. Additionally, in our attempt to create an equilibrium by using both western and non-western methods or methodologies, we cannot disregard essential identity markers such as race, gender, or sexual orientation. Finally, focusing only on the rhetoric of Malcolm X or his life does not necessarily reconnect his legacy with local communities. In the next chapter, I will develop the research of Benson II, Byrd, Corrigan, and Dyson and express my methodology for the remainder of this project.

Chapter. 4: My Cultural Rhetorics Methodology

"'Is there any news on Lumumba?' Malcolm X smiled broadly at the mention of the Congolese leader's name. Castro then raised his hand. 'We will try to defend him'" (*Fidel & Malcolm X: Memories of a Meeting 43*)

During "The Harvard Law School Forum of December 16, 1964," Malcolm X, who was once "the second most sought-after speaker on college and university campuses" (*The Speeches of Malcolm X at Harvard* 161), warned his audience about power dynamics related to white supremacy: "Victims of racism are created in the image of racists. When the victims struggle vigorously to protect themselves from violence of others, they are made to appear in the image of criminals" (165). According to Malcolm X, how one represents a person of color, community of color, or entire race and/or ethnicity is a rhetorical tool that can reinforce or challenge white supremacy. As a scholar of color, I aim to avoid misrepresentation and cultural appropriation.

Regarding this project, Malcolm X is the basis of what I will explain as the relational and "constellative" practices in my work. While it is impossible to determine if this Dallas community's practices existed before, after, or would have existed without Malcolm X's legacy, the cultural practices of this community are connected to Malcolm X's legacy, warranting an appropriate methodology that responds to this event. As the following chapters will convey, Malcolm X is not the authority but rather evidence of a community normalizing its collective practices to honor him. These practices demonstrate the rhetorical effects of Malcolm X's legacy. Although we cannot pinpoint a specific rhetorical artifact (e.g., primary speech) that prompted such effects, this community's annual festival shows us how Malcolm X is invariably attached to this community.

Prior to conducting my research, my desire has always been to privately and openly appreciate the legacy of Malcolm X. Privately, to use myself as an example, cultural

appreciation—which I will define later in this chapter—could include artifacts I have collected such as a framed newspaper photograph of Malcolm X or the May 1963 copy of *Playboy*, which contains one of Malcolm X's interviews. It can also entail private conversations in which I explain to people why I have a portrait tattoo of him. Openly, the t-shirts and hoodies purchased from the [Malcolm X Legacy store](https://malcolmxlegacy.com/)[37], the visits to the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, and conversations with past students (who did not know or had some knowledge about Malcolm X) are all ways that I have appreciated Malcolm X. I contend that these actions are clearly acts of cultural appreciation due to the result: I gain nothing from them beyond acknowledgment of my appreciation. This thin line between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation is difficult for any researcher to navigate regardless of identity markers since production of scholarship is usually the result.

Personally, I feared cultural appropriation—which I will also define later in this chapter—for numerous reasons. First, even though I am a man of color, as I have and will continue to reiterate, I am not black. Therefore, I have thought about the implications of future generations learning about Malcolm X only to find many of the academics who wrote and/or write about him are not black. I am not saying that I or others have nothing to contribute. However, I am confessing that I am fully aware of how differently I approach Malcolm X than people who have experienced what Malcolm X spoke about. Second, I did not want to appropriate the festival by collecting my research and never returning. On one hand, the academic profession makes it difficult to maintain and strengthen relationships with research subjects. Visiting the Pan-African Connection once a month would be difficult and visiting the Pan-African Connection a few times out of the year would feel insufficient. On the other hand,

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[37] See https://malcolmxlegacy.com/.

these thoughts before, during, and after my research process created my central research question: *How do the rhetorical effects of the Malcolm X Festival's cultural practices—the festival itself, sponsoring bookstore, attendees, performers, visuals, and vendors—(re)construct the rhetorical legacy of Malcolm X?*

To answer my research question, I turned to my specialized area: Cultural Rhetorics. As a defined area, scholars of cultural rhetorics have extensively considered methodology. First, to Phil Bratta and Malea Powell, the theoretical framework and/or methodology of a researcher should be the product of a culture that he or she is studying instead of forcing a culture to adapt itself to a chosen theory and/or methodology: "Scholars must be willing to build meaningful theoretical frames from inside the particular culture in which they are situating their work." If the scholar is willing to accurately represent a culture, especially a culture that informs the identities of victims of racism, scholars have to continue to develop new methodologies and theoretical frameworks that reflect the diversity of cultural practices that exist outside of academia. It is this attention to culture that shapes my project. Failing to acknowledge the intricacies of this culture could reduce any part of a community, and certainly one of its annual events like a festal, to a specific ideology. Therefore, immersing myself into this culture and discovering a methodology as opposed to restricting this culture to an academic's preselected methodology embraces the position of Bratta and Powell.

Second, Bratta and Powell document the value of two concepts, "relationality" and "constellating": "Constellative practices emphasize the degree to which knowledge is *never* built by individuals but is, instead, accumulated through collective practices within specific communities." Likewise, in *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, Shawn Wilson states that empirical evidence is not more important than cultural knowledge due to

relationality, or how "all things are related and therefore relevant" (58). Relationality, then, exposes the importance of relationships: "Knowledge itself is held in the relationships and connections formed with the environment that surround us" (Wilson 87). These relationships and connections highlight the significance of constellative practices. If a researcher disregards the relationships and connections within any culture, that individual may become an authority for cultural practices that he or she did not necessarily create. I want to be clear that I am not suggesting that I or people connected to the neighborhood that surrounds this Malcolm X Festival view land similarly to indigenous people. What I am saying is I could not form a genuine relationship with the festival, interviewees, artifacts, and, frankly, the legacy of Malcolm X, if I was not familiar with this area. While I am not suggesting that familiarity is necessary for sincerity, I am arguing that my familiarity with the area significantly informs my understanding of this community's cultural practices and the commitment I have to accurately representing this festival.

As a cultural rhetorician who is not part of the race that Malcolm X represents, I had to create a methodology that responds to this Malcolm X Festival. This process is, then, embodying what Bratta, Powell, and Wilson have called for in their research. In this chapter, I argue that the foundation of any cultural rhetorics methodology could include the rhetorical circle of positionality, motive(s), and community accuracy, or P.M.C. for short. While I incorporate multiple forms of qualitative methods by combining the use of oral history, ethnographic research, textual analysis, and personal narrative, a researcher's methods will always change based on the research study. I contend, however, that a researcher's attention to P.M.C. should not change. Without acknowledging my own motive and own positionality *prior to, during, and after* my research process, I increase the inaccuracy of my research. *Prior to my research*

process, acknowledging motive and positionality could disclose one's bias. Identifying one's bias should affect one's research goals or convey to a person that he or she should not continue with a project. For example, if this festival was about Elijah Muhammad, due to my admiration of Malcolm X, I would likely discount any potential negative remarks about Malcolm X. Therefore, my bias would conflict with the integrity of this project. *During my research process*, acknowledging motive and positionality gives a researcher an opportunity to weigh the perspectives of others against his or her motive and positionality. In this case, my racial identity influences my positionality. If I am aware of my blind spots (i.e., how I perceive the legacy of Malcolm X differently than any black person), the perspectives of others should outweigh my own. *After my research process is complete*, returning to motive and positionality becomes a moment of reflection. More specifically, I am able to review the research and ensure that I have remained true to my original motives and have factored in my positionality.

I begin by discussing positionality. I demonstrate why a researcher should express his or her positionality in advance. Constantly (re)considering my own positionality warrants (re)consideration of the nuances and effects of cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation. Furthermore, who I am as a person (i.e., the identity components and ideologies that create my positionality) exists before I select a research project. To this end, I am aware of my positionality before I identify a research site and consider motive(s). A researcher should be transparent about his or her motives to him or herself before fully committing to a research project. By accounting for motives, a researcher, then, can juxtapose his or her motives with any goals of research subjects. In this case, I juxtapose my research goals with the intent of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival to ensure that my motive is not overshadowing or, at the worst, terminating the motive of the festival. Finally, I explain how a devotion to cultural accuracy entails not only writing for

potential readers in my field but also for the approval of the people who support this festival. To

address cultural accuracy, the first section focuses on the written portion of my research, and the

second section analyzes the relationship between reseeing and photography as a method. Finally,

As seen in Figure 2, I conclude that my methodology of P.M.C. never functions in isolation.

Instead, a researcher's awareness of positionality, motive(s), and community accuracy are always

already interconnected, coming full circle.

Motive(s)

Positionality   **Community**
                                      Accuracy
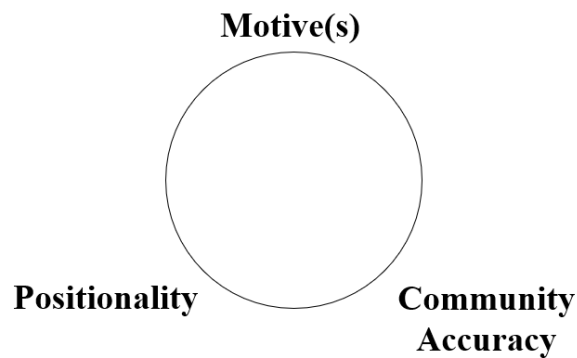
Figure 2 "Positionality, Motive(s) and Community Accuracy (P.M.C.)"

Constantly Disclosing and (Re)Considering One's Positionality

Because motive reflects positionality, a positionality statement should begin and end with the

motives of a researcher. I am not suggesting that a researcher ever stops thinking about his or her

own positionality or motives. I am claiming that this process is both continuous and circular. In

Toward a Phenomenological Rhetoric: Writing, Profession, and Altruism, Barbara Couture

states,

> What aids us in discovering differences in ceding to our particular positionality is
>
> professing a view of the world we share. Acknowledged positionality allows for the
>
> possibility of change as we struggle together to find space for all and meaning for each. . .
>
> . Positionality that allows us to see difference is not stifling and not wedded to ideology
>
> and its rhetoric, nor is it a mere taking up a subject position for rhetorical effect. Rather,

positionality is an awareness of perspective, of one's personal opportunity to see the

world as no one else sees it and thus to help others to see it differently. (114)

If positionality is indeed a level of awareness, it also presents an absence, the "unawareness" of a

researcher. For example, while my racial identity, ideologies, religion, culture, upbringing, and

profession will affect what I am aware of regarding topics that relate to any or all of these

factors, they will also inform the foundation of my unawareness regarding topics that do not

relate to my perspective. As a heterosexual man of color—specifically a second-generation

Mexican-American, whose culture is founded upon the cultural practices of Oak Cliff and the

academic practices of our field, and who self identifies as a non-denominational Christian—I am

fully aware of how I would (re)construct Malcolm X to an audience of students, colleagues, or

everyday people, but I am also unaware of how blacks perceive not only Malcolm X but also life

in general.

To remind myself and potential readers of my positionality, I emphasize throughout this

project that Malcolm X belongs to his people. By this statement, I am suggesting that I am not a

descendant of "the 22 million non-Muslim Negroes" that Malcolm X constantly mentioned in his

speeches and interviews (*February 1965* 212). This awareness, naturally, reveals a level of

unawareness. Because I cannot relate to Malcolm X—understand the rhetorical legacy of

Malcolm—like his people can, I cannot explore the (re)construction of his legacy without a black

community's cultural practices educating me and directing my research. Since I am mitigating

my unawareness by working with a black community, the tension between cultural appreciation

and cultural appropriation arises. To me, cultural appreciation recognizes and honors the cultural

practices of a community, race, ethnicity, and/or nationality. If a person aims to honor a

community, race, ethnicity, and/or nationality without considering his or her own positionality,

motive(s), and community, he or she may only culturally appropriate this community, race, ethnicity, and/or nationality.

Cultural appreciation combines a researcher's positionality and motive(s). Hsiao-Cheng (Sandrine) Han asserts that cultural appreciation recognizes, enjoys, and celebrates cultural practices that do not belong to the appreciator (9). To distinguish cultural appropriation from cultural appreciation, Han states that a teacher should consider the culture of focus, how he or she represents this culture, the relevancy of the culture in terms of his or her daily goal, and, arguably the most important, the purpose of focusing on this particular culture (10). If we review these theoretical questions in terms of conducting research, the questions I asked myself are: *1) Is this culture truly relevant to me?; 2) Why am I selecting this community and its festival?*; and 3) *Am I accurately representing the culture in the eyes of this festival?* As I explained in the previous section, accuracy permeates my entire research process. However, I answered questions two and three before I began my research based on my positionality regarding Oak Cliff.

Since I am from the Oak Cliff area, the culture of Oak Cliff and South Oak Cliff will always be relevant to me. Because the majority of my family still lives in the Oak Cliff and South Oak Cliff area, I am never permanently removed from it. Furthermore, I selected this community and this festival largely due to location. If Waco was the only nearby city that celebrated Malcolm X by having an annual festival, my cultural appreciation of Malcolm X would still remain, but my cultural appreciation of the area would not. In this hypothetical situation, I would have to weigh my awareness of Malcolm X, which connotes unawareness of any black community and how black people receive the rhetoric of Malcolm X, against my unawareness of Waco. However, a candid positionality statement that communicates not only one's perspective of him or herself and the world but also the system of (un)awareness that

affects his or her attempt at cultural appreciation can divulge one's motive(s) and commitment to accuracy.

Despite my familiarity with this community (i.e., South Oak Cliff), I do not return to this area. Therefore, I have to address this tension by considering my positionality. As Erich Hatala Matthes argues, cultural appropriation "refers to the use of the stories, styles, motifs, etc. of a particular cultural group by outsiders to that group" (1104). In other words, using the cultural practices of research subjects in my writing—your writing—can become a form of cultural appropriation. C. Thi Nguyen and Matthew Strohl generalize about why everyone should avoid cultural appropriation: (1) When one's cultural appropriation inflicts "harm to members of the culture that is being appropriated from" and/or (2) highlights "the power imbalance and the way it benefits the appropriator," thus appropriation primarily serves the appropriator (984-85). In relation to my methodology, to avoid cultural appropriation, I did not invent cultural appreciation; it was organic due to my ties with the neighborhood (i.e., positionality) and motives.

The Importance of *Motive*: Oak Cliff

We cannot separate a researcher's motive(s) from the worldviews that the researcher affirms in his or her research (and research question). In their summaries of a variety of worldviews, such as a postpositive worldview, constructivist worldview, transformative worldview, and pragmatic worldview, John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell convey how a researcher's worldview concerning research goals correlates to a researcher's motive for conducting research (5-11). For example, if I truly adopt a transformative worldview, "aiming to provide a voice for . . . participants, raising their consciousness or advancing an agenda for change to improve their lives" (9), the motive of my research should reflect how I conduct my

research and the results of my research. Simply put, both method (e.g., a research tool like an interview) and methodology (i.e., ethnography) have to reflect a researcher's worldview, which is rooted in a researcher's motive, in order to fulfill this worldview. While my research does provide a voice to the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, my research impacts me and, ideally, readers of my research more than it affects this festival. Since this festival was thriving before me and will continue to do so, I cannot state that I adopt a transformative worldview. Despite what I hope my research ideally accomplishes in relation to influencing people who attend this festival to improve their lives, I also have to acknowledge what my research literally accomplishes. In this project, I embrace a constructivist worldview. According to Creswell and Creswell, a constructivist worldview includes three distinct features: 1) "Human beings construct meanings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that the participants can share their views;" 2) "Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives;" and 3) "The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. . . . the inquirer generates meaning from the data collected in the field" (8). This worldview based on how a human community develops meaningful cultural practices allows me to assess how the influence of Malcolm X relates to this festival's (re)construction of him. In essence, my methods not only fulfill my methodology but reinforce a worldview that resembles this festival, as I will convey later in this chapter.

Prior to attending this festival, I had two primary motives. First, I wanted to document how important Malcolm X still is. Documenting the contemporary importance of Malcolm X illustrates how his legacy did not conclude with his assassination. His legacy, instead, continues to affect current and potentially future generations of people. Second, I wanted to provide a

traditional academic space for the 2018 Malcolm X Festival to educate academics. This shift

embodies a decolonial practice, or "'stories from the perspective of colonized cultures and

communities that are working to delink from the mechanisms of colonialism'" (Bratta and

Powell), because it presents a community's conception of Malcolm X, thereby juxtaposing how

academics understand Malcolm X (and his legacy's effects on a community) and a community's

understanding of Malcolm X. For instance, any effort to record the contemporary importance of

a rhetor of color can work against higher education minimizing or removing traces of that rhetor.

On one hand, my motives are identical due to the potential motives of the Malcolm X Festival.

At the very minimum, potential attendees will (re)introduce themselves to Malcolm X by

attending the festival, demonstrating how this community clearly believes that Malcolm X is

important. On the other hand, the version of Malcolm X that I find important and why I believe

Malcolm X is important could contradict this community's stance on Malcolm X.

      While the demographics of Oak Cliff are conflicting (i.e., no credible source definitively

reports the current demographics of Oak Cliff), currently, only 29% of Dallas residents are

"White alone, not Hispanic or Latino"; 24.3% of Dallas residents are "Black or African

American alone," and 41.7 % of Dallas are classified as "Hispanic or Latino" ("Quick Facts").

Despite the racial diversity of Dallas, the history of Oak Cliff, like U.S. history in general, is

tainted by white supremacy. In 1860, a fire erupted in downtown Dallas. Unfortunately, "Blacks

were accused of setting the fire and angry whites said it was the beginning of a slave rebellion. In

72 hours, three black men were hung downtown and every black in Dallas County was ordered

whipped" (Minutaglio and Williams 30). Forty years later, "the 1900 census showed there were

3,092 whites and 538 blacks in the City of Oak Cliff" (103). Together, these and other events

show not only the roots of slavery in Oak Cliff but also how the residents of this area once viewed racial diversity.

In the early 1900s, "After Wynnewood was created, it became a class example of Oak Cliff's constantly shifting lines. Wynnewood was not strictly a part of the old city of Oak Cliff but it was declared—by the media, by its owners, by Dallas officials—to be in South Oak Cliff" (Minutaglio and Williams 172). As Minutaglio and Williams state, "blacks were limited to either the Harlem Theatre downtown or the State Theatre in North Dallas . . . The Star at Miller and Eight, 'was the only movie theater for blacks in Oak Cliff' when it opened in 1948" (181). The potential for racial diversity frightened whites—especially white Christians. Reverend Buel Crouch addressed Oak Cliff residents about the selling of alcohol: "If I believed with all my heart that business conditions would be a lot better in Oak Cliff if we had beer, wine and whiskey for sale, I would still be against it because it is the greatest enemy of the American home" (190). Crouch, then, pressured residents to consider how this issue would affect the future of Dallas Baptist University and their children (191). On one hand, a Christian refuting the selling and purchasing of alcohol seems typical. On the other hand, this issue was also racial. In 1963, "an 'Executive 100 Council' was organized to place young Oak Cliff businessmen onto different Dallas boards, drives, and communities," aiming to further "beautify all major entrance thoroughfares to Oak Cliff" (192-93). In 1965, the *Dallas Times Herald* published an excerpt from a council's binder:

> The Greater Oak Cliff Council—charging a move is afoot to turn Oak Cliff into an all-
> Negro—ghetto—has proposed a city ordinance to prohibit the mention of race in real
> estate advertising or transactions. The ordinance, proposed at a Tuesday night meeting of
> 500 Oak Cliff residents at South Oak Cliff High School, also would prohibit so-called

blockbusting methods . . . "our over-all objective is to make Oak Cliff a desirable place to live for everybody," (a spokesman) said. He said the council is trying to stem the flood of white residents from Oak Cliff since Negros have been moving into previously all white sections. (193).

This council clearly aimed to keep Oak Cliff as white as possible. Although Minutaglio and Williams do not cover the effects of such meetings, I will assume that this council had some success. Oddly enough, this meeting occurred at South Oak Cliff High School, a high school that many of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival attendees had attended, and Malcolm X was also assassinated in 1965. Fifty-three years later, residents of South Oak Cliff did not gather to celebrate how white Oak Cliff is or to honor this council. Residents, instead, gathered to celebrate a black rhetor.

To ensure that I minimized my own bias relating to the importance of Malcolm X, I considered the relationship that I formed with the Oak Cliff area long before starting this project. Even though this festival occurs in South Oak Cliff, which is roughly ten minutes away from the neighborhood that I lived in until I was eighteen years old, I understood the significance of land. Currently, Oak Cliff is battling gentrification. For example, on July 24th, 2018, the Texas Theatre, located on W. Jefferson Blvd. in Oak Cliff, screened *Santos Vive*, a documentary that covers how a white Dallas police officer, Darrell Cain, shot and killed an unarmed and innocent 12-year-old boy, Santos Rodriguez, due to "a theft of change from a soda machine" (Jaramillo). Cain only served roughly half of a five-year prison sentence (Jaramillo). Despite this neighborhood's attempts to retell its history, gentrification continues to impact Oak Cliff (see "How Gentrification"). Another report circulates "Texas offender data from the Texas Department of Corrections Report as of August 2019" about the county of Dallas, possibly to

assist future home and business owners with selecting a crime-free location, displays the number

of Texas Department of Criminal
Justice (TDCJ) inmates as of August
2019 (See Figure 3). Moving one's
mouse over a particular area discloses
an area's zip code, total population,
percentage of population that lives in
poverty, and a median income
("Number of TDCJ Offenders"). A
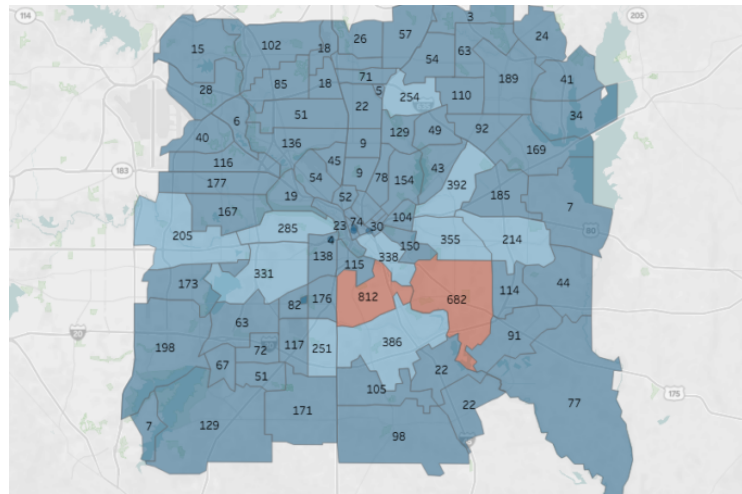
Figure 3 "Number of TDCJ Offenders by Zip Code"

shade of dark blue suggests that a zip code has a relatively low crime rate, a shade of light blue

suggests that a zip code has a relatively moderate crime rate, and a shade of red suggests that a

zip code has a relatively high crime rate. 812 inmates, or the largest number on this map, are

from the following zip code: 75216. The address of the Pan-African Connection: Bookstore, Art

Gallery, and Resource Center is *4466 S Marsalis Ave, Dallas, TX 75216*. Since I grew up on 711

Havendon Cir, Dallas, TX 75203, or, according to Figure 3, the 115 right above 812, I

understood the misconceptions about this community. These misconceptions motivated me to

create a space for this community to give a report about itself.

      To address the difference in these area codes, we have to consider, as I will state in a later

chapter, that the Pan-African Connection was once on Jefferson Blvd, which is a street that I

walked past to get to high school. Furthermore, growing up, we did not see people from Oak

Cliff as outsiders in South Oak Cliff and vice versa. To provide an example, during a

conversation at the Pan-African Connection, I mentioned that I grew up in the Oak Cliff area,

specifically near W.H. Adamson High School. The community member who I was conversing

with recognized the area because he would train for wrestling in this area. In addition to past experiences in the South Oak Cliff area and still having family and friends who live in this area, an outsider to us would technically be someone who is not from the Oak Cliff area as a whole.

These motives, informed by a commitment to enhancing my relationship with the Oak Cliff area and forming relationships with the people that I met at this festival, shape my research question. These components, such as the Pan-African Connection Bookstore and vendors, performers, and visuals, represent the instrumentality of this community for propagating cultural knowledge relating to Malcolm X. Through this propagation, I draw the conclusion that this festival unintentionally offers a counter-narrative to the media's rhetoric, as seen in Figure 3, about the level of criminality that affects its environment. To outsiders, the media's narrative about criminality may discourage people from visiting this area. To people who were born within and nearby this neighborhood or who have become familiar with the area, this festival's (re)construction of Malcolm X's legacy divulges the educational authority of this area.

Community Accuracy: Initial Experiences

In this section, I will discuss the written portion about my three visits to the Pan-African Connection. Although I did take visuals during my three visits, I will explain taking photographs as a tool in the following section as it relates to reseeing. When an academic chooses to research a community or culture that he or she does not belong to, accuracy becomes problematic. While I am not suggesting that all research does not intend to be accurate, the questions that we should consider are: Is what the research suggests accurate to the community and/or culture? Does the diversity of my research reflect the diverse positions of the community and/or culture? The topic of community accuracy is essential in non-western methodologies. In *Indigenous Research Methodologies*, Bagele Chilisa explains that "research evidence is therefore credible if it

represents as adequately as possible the multiple realities revealed by the participants" (165). Research participants will likely not reveal a single reality in conjunction with each other. In the case of this festival, I knew it was probable that (1) the festival would likely (re)construct multiple versions of Malcolm X's legacy, (2) the bookstore owner, performers, attendees, vendors, and visuals would likely offer conflicting interpretations of Malcolm X, and (3) I would not always agree with the depictions of Malcolm X. Accordingly, I decided *not to teach and expected the festival to educate me*. As a scholar who has done extensive research on Malcolm X and who was a recipient of a short-term research fellowship (see "Short-Term Research Fellowship recipients"), which allowed me to access the Malcolm X Papers, specifically, the unpublished chapter of Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*[38], I did not enter this festival intending to update people about who Malcolm X really is. Although my privileged position provided me with a unique point of view, I was motivated to learn from the festival since I expected it to counter-educate me.

First, I incorporate ethnographic research by visiting the location of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival three times in the same year: May 5th, 2018 (i.e., two weeks before the festival), May 19th, 2018 (i.e., the day of the festival), and August 18th, 2018 (i.e., the day that the Pan-African Connection Bookstore celebrated the life of Marcus Garvey). When I visited the Pan-African Connection on May 5th, 2018 for the first time in my life, I immediately started to take field notes about the store. The Pan African Connection filled up the majority of the Glendale Shopping Center at Ann Arbor and Marsalis in Dallas, TX. Although I did not encounter many customers, the majority of the customers that I did encounter were black women and black children. I did notice two black police officers who were having a friendly conversation with a

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[38] I would like to thank the Schomburg Center for this opportunity and its hospitality.

young boy. These male police officers appeared to be regular customers based on their interactions with everyone that they encountered. After walking around the store, specifically scanning bookshelves, I approached the store clerk. As I turned back to look at the entrance, I noticed the sound system was synced with the audio of a screen that displayed Malcolm X speaking (See Figure 4). Since we were two weeks away from the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, I will assume that the audio that filled the bookstore only featured Malcolm X due to the bookstore's desire to advertise the festival to customers. When I

Figure 4 "Malcolm X Speaking"

approached the clerk, who was located near the middle of the left section of the store, the clerk, a black woman who had her sunglasses above her forehead, greeted me, and waved to other customers who walked by us.

During this checkout, she told me about the 2018 Malcolm X Festival and even handed me a physical copy of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival visual advertisement. She mentioned how the festival relies on donations to fund this festival. Without knowing the identity of the woman, I donated $100 to this festival. To be clear, my intent was to support a festival about a legacy that has influenced me as a person. Near the end of the transaction, I expressed to her that I was planning to write my dissertation on the festival and hoped to interview the bookstore owner. To my surprise, I learned that she was Akwete Tyehimba, who has been the sole owner of the Pan-African Connection since her husband, Bandele Tyehimba, passed away in 2012 (Stone). I asked if I could interview her for my dissertation, and she kindly agreed to a phone interview on May 7th, 2018.

Because I did not know about the festival until the spring of 2018, I did not feel confident about securing IRB approval to record interviewees. Therefore, I took notes of their responses.[39] I want to explain that I did not construct interview questions prior to my visit. As a result, I had to create interview questions over the next two days. Prior to this phone interview, which I analyze in a later chapter, I created a series of questions that I asked her and other interviewees: (1) What brings you to the festival?; (2) How did you learn about Malcolm X?; and (3) What does Malcolm X mean to you? I devised these questions with three goals in mind. First, I intended to ask a specific question and open-ended questions because this combination would likely result in a different variety of answers (Ritchie 92). Second, I intended to pose questions that would prompt personal responses. By personal responses, I mean that I hoped to record responses that divulged the personal relationship between an interviewee and Malcolm X's legacy. Third, I intended to present questions that would not require too much time of the interviewee. Since an interviewee would likely want to enjoy the festival, I did not want the interview process to require too much time. Based on the responses of interviewees, however, I asked follow-up questions to ensure that I was correctly interpreting each response. I printed out several forms that included these questions and a section of space titled "Description" before conducting interviews.

When I arrived at the actual festival on May 19th, 2018, I parked behind a nearby church. As I walked over to the festival, I observed, unlike my first visit, that the entire shopping area was filled with vendors and attendees. Although I could not literally count the number of attendees, I estimate that over one hundred people, who were either volunteers that helped with the festival, vendors, attendees, or performers, attended the festival. As I walked throughout the

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[39] I was not worried about the approval of my project. Instead, I could not go through all the paperwork in time. My study was deemed exempt from the IRB.

entire festival on three separate occasions, I noted different sections of vendors. Since each row accommodated fifteen vendors, I estimate that roughly sixty vendors sold their products this day. Additionally, I did intentionally diversify the positions of interviewees by finding, besides the owner of the Pan-African Connection, regular attendees, volunteers, and vendors to interview. Although I was able to distinguish most attendees from vendors due to positioning (i.e., vendors remained near their booths), I was unable to identify volunteers because they assumed positions of vendors.

While I did not interview anyone on August 18th, 2018, I did take field notes of The Pan-African Connection's event dedicated to Marcus Garvey: "Marcus Garvey Birthday Tribute" ("Marcus Garvey"). The Pan-African Connection was able to host this event within this bookstore. Less than twenty individuals were present for this event. However, this celebration included more discussion. First, attendees watched a portion of a documentary about Marcus Garvey. Then, we listened to four presentations. One of these four presentations featured two young boys as presenters. One young boy recited one of Garvey's speeches while the other young boy expressed memorable quotations of Garvey. In the second presentation, a young black woman, who was a volunteer at the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, read an excerpt of one of Garvey's speeches and discussed her perception of Garvey. Similarly, in the third presentation, a young black man read an excerpt of one of Garvey's speeches. Finally, an older black man, expressed what specific quotations of Garvey meant to him. After these presentations, everyone participated in a Q&A discussion. Throughout this discussion, Akwete, presenters, and the audience deliberated about Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois, how black people should move forward as a unified race, and the role of technology in the education of black children. While the 2018 Malcolm X Festival was a much larger celebration, the Marcus Garvey Birthday

Tribute possessed a classroom atmosphere. However, this atmosphere, like the Malcolm X Festival, did not feature an expert, thereby erasing the power dynamics between teacher and students. This section incorporates the written portion of my research to disclose my initial responses. Despite my initial responses, like all researchers, I returned to my research. Returning to my research caused me to review not only my field notes but also photographs that I associated with these notes.

<p style="text-align:center;">***Community Accuracy*: Reseeing Experiences**</p>

In this section, I convey how community accuracy is a two-step process. Previously, I presented my experiences based on field notes. In this section, I demonstrate how taking photographs is a method that increases the community accuracy of my project. As a methods tool, taking photographs does not present unbiased representations of this festival. However, reexamining photographs entails not only comparing and contrasting photographs with written notes but also reseeing an event after a research process is complete. After collecting all my research, I reread my field notes and reexamined photographs and artifacts *to understand several cultural practices and testimonies on their own terms instead of mine or academia's*. As Andrea M. Riley Mukavetz states in "Towards a Cultural Rhetorics Methodology,"

> I begin with writing because I believe that this is where we need to learn the most on how to enact ethics practices. It wasn't difficult to hear the women as collaborators or co-workers while we got together or as I transcribed their stories. Instead, the difficulty occurs when I write about the women to the discipline: to move from sharing stories that I have always understood as theory to presenting these stories as theory in a way that is meaningful to the discipline. (115)

In agreement with Mukavetz, as I began to write, I wanted the final product, which I will give to the Pan-African Connection when its complete, to accurately represent how meaningful the 2018 Malcolm Festival is to this community. To ensure that I did not confine any of the stories or cultural practices of the festival to academic standards, I had to prioritize my initial motive about how this festival educates without me and could educate academia, myself included. Focusing on how this festival educates outside of the traditional academic boundaries requires reseeing. Mukavetz offers a methodological strategy as she explains, "I would return to those experiences, remember the space, and just listen" (116). Relistening to testimonies, as Mukavetz theorizes, involves a metaphorical return to experiences and space with the intent of only relistening to specific stories. To embody Mukavetz's methodological strategy, I returned to the Pan-African Connection by metaphorically reseeing this Malcolm X Festival via photos and by literally reseeing this space as I supported another celebratory event.

Reseeing the Pan-African Connection involves a metaphorical return to my first visit. As

Figure 5 "Entrance of Pan-African Connection"

seen in Figure 5, messages such as "Africans Get Organized" introduced me to the ambience of this store. Upon reviewing this specific photo, such messages are not performative. Since the Pan-African Connection has been organizing a Malcolm X Festival, and other events as I will discuss later, it sells merchandise that reinforce a particular narrative about this space: Connecting Pan-Africans via events and merchandise. To resee how this space retells this narrative about itself, reviewing and reflecting on the design of the Pan-African Connection is crucial. The inside of the Pan-

Figure 6 "African Artifacts"

Figure 7 "African Attire"

African Connection is true to its name as it surrounds customers with Pan-African rhetoric. The store included walls of African artifacts that could symbolize African culture in the homes of customers (see Figure 6) and sold African attire (see Figure 7). Together, these items represent how the Pan-African Connection implicitly encouraged customers to champion Pan-Africanism in both their public and private lives. Consequently, these practices, which connect Pan-Africans to each other and people to this ideology, challenge customers to resee Pan-Africanism every day in themselves and inside their homes.

Reseeing an entire wall containing several visuals of black leaders caught my attention when I originally scanned the bookstore and as I reexamined this photograph (see Figure 8).

Figure 8 "Black Art"

During my visit, I did not think about asking if any of these visuals were for sale. As I reconsider this decision, I likely assumed these visuals were not for sale because they visually represented this Pan-African theme to customers, such as myself. These visual artifacts, such as the paintings of Marcus Garvey, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X, covered a large wall within a vast amount of empty space (that I later learned was the center for sponsored events). Reseeing such artifacts reminds me that this Malcolm X Festival is not an event that contradicts what a customer will find in the Pan-African Connection.
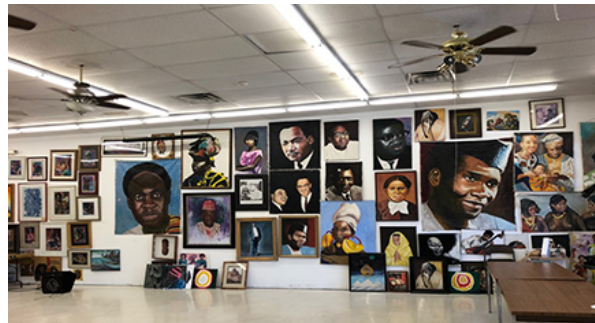
After glancing at photographs of the actual festival, I can

Figure 9 "Vendors and Attendees 1.0"

ensure that my description of this festival is not hyperbolic. Figure 9 records a section of the festival, which contains some booths of vendors and some parked vehicles. What I notice now is the structure of the festival. The positioning of these booths of vendors makes it unlikely for attendees to browse

Figure 10 "Vendors and Attendees 2.0"

at a vendor's booth without noticing other booths. Furthermore, this close proximity bolsters the

kinship in which this festival promotes. In both Figures 10 and 11, these photographs capture

different angles of different sections filled with vendors and attendees. Besides showing the

layout of the festival and a portion of vendors and attendees, reseeing how engaged people are with each other reaffirms the value of this festival and the objective of this project. For example, Figure 10 features multiple examples of how vendors and attendees engage with other. On the left side of a vehicle (see Figure 10), the men who are wearing suits are members of the Nation of Islam (NOI). Despite

Figure 11 "Vendors and Attendees 3.0"

providing security for an unknown fee, an arrangement I discovered during an interview, even

the NOI was willing to converse with attendees.

Reseeing these photographs relate to accuracy in several ways. First, largely due to a motive that I previously discussed (i.e., documenting how important Malcolm X still is), I, obviously, wanted the Malcolm X Festival to be a success. However, the slightest exaggeration about the festival would dishonor this festival. These photographs illustrate how this festival truly galvanizes local attendees, vendors, and performers to support the festival. Second, these photographs validate the other motive I discussed: providing a traditional academic space for the 2018 Malcolm X Festival to educate. Despite how this project does give an academic platform to this festival's educational efficacy (in relation to chronicling its relationship with the legacy of Malcolm X for primarily scholarly readers), upon further reflection by reseeing these moments, a more accurate statement would be that this festival educated any attendee, vendor, performer, or volunteer that engaged with its complexities. In other words, I do not enlarge or supply this festival with its educational merit. My research approach simply details how this festival

Figure 12 "Practice Group Economics"

operated. For instance, Figure 12 focuses on a particular vendor's booth: "Practice Group Economics." As future chapters will show, while each vendor may have had his or her own impression of Malcolm X, each vendor was more than willing to converse with and potentially enlighten other vendors, attendees, performers, and volunteers. Because many vendors, as I

explain in greater detail in later chapters, are business owners, they are looking to create

relationships with other vendors and potential customers.

The community events of the Pan-African Connection establish a continuous educational

engagement with its community. To accurately portray this engagement, I have to compare and

contrast the community's response to two separate events. The Marcus Garvey celebration event

did not garner the community presence that the Malcolm X Festival did. Despite these

differences, reseeing the image of Garvey reminds me of Garvey's impact on Malcolm X's

legacy, as I briefly discuss in chapter two, and this community's commitment to honoring black

leaders. Reseeing how the Pan-African Connection continuously engages with its community

exposed to me (1) how significant the 2018

Malcolm X Festival is for the community and

(2) how the depiction of the events of the Pan-

African Connection, the retelling of its stories,

and the analysis of its cultural practices should

prioritize what the Pan-African Connection

accomplishes throughout the year without an

educational system's boundaries. Although this

event centered on Marcus Garvey (see Figure

13), I recall hearing and feeling the commitment

Figure 13 "Marcus Garvey Celebration"

of the Pan-African Connection to uplifting its community and the willingness of its community

to uplift itself in the presentations and discussions. Community accuracy, then, suggests that I

would not modify the totality of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, such as the hosting of the Pan-

African Connection, the volunteers, the vendors, the performers, the attendees, the artifacts, and

the cultural practices, to fit my or anyone else's academic needs because the Pan-African Connection reminds us that organizations supply the academic needs of its community every day without a traditional academic base and that research about a community should feel accurate if read by this same community.

The Appropriateness of P.M.C.

While I believe the interconnectedness of positionality, motive(s), and community accuracy affects research processes beyond my own, the employment of the use of oral history, ethnographic research, textual analysis, and personal narrative was a *response to the structure of this Malcolm X Festival*. If the host of the Malcolm X festival determined that all vendors, performers, and volunteers could only depict Malcolm X in a particular way, my methodology would likely be significantly different. In other words, my cultural rhetorics methodology illustrates how researchers can continue to analyze how people, communities, and organizations (re)construct the legacies of rhetors and why my approach works for this specific festival.

In the following chapter, I begin to express the results of my methodology. While the upcoming chapter features a focus on literacy practices, this festival incorporates more than just literacy practices in their representations of Malcolm X. I selected literacy practices over other potential cases due to the overwhelming presence of books at this festival. After my chapter on literacy, I focus on rhetorical theory, particularly an epideictic performance of a NOI student minister. Although this festival featured several oral performances, such as the reciting of poetry or African dancing, I elected to analyze this performance because of Malcolm X's legacy's connection to the NOI. Finally, I conclude with a chapter on visual rhetoric. While the festival incorporated many forms of visual rhetoric (e.g., a vendor sold his own comic book), the visuals that advertise this festival were appropriate for the scope of this project. Because this festival, as

forthcoming chapters will show, applies literacy practices, rhetorical theory, and visual rhetoric, my methodology, as I have argued, has to be both flexible and cognizant of positionality, motive(s), and community accuracy.

Chapter 5: Reconnective Racial Literacies: Malcolm X and a Literacy Event

"When you have no knowledge of your history, you're just another animal"

—Malcolm X (*By Any Means Necessary* 83).

Two weeks prior to the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, I visited the Pan African Connection: Bookstore, Art Gallery, and Resource Center. Several cars filled the parking lot of Glendale Shopping Center. Local residents were entering and exiting nearby stores, such as a barbershop, a food mart, and a nail salon. Standing in front of the bookstore, I began to take photographs of the front of the store. As I thought about the black nationalism expressed in the sign of the

Figure 14 "The Pan-African Connection: Bookstore, Art Gallery, and Resource Center"

bookstore (i.e., "The Shortest Trip to Africa Without Getting on a Plane") (see Figure 14), I quickly observed two black men unloading watermelons from the back of a pickup truck. The man who stood in the bed of the pickup truck wore a Red, Black, and Green (RBG)-colored beanie. After entering the bookstore, I started to take photographs of several products, such as shirts printed with messages that range from "Son of a Field Negro" to "Danger: Educated Black Man" to "Africans, Get Organized!," African masks, instruments, and collectives. As I took a photograph of Bob Marley Cigarette Papers, I realized that Malcolm X was speaking through the store's sound system. While I did not see many customers on this visit, the entire parking lot outside the store was filled a few weeks later, causing people, such as

myself, to park at nearby churches. Fifty-three years after his assassination, May 19, 2018 marked the 83rd birthday of the great Malcolm X and a cultural space of racial literacy.

I will analyze the literacy practices (e.g., the communicative practices of a culture [see Barton]) of this festival, which I ultimately argue is a literacy event (i.e., when literacy informs the foundation of an event [see Heath]). Eric Darnell Pritchard defines "*restorative literacies*" as "literacy practices that Black queers employ as a means of self-definition, self-care, and self-determination" (24). Developing Pritchard's argument about the negative effects of literacy normativity, or the employment of literacy to "categorize individuals as nonnormative" (58), I contend that literacy normativity also conditions people of color to identify with white standards of literacy. These standards do not only affect the communication habits of people of color but also influence how literate people of color can be or can become about their own racial ancestry. Although he coins this concept as a LGBTQIA+ term, I intend to develop this term by analyzing how literacy practices of the festival can function as *reconnective racial literacies*. I want to emphasize that I am not appropriating Pritchard. Instead, Pritchard motivates me as a researcher to acknowledge how the festival resists the literacy normativity that has impacted how literate attendees are in regard to Malcolm X and how literacy practices can reconnect people of color to their ancestors. I am less concerned with the benefits and consequences of being literate in Malcolm X as a historical figure and more concerned with being literate in Malcolm X's rhetoric and legacy. By honoring Malcolm X, people become literate in Malcolm X. *Becoming literate in Malcolm X simply means producing or strengthening one's understanding of Malcolm X*. This form of literacy reconnects people with Malcolm X and, ideally, other ancestors, encouraging festival attendees to embrace specific literacy practices that continue this reconnective process. I define reconnective racial literacies as literacy practices that marginalized identities employ to

counter the erasure effects of colonialism, reconnecting them to their ancestry and race. Reconnective racial literacy practices allow marginalized groups of people to identify how institutional racism is affecting them and respond to it by embracing learning, reading, and active habits that reconnect them with their racial history. Because testimonies of attendees, as well as the funding of the festival, identify and respond to "structural violence of our institutions (our local settings, colleges, nation, and our field)" (Kynard "Stayin

Figure 15 "The Stage of the Malcolm X Festival"

Woke" 523), I contend the reconnective racial literacies of this festival (see Figure 15) are also a type of race-radical literacies (520-23). However, I contend that they differ because radical literacies do not necessarily have to be reconnective and relate more to activism (523).

First, I incorporate scholarship that focuses on literacy to situate this chapter in racial literacy. This scholarship review is not meant to be exhaustive. Instead, I hope to convey that scholars have always recognized the racial implications of literacy. Second, I expand Deborah Brandt's definition of sponsorship from *Literacy in American Lives and Literacy and Learning* by illustrating how collective sponsorship diversifies literacy practices and evenly distributes power. These diversification and distribution actions reconnect both sponsors and attendees of the festival with each other and the community. Consequently, racial sponsorship is reconnective and challenges how sponsorship can function within communities of color. When people of color employ racial literacy practices with each other, these practices reconnect individuals with other people, organizations, cultural practices, and history. Third, I convey how this festival is a literacy event. Based on the testimonies of six interviewees, the 2018 Malcolm X festival allows

vendors and attendees to reconnect with what different systems of the country (i.e., the educational and justice system) have whitewashed or oppressed for them. I do not state the name of any interviewee to protect his or her identity. Additionally, I include hyperlinks to businesses or organizations that have websites. Finally, I summarize the responses of interviewees due to my research choice of notetaking instead of recording them.

This chapter contributes to literacy studies in many ways. First, while educators should become cognizant of how racial literacy can strengthen their classrooms, educators should also welcome the opportunity of personally observing and ideally learning to value the cultural practices of nearby communities that inform the literacy practices of their students. Second, developing France Twine's definition of racial literacy, this chapter demonstrates how individuals of color reconnect with their community, culture, and racial history through literacy practices, countering the effects of systemic racism. Finally, I emphasize Kynard's definition of literacy as "something that people do, rather than something that they have or do not have; that literacy represents social and cultural practices, rather than a set of skills to be acquired according to given hierarchies of understanding and social organization" (*Vernacular* 32). In this chapter, the festival of focus cannot be reduced to academic conceptions of literacy. Instead, the cultural practices of this festival allow it to accomplish its goal of reconnecting attendees to each other and to the legacy of Malcolm X.

Racial Literacy

In her stellar overview of literacy, Beth Daniell chronicles our field's evolving conceptions of it. As she conveys, literacy has real racial, cultural, and social value. As opposed to discussing the literacy practices of a broad group (e.g., North America) (400), Daniell calls for a commitment to "what it means to be or to become literate in" a particular "culture and its

various subcultures" (404). Such a commitment potentially offers our field more different functions of literacy (e.g., arresting literacy, functional literacy, critical literacy, and generative literacy [Covino 24-28]), goals of literacy (e.g., community literacy [see Grabill, 2001; Peck et al., 2001]), generational effects of literacy (see Goodman), and the pedagogical concerns related to literacy (see Robbins and Dyer). John Willinksy explains, "Literacy is better understood *not* as an isolated skill, as something one can do on demand, but as a social process in the daily landscape" (6). If literacy is indeed a process that relates to the social aspect of our daily lives, we can enhance our understanding of literacy with a racial lens because society is always already racialized.

In *Literacy in Theory and Practice*, Brian V. Street argues against the use of the autonomous model: "the model assumes a single direction in which literacy development can be traced, and associates it with 'progress', 'civilisation', individual liberty and social mobility. It attempts to distinguish literacy from schooling" and disregards "the socialisation process in the construction of the meaning of literacy" (2). While Street endorses an "ideological model of literacy" (2) and calls for research focused on this ideological model (*Social Literacies* 127), he issues a warning: "What I want to avoid, in looking at the cultural aspect of literacy, is recreating the reified list—here's a culture, here's its literacy; here's another culture, here's its literacy" (134). Instead, Street endorses "[a]n approach that sees literacy as critical social practice would make explicit from the outset both the assumptions and the power relations on which these models of literacy are based" (141). Sharing Street's view of literacy as a social practice, Mary Hamilton, et al., state, "we explore some of these different worlds of literacy with their own literacy practices and events. By placing them next to each other we can begin to see how they differ and what they have in common. This can help identify the ways in which literacy is shaped

and patterned by wider social practices and values in society" (x). Similar to Street, Hamilton posits that we can become aware of how literacy operates if we consider literacy practices of one particular culture with another culture instead of discussing literacy practices in isolation.

Our assessment, methodological practices, and understanding of literacy should not only evaluate social practices but how such practices are racialized. In "The Ethnography of Literacy," John F. Szwed claims that to better understand literacy within "social life" (422), we have to incorporate ethnography in our research. He expresses, "I would contend that ethnographic methods, in fact, are the only means for finding out what literacy really is and what can be validly measured" (427). Ethnography allows us to discover what literacy really is because placing ourselves in the environments of research subjects, conversing with them, and learning from them cannot occur without physical proximity and movement. According to Szwed, "We need to look at reading and writing as activities having consequences in (and being affected by) family life, work patterns, economic conditions, patterns of leisure, and a complex of other factors" (427-28). In addition to his commentary about methodology, Szwed emphasizes the negative effects of forms of literacy. Due to conditioning, everyone can bring his or her literacy practices into his or her personal life, work life, and other social affiliations. Consequently, any person could potentially begin prioritizing specific literacy practices instead of welcoming the value of different literacy practices. As Paul James Gee states, "Discourses are not mastered by over instruction . . . but by enculturation . . . into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse . . . This is how we all acquire our native language and our home-based Discourse" (527). The normalization of literacy, then, involves cultural interactions and practices. Consequently, Gee concludes, "any socially useful definition of 'literacy' must be couched in terms of the notion of

Discourse. Thus, I define 'literacy' *as the mastery of or fluent control over a secondary Discourse*. Therefore, literacy is always plural" (529). For Gee, "Discourses are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes" (526). Since literacy is always plural and involves various and, at times, competing discourses, literacy can have both positive and negative effects. For example, Ellen Cushman discusses the complications of language transfer (12), particularly how "the process of gaining fluency with institutional language" for some may involve fighting to "maintain their face (cultural identity)" (139). Rhetoric and rhetorical sensitivity, then, pervade both discourse and literacy if we consider the importance of one's cultural identity.

Although she does not explicitly discuss racial literacy, Geneva Smitherman illustrates how an observation of discourses of black communities should entail attention to cultural practices and context. Providing a historical context for the fluidity of African-American language, she argues that "reality is not merely *socially*, but *sociolinguistically* constructed. Real-world experience and phenomena do not exist in some raw, undifferentiated form. . . . Thus my contention is that consciousness and ideology are largely the products of what I call the *sociolinguistic construction of reality*" (43). Similar to Smitherman's assertion about the fluidity of discourse and the African American community at large, Lani Guinier also suggests that race is not independent of other factors such as class or culture. In her critique of racial liberalism, Guinier advocates for the incorporation of racial literacy (114). According to Guinier, racial literacy deciphers "the dynamic interplay among race, class, and geography," "reads race as epiphenomenal," and "requires us to rethink race as an instrument of social, geographic, and economic control of both blacks and whites" (114). Racial literacy, then, seeks to recognize how

race operates on a social, geographic, and economic level instead of simply on a racial level. In other words, racial literacy seeks to explain how other factors, such as class, affect one's race in regard to literacy.

In a similar way that Guinier conceives of racial literacy, race and racialization for France Twine are effects of a current problem. Despite race as the dominant factor, other identity markers, such as social class, gender, and sexual orientation, affect people of color differently. Twine considers how racial literacy impacts parents: "I define racial literacy as a reading practice, a way of perceiving and responding to the racial climate and racial structures that individuals encounter daily . . . Racial literacy includes discursive, material, and cultural practices in which parents train themselves and their children to recognize, name, challenge, and manage various forms of everyday racism" (8). Racial literacy, as Twine explains, warrants a type of rhetorical analysis of the various rhetorical situations that people may find themselves in, and, more importantly, is a response to systemic racism. Furthermore, Twine expounds a more explicit definition of racial literacy:

> The components of racial literacy include the following: (1) the definition of racism as a contemporary problem rather than a historical legacy; (2) an understanding of the ways that experiences of racism and racialization are mediated by class, gender inequality, and heterosexuality; (3) a recognition of the cultural and symbolic value of whiteness; (4) an understanding that racial identities are learned and an outcome of social practices; (5) the possession of a racial grammar and vocabulary to discuss race, racism, and antiracism; and (6) the ability to interpret racial codes and racialized practices. (92)

If we acknowledge and accept that systemic racism is real, Twine explains, then whiteness becomes a type of social currency, allowing white people to navigate white spaces with a form of

racial privilege that people of color simply cannot possess. Finally, racial literacy requires

scholars to review the social practices of individuals who are attempting to communicate within

and outside of their own communities.

Within the black community, literacy demonstrates a community's commitment to self-

empowerment. As Maisha T. Fisher communicates, "Literacy is and will continue to be at the

core of understanding the lives of Black people in the United Sates. The outlawing of literacy for

enslaved Africans established the relationships between literacy, power, and humanity . . .

Slaveholders had to keep literacy beyond the reach of those whom they enslaved; to do otherwise

would be acknowledging the men and women who were being used as chattel were indeed

human" (15). Because being denied access to a form of literacy is part of the history of the black

community, their contemporary literacy practices counter both historical and contemporary

forms of marginalization. For instance, in *Harlem on our Minds: Place, Race, and the Literacies*

of Urban Youth, Valerie Kinloch explores how the gentrification of Harlem influences the

literacies of African American youth who reside there. The effects of gentrification caused

students to employ "accessible language to describe their struggle and successes with writing to

analyze the increasing presence of White residents in the community, and to question the

purpose of building new condominiums that are too expensive for the majority of the local

residents to afford" (52). The financial, social, cultural, and racial outcomes of gentrification

prompt individuals who are affected by these outcomes, such as students of color, to discover the

communicative means necessary to reflect and manage their changing environment. For such

individuals, as Kinloch conveys, our pedagogical approaches should heed outside forces shaping

our students' environments and identities.

Racial literacy does not merely assist researchers but also supports educators who aim to create a more racially inclusive teaching style and classroom. Howard C. Stevenson's definition of racial literacy is slightly different from previous scholars that I have discussed. For Stevenson,

> *Racial literacy* is the *ability* to read, recast, and resolve racially stressful encounters through the competent demonstration of intellectual, behavioral, and emotional skills of decoding and reducing racial stress during racial conflicts. Racial literacy is the culmination of a successful procurement of racial coping skill sets to navigate racially stressful encounters across various social contexts. As such, racial literacy is defined by the product of experiences of racial encounter stress, self-efficacy, socialization, and coping as the ability to read, recast, and resolve racially stressful encounters (115).

In offering his definition, Stevenson discloses the potential of racial literacy as a pedagogical tool. For teachers and students who are anxious about addressing the topic of race, racial literacy prepares them for the inevitable, uncomfortable, and necessary moments related to race. Since every individual can experience racial stress, or "emotional overload or shock to an individual's coping system before, during, and after racial interactions" (28), Stevenson calls for racial literacy as a remedy for such stress. In sum, racial literacy involves researchers and subjects, students and their communities, and teachers and their students.

In more recent scholarship relating to racial literacy, Mara L. Grayson also focuses on the importance of teaching and racial literacy. She contends that "racial literacy demands not only that we develop a multilayered understanding of the function(s) of race in society but also that we learn to read individual situations for the ways in which they represent, reinforce, or resist systematic injustice," arguing that "a racial literacy curriculum can introduce students to foundational concepts of literacy and rhetoric, such as authorial positionality, language choice,

representation, critical media literacy, textual analysis, and audience. Put simply, a strong education in racial literacy is a strong education in literacy" (xv). In other words, each situation that relates to race is unique and should be approached differently. Consequently, we cannot expect each racialized situation to function in the same way. Furthermore, she demonstrates that because key rhetorical concepts, such as positionality, are always already racialized, we have to be prepared to address race when teaching these concepts to our students. Grayson offers numerous teaching practices that can assist educators. For instance, she explains that not all silence is identical: "Students aren't talking," which likely means, "students who do talk feel that the burden to maintain dialogue has been placed on their shoulders," and "Students might talk about everything but race" (103-04). In the case of the second type of silence, educators who are committed to racial literacy would recognize that even a classroom that has robust conversations can still be silent about race.

In the fourth chapter of *African American Literacies*, Elaine Richardson also shares research based on "an African American rhetoric and composition course," declaring that "the point of exploiting African American literacies is to develop systematic approaches to connecting students to public and academic discourses without disconnecting them from their cultural and linguistic heritage in educational settings" (97). Since her research focuses on literacy for African Americans, I would argue that she is doing scholarship in racial literacy from a pedagogical standpoint. As educators, Richardson demonstrates how and why we should encourage people of color, in her case African Americans, to incorporate literacy practices that relate to their cultural identity. Creating classes that condition students to prioritize literacy practices above their own will likely encourage them, as Richardson shows, to value their literacy practices less than white forms of academic literacy when all uses of literacy are

rhetorical choices. In her assessment of quantitative (101-10) and qualitative (110-13) educational research, Richardson concludes that after encouraging students to incorporate African American Vernacular English (AAVE), black students develop an appreciation of AAVE and an understanding of the rhetorical choices involved with writing in "the language of wider communication and AAVE" (112). In sum, Richardson illustrates that racial literacy should also embrace all literacy practices of students of color, especially in their writing.

One's racial identity not only influences his or her literacy practices but also his or her conception of literacy. Simply put, our own racial literacy affects how we communicate and perceive (and/or evaluate) what we believe are common communicative choices (e.g., silence). When different understandings of literacy intersect, our willingness to accept literacy as a fluid concept tied to one's intricate identity determines whether or not we recognize the benefits of engaging with people who cause us to redefine our working definition of literacy. *A literacy practice will always serve people in different ways.* To fully acknowledge these differences, we have to become more aware of *why* people utilize unique forms of literacy.

Reconnective Racial Sponsorship

Through the idea of sponsorship, we can get to the reconnective form of racial literacy. In *Literacy in American Lives*, Deborah Brandt offers our field of rhetoric and composition several valuable concepts such as literacy learning, literacy development and literacy opportunity (7). The term that I want to focus on is her concept of sponsors of literacy, which she discusses in both *Literacy in American Lives* and *Literacy and Learning*. Brandt advances sponsors of literacy as "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way" (*Literacy in American Lives* 19). While I agree with Brandt's definition, the 2018

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Malcolm X festival illustrates how sponsorship is advantageous for people of color in specific ways: racial literacy is advantageous for an entire community as opposed to a specific person or organization.

Although sponsorship can "enable, support, teach, model," "recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold," literacy sponsorship can also *reconnect* individuals to others who share their cultural identity, values, or goals (19). Since literacy sponsorship has a reconnective influence, a single literacy sponsor could heavily influence what a literacy event reconnects people to. For example, if Akwete Tyehimba —the festival organizer who I will introduce later—was the only vendor, she could control the resources about Malcolm X (e.g., books) and circulate only resources that argue Malcolm X was a Pan-African Nationalist instead of other potential labels, such as Malcolm X as a growing socialist. As I discussed in chapters two and three, competing visions of Malcolm X intend to offer a complete picture. Therefore, collective sponsorship increases the likelihood that people will receive competing visions of Malcolm X to develop their own understanding of him. When sponsorship is a collective effort**,** any one sponsor will likely be unable to suppress literacy practices because several sponsors will have different aims largely due to their understanding of people like Malcolm X.

Additionally, because a white sponsor can impact access to literacy or a non-white sponsor can try to mitigate how white sponsors have already influenced literacy for people of color, *sponsorship is always already racial*. For example, if the sole sponsor of a festival is white, whiteness will affect his or her choices as a sponsor. If he or she is racially unaware, this sponsorship, would intend only to assist white people because the sponsor would not consider people of color. If a sponsor is racially aware to some degree, he or she would still have to combat his or her own whiteness; thus whiteness would still be a focus. On the other side, a non-

white person who sponsors an event such as a Malcolm X festival could try to challenge the whitewashing of Malcolm. In either case, since a sponsor is always already racialized, sponsorship cannot ever reach a state where race is not part of its foundation.

Therefore, the racial literacy of a literacy sponsor can determine if the sponsorship is reconnective, suppressive, or disconnective. For instance, if this festival chose to only endorse the NOI's interpretation of Malcolm X, it would be suppressive because the festival would prevent the development or discovery of literacy practices. If this festival did not allow people to circulate other figures, such as Marcus Garvey or Elijah Muhammad, this festival would establish or exacerbate a disconnect between community members and their own ancestry. Due to the power dynamics involved with sponsorship, this festival illustrates how a black community attempts to balance out the power between organizer and vendors while combating dominant narratives about Malcolm, dominant narratives that affect the literacy practices of potential vendors and attendees.

Since reconnective racial literacy practices identify how institutional racism is affecting people of color and causes people of color to respond to such marginalization by embracing learning, reading, and active habits that reconnect them with their racial history, we cannot dismiss the role of an educational system. In 2017, 76,000,000 million students were enrolled in schools throughout the U.S. ("More Than"). In terms of race and ethnicity, 49.1% of K-12 students enrolled during 2017 were non-white, and 45.3% of college students enrolled during 2017 were non-white ("Classroom Diversity"). Despite this so-called increase in diversity, A.W. Geiger points out, "Racial and ethnic minorities accounted for 20% of all public elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States during the 2015-16 school year." Because our educational system has a conception of literacy, which may vary if educators have competing

definitions of literacy, and a teacher has the ability to "recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy" (*Literacy in American Lives* 19), the literacy practices of our educational system control what students, particularly students of color, understand about their racial history. This (unchecked) power of our educational system makes festivals of local communities necessary.

On May 7th, 2018, Akwete Tyehimba (see Figure 16), who I had the pleasure of meeting during my first visit to the Pan-African Connection, granted me the opportunity to conduct a phone interview with her. While she was raised in Waco, TX, her husband was from Cleveland, Ohio. While traveling the country, he

Figure 16 "Akwete Tyehimba"

observed how black bookstores were progressive places that had positive vibes. These black bookstores, according to her husband, provided a space for nearby communities to collectively strategize about uplifting black people. In 1989, she and her husband founded the Pan-African Connection. The bookstore was originally on W. Jefferson Blvd in Oak Cliff. As she noted, while her bookstore serves predominately black customers, many of the bookstore's customers were Indigenous and Latin@ people. When they moved their bookstore to the South Dallas area, they were able to serve a predominately black community that they enjoyed uplifting. Due to financial reasons, the Pan-African Connection relocated to its current location, 4466 S. Marsalis Ave, Dallas, TX. In December of 2018, the Pan-African Connection has been at this location for three years.

As Akwete explained, Malcolm X activities and festivals have existed since 1971 in South Dallas. For the last six years, the bookstore has helped promote and organize the festival. A committee of ten individuals work together to ensure that the festival continues. The members

are all part of the same community and vary in age and gender. They receive no corporate funding for the festival. They rely on grassroots funding, which handicaps them financially but permits them to control how freely the festival operates. Figure 17, the visual artifact, documents the grassroot efforts of the festival: a Karaoke night, a Fish Fry, a Paint party, all generating revenue to support the festival. When a community sponsors a literacy event and includes several vendors who may have different views of Malcolm X than what the Pan-African Connection believes, the joint efforts of these various sponsors of literacy provide rhetorical choices to attendees,

Figure 17 "Fundraiser Poster"

thereby challenging racism within the present-day educational system. In our current educational system, the vision of a classroom, department, or entire campus may not consider the importance of its students' racial histories. Additionally, a classroom, department, or campus may not (re)introduce students to Malcolm X. This festival combats the structure of our modern educational system by not only (re)introducing people to Malcolm X but to different interpretations of and literacy practices associated with him.

While Akwete was growing up, she heard about notable black leaders such as Dr. King and Harriet Tubman. However, she never heard about Malcolm X. Her husband introduced her to Malcolm X. After watching a documentary about Malcolm X, she was able to discover more information about him and make her own assessment of him. As she states, Malcolm X emphasizes the concept of self-hate, specifically how society encourages black people to hate

anything African and love everything that is European. Gradually, she changed. For example, she started wearing braids and stopped getting perms. In addition to reading and learning more, she even changed her name to Akwete, an African name. To her, Malcolm X's autobiography is a book that persuades readers to continue reading and craving more knowledge. Because of this book and his life, she views Malcolm X as transformative. He shows we all have a political responsibility to do the type of work that assists marginalized people and not to only focus on oneself. While everything about Malcolm X is important, including how the NOI assisted Malcolm and gave him a type of discipline that is necessary, Malcolm X was always involved in organizations. Malcolm X's parents were active and always expressing Marcus Garvey rhetoric. Essentially, they showed Malcolm X the importance of organizing and organization. According to Akwete, Malcolm X's journey to West Africa exposed him to African revolutionaries who presented Pan-Africanism to him. To her, Pan-Africanism is appealing since blacks have no power regardless of location. Blacks, then, can never be free until Africans have an international and global alliance with Africa as the base. Consequently, she contends that a black identity is based on land and not solely skin color.

Akwete's testimony educates us about literacy in regard to Malcolm X in numerous ways. First, similar to many of the interviewees who I will discuss in the following section, her education did not grant her access to Malcolm X. Instead, to become literate and understand what Malcolm X means to her racial history, someone had to teach her about Malcolm X. Second, becoming literate in Malcolm X also means becoming literate about how white supremacy operates. For her, Malcolm X unmasks how the U.S. incorporates race to condition people to think poorly of themselves or others due to skin color. Third, becoming literate about white supremacy prompts literacy practices, such as embracing one's natural hair or changing

one's name. These cultural/symbolic practices are part of literacy because they reflect Akwete's

mastery of what she understands to be a Pan-African Discourse. Confronting the rhetorical

foundation of racist literacy practices (e.g., aspire to have a particular kind of hair) warrants

reconnective racial literacy practices, or identifying how institutional racism is affecting oneself

and responding to it by embracing learning, reading, and active habits that reconnect oneself with

one's racial history. Fourth, Akwete's interpretation of Malcolm X and appreciation of *The

Autobiography of Malcolm X* signifies the importance of this festival: true racial literacy does not

advocate for the "right" kinds of literacy practices or, in this case, a "correct" way of being

literate in Malcolm X.

Figure 18 "Pan-African Connection's Books about Malcolm X and a Vendor's Books about Malcolm X"

Although the Pan-African Connection promotes and organizes this festival, no single

literacy practice or form of being literate in Malcolm X dominates this literacy event. In Figure

18, the image on the left consists of a section of books that the Pan African Connection classifies

as "Black Leaders." The image on the right contains books and a newspaper subscription that a

vendor was selling (see Figure 18). Unlike the Pan African Connection's section, the vendor's

table includes many copies of the same text: Jack Barnes' *Malcolm X: Black Liberation & the*

Road to Workers Power. As I stated in chapter two, this text endorses the notion that Malcolm X was embracing Pan-African socialism. If we factor in Akwete's interpretation of Malcolm X, Pan-African nationalism appears to inform the Pan-African Connection's section for "Black Leaders." While I am not stating that we should associate Malcolm X with Pan-African nationalism, Pan-African socialism, neither, or both, this literacy event does not have a single literacy sponsor. Furthermore, another vendor does not attempt to reconnect attendees with a Pan-African nationalist or Pan-African socialist interpretation of Malcolm X but rather a

Figure 19 "Vendor's Table"

multilayered version of Malcolm X. In Figure 19, the vendor not only attempts to sell books and a website link but also candles, which include photographs of Elijah Muhammad, Marcus Garvey, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells, and Malcolm X. The combination of both books and candles that feature a range of black leaders affirms that reconnective racial literacy practices do not conclude with a historical figure like Malcolm X but actually begin with Malcolm X. In other words, becoming literate in Malcolm X is part of becoming literate in one's race and discovering more literacy practices and ancestors. As the vendor's table suggests, to understand the cultural impact of Malcolm X involves understanding the significance of and (re)connecting the significance of black leaders who lived before and after him.

<p align="center">**A Reconnective Racial Literacy Event**</p>

"What does Malcolm X mean to you?" highlights the racial divide that still pervades all cultures that create the United States of AmeriKKKa in 2019. As recent as April and May of 2019, police officers visited, fined, and confiscated a stereo of Mikisa Thompson, "an organizer and activist" who lives in Garner, North Carolina (Brown). In the 911 call made by her neighbor, the neighbor states that Thompson was "playing loud Islamic-Muslim preaching" (Tauss). Thompson was playing speeches of Malcolm X (see Brown; Tauss). While I will not speculate about what prompted this neighbor to notify local police about Thompson's playing of Malcolm X, what is clear is this neighbor perceives Malcolm X as a Muslim minister, which he was, and nothing more. To understand what Malcolm X means to his people, black people, one would have to be literate in black culture. Malcolm X's religious choices may be how some people choose to remember him, but others have different views.

According to Heath, "A literacy event is any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes" ("Protean Shapes in Literacy Events" 350). Refining Heath's definition, I contend that being or wanting to be literate in Malcolm X is vital to this festival. As a historical figure, all his speeches, forms of writing, and visual artifacts about him (e.g., biopic and documentary) are the "piece of writing" that binds this festival together. To credit a single film, speech, or book as the piece that is the foundation of the festival would be an unfair description of it. In addition to interviewing the bookstore owner, I had the privilege of interviewing six more people: two vendors, two attendees, one volunteer vendor, and one volunteer. Four of the interviewees were black men, and the other two interviewees were black women. During my interviews, I posed the same three questions to each interviewee: 1) What brings you to the festival?; 2) How did you learn about Malcolm X?; and 3): What does Malcolm X mean to you? While each interview consisted of

follow-up questions based on the responses of each interviewee, the responses of each interviewee were very similar in relation to the legacy of Malcolm X.

Interviewee #1, a black man who wore dark shades, an RBG-colored bandanna on his head, black shorts, and a white t-shirt covered in black and white Malcolm X photos and slogans (e.g., "By Any Means Necessary") expressed that he was a regular attendee at the festival. As he touched his beard, he talked about attending South Oak Cliff High School, a local high school minutes away from the festival, and emphasized he grew up in the surrounding area. As a result, he visits the festival because of the community atmosphere. He learned about Malcolm X by self-teaching himself through videos. After watching videos of Malcolm X, he began following Malcolm X's legacy by further educating himself about Malcolm X through reading about Malcolm X. Interviewee #1 succinctly expressed what Malcolm X means to him with a single word, "Leadership." Crucial responses, such as self-teaching and community, document this interviewee's reaction to his education. Since his education does not seem to have included Malcolm X, he had to self-educate himself. Due to how Malcolm X's legacy connotes self-education, self-education is not necessarily a burden but a cornerstone of reconnective racial literacy as this attendee is able to see himself in Malcolm X.

Interviewee #2, who wore glasses and was clean shaven, is originally from Chicago, but he has been attending the festival for years. Additionally, he has personally known Akwete and her late husband for years. Growing up on the southside of Chicago, he saw NOI members near a local NOI mosque. While he did learn about Malcolm X in school, he expressed frustration at how his school "whitewashed" Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and did not assign Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. He emphasized, "I've been on a thirst for knowledge since reading the autobiography." For him, he could remember when the NOI did not support Malcolm X, but

he can now say for certainty that the current NOI praises Malcolm X. To him, the festival is an opportunity to interact with people who have a similar mindset and meet black vendors and circulate the black dollar. He views Malcolm X as a revolutionary Pan-African leader who stood for all black people, spoke unapologetically to uplift all people, and wanted to improve conditions in more than one way. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* prompted this process of reconnective racial literacy because learning about Malcolm X encouraged this interviewee not to only continue to seek knowledge but to also uncover black spaces.

Seated at the information desk, interviewee #3, a volunteer who also wore a Malcolm X t-shirt and blue jeans, stated that she was a great friend of Akwete. She stated her father taught her about Malcolm X. These conversations led to her reading his autobiography and then reading other books that related to African-American history. She notes that nobody ever mentioned Malcolm X in her school, but because of her upbringing, she expected certain knowledge. Her father would "unteach" her of any distorted accounts of black leaders since white views promoted certain black leaders during Black History Month. Her family provided her with black history. Describing Malcolm X's life as a story of both evolution and tragedy, she views him as a prime example of black excellence because Malcolm X embraced personal growth. Her father's commitment to reeducation and to introducing her to Malcolm X emphasizes a central argument of Malcolm X: "The colleges and universities in the American educational system are skillfully used to miseducate" (Barnes 49). Reeducation reflects the lack of trust families of color have in an educational system that, for the most part, is still white. Reeducation, then, reconnects people with the cultural practices of their families and allows them to identify with other individuals who do the same.

Interviewee #4, a volunteer vendor who wore a yellow Malcolm X t-shirt that advertised the festival and a headwrap scarf, also explained that she was a friend of the owner, reflecting the comments of interviewee #1 in relation to community. To her, Malcolm X is revolutionary, and she aspires to perform actions that Malcolm X performed. For example, because he was a great organizer who deeply cared about all his people, she organizes by volunteering at this festival and even serving on a committee for this festival. Additionally, she claims that Malcolm X is a blueprint for what a black person should do for his or her people by any means necessary. She even changed her name to ensure that she did not keep a name that erased her African roots. As I observed her interaction with a customer, she discussed what she believes are current Counter Intelligence Program efforts by sharing the story of Rakem, or Christopher Maurice Daniels (who I briefly mention in chapter six). She reiterates that she intends to educate anyone about Rakem's case with the FBI to show people that such actions of the FBI are not racial effects of the past. Finally, she even promoted "Guerrilla Mainframe," a political party that has its own mission.[40] The literacy practices of interviewee #4 include her changing her name to reconnect

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[40] According to the Facebook page of Guerrilla Mainframe, the political party endorses twelve points: "1. We demand an education that teaches us the historic role of working class people, and their struggle in the United States and world wide. 2. We believe in the duality of life, universal/natural law and are against gender discrimination of the sexes. 3. We demand educational institutions that teach the historical role and culture of Afrikans/New Afrikans, Asiatic, and other indigenous people around the world. Ex. Mexica, Incan, Mayan and Tainos. 4. We support the abolishment of the U.S. Constitution as a political right, and favor a government based on the needs of the people. Ex. Land, Bread, and housing. 5. We demand universal health care For ALL people! A nationalized program to ensure All health needs are free. 6. We want all freedom fighters/prisoners of war to be freed immediately to rejoin the peoples struggle for revolution. 7. We demand the redistribution of land, power, and resources be returned to exploited people around the world. We are unified against the evils of capitalism, fascism, and imperialism in all forms. 8. We want an end to the destruction of the environment by the capitalist state. I.E. Fracking, Drilling, and Mining. Nuclear, chemical "casual" environmental alterations to the atmosphere and land. 9. We demand an end to all state, local, and federal taxation of working people. In addition, a complete work day being 6 hours per individual. 10. We demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. Armed Forces and cronies in all its forms, state federal, and local police from ALL oppressed and exploited communities around the World. 11. We believe in Revolution, by this meaning the Total overthrow of the Capitalist System by direct struggle conflict. Ex. Every aspect of struggle is a useful part of our cause. We agree with protest/occupations as a means to enlighten the masses, however balance must play a significant role for unification of the mind, body, and spirit. 12. WE DEMAND A SOLUTION TO THE CHAOTIC ENVIORMENT CAPITALISM HAS CREATED. WE ACCEPT OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BRING BALANCE, HARMONY TO THE OPPRESED." Additionally, the Huey P.

her with her ancestors, serving her community, and educating people about how the criminal justice system continues to fail the black community, thereby proving that literacy is not about oneself but about reconnecting a marginalized race of people with each other and their roots.

Interviewee #5, who wore a shirt of his own design, blue jeans, and red New Balance shoes, was a vendor specializing in clothing who he grew up in Ohio. According to him, he attends the Malcolm X festival to circulate the black dollar. From his perspective, black vendors spread black culture and use this festival space to unify the black community. He learned about Malcolm X when he was a first-year college student. He self-taught himself by reading Malcolm X's autobiography. As he states, a person obtains a lot of information as he or she grows. Reading Malcolm X motivated him to learn more about himself and the history of his people. To him, Malcolm was a leader of his people, a leader who was never afraid to spread his message even when encountering criticism or death threats. Even though the 1960s is a pivotal decade in U.S. History and one cannot fully discuss the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. without mentioning Malcolm X, interviewee #5 (who is not even from the same state as other interviewees) had to wait until college to learn about Malcolm X. The fact that he was able to attend elementary school and secondary school but still not learn about Malcolm X hints at how much our educational system undervalues Black History. Additionally, being literate in Malcolm X and Malcolm X's vision of how the black community should prosper, which I will discuss extensively in the following chapter, encourages interviewee #5 to also buy from and sell to his race of people.

Newton Gun Club of Dallas, TX advertised a fundraiser event of the Guerilla Mainframe, demonstrating the community involvement of this organization ("Guerilla Mainframe 4K/Run&Walk").

The circulation of the black dollar is just as much about capitalism as it is about representation. Interviewee #6 has a medium build and is clean shaven. He wears dark shades, khaki shorts with a white towel hanging out his right pocket, and a black shirt that features a photo of Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. He is tall and chews a licorice stick. As a vendor, he was promoting his business that sells children books (see Figure 20). While vendors promote themselves at festivals, he values the black community that is present at the festival. He is around people who do not expect him to explain himself. Additionally, he spends money to support other vendors. Consequently, vendors not only buy from black-owned companies or black

Figure 20 "Children Books of a Vendor"

entrepreneurs, but they also find contacts in each other. First, a black business owner who supports other black business owners encourages a reconnective practice founded on race. If this literacy practice becomes a dominant culture practice, a community ideally could support local businesses. Second, a black-owned business can control to some degree the representation of blacks in its products. This control provides these businesses with the power to reconnect consumers with potentially positive images of themselves. Additionally, as interviewee #6 indicated himself, not having to remain self-aware of one's so-called literacy practices is perhaps arguably the most important component of literacy: talk, write, read, and be without the pressure of having to prove oneself. Simply put, as Richardson and Ragland claim, "Black language comes out of Black experience" ("StayWoke" 30), and as these interviewees emphasize, this festival provides them with a black experience which permits them to incorporate any cultural

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practice. Similarly, interviewee #6 stated how Malcolm X represented everything he values: strength, confidence, and intelligence. For him, nobody could tell Malcolm X anything or question him without a thoughtful response from Malcolm X.

What brought each interviewee to the festival was their literacy in black culture, a culture heavily influenced by Malcolm X. Their responses all share that racial literacy entails interpreting the rhetorical practices of a black leader in Malcolm X for oneself. For them, they have to examine their racial history, community, and cultural practices to draw conclusions about Malcolm X. Racial literacy to them consists of uplifting and reconnecting with other black people, especially black business owners. To them, cultural and social practices involve not simply knowing who Malcolm X is or how to converse with other attendees but also include spreading black nationalism and black love through attending a community event and supporting everyone. Even though many attendees were from the Dallas area, the culture that this festival endorses should not be interpreted as merely the culture of South Oak Cliff but rather a type of black culture that one can discover in South Oak Cliff.

Although this festival honors Malcolm X, each interviewee reiterated the absence of Malcolm X in their education. Out of the six interviewees, only one interviewee recalls a high school teacher educating him about Malcolm. Additionally, only one of six interviewees states that her father taught her about Malcolm X. However, she explained that it was the goal of her father to "unteach" her due to the distorted accounts of black leaders during Black History Month at her schools. Four of six interviewees self-taught themselves about Malcolm X, a self-teaching process that involved watching videos of Malcolm X (e.g., online clips), watching Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*, reading *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, or a combination of all these literacy acts of reconnecting with a racial figure. For them, literacy cannot simply be measured

by a form of reading or writing. Literacy involves understanding their race and, more importantly, themselves. Although some academics may argue that these resources, the biopic and the autobiography, are not accurate, accuracy is not a central concern for these interviewees. Due to a racist educational system that could whitewash Malcolm X or never educate students about him, these interviewees represent individuals who have to rely on family members for historical information or have to self-educate themselves. In other words, they are literate based on their cultural standards and largely due to the contributions of themselves or their family members. Finally, the silence of the educational system expands Grayson's description of silence because racial literacy does not only relate to students who are unwillingly to discuss race but also relates to institutions that fail to adequately address race (103-04). If an institution chooses to remain silent about race, then teachers have to recognize silence inside and outside of their classrooms.

Their interpretations of Malcolm X include several labels for him: leader, revolutionary, organizer, Pan-Africanist, black excellence, unapologetic, eloquent debater, intellectual, and evolutionary. Labels such as leader, revolutionary, and organizer emphasize that being literate in Malcolm X involves practices that entail creating opportunity for one's own community with or without the assistance of outsiders. Pan-Africanist, black excellence, and unapologetic suggest that these individuals all endorse cultural and symbolic practices that promote racial pride and unity. Furthermore, being literate in Malcolm X in relation to racial pride and unity means never being ashamed of one's black skin and race. Additionally, we cannot disregard the rhetorical skills and natural aptitude of Malcolm X. Malcolm X as an eloquent debater and intellectual demonstrates an appreciation of robust conversations and the ability to withstand criticism. These types of literacy practices (e.g., participating in tough conversations and navigating

criticism) reconnects them with Malcolm X, instilling them with racial pride and a sense of self. Finally, evolution, arguably the most important label, becomes the foundation of all their reconnective racial literacy practices. Like Malcolm X, they all intend not only to grow as individuals but also to be part of the catalyst for the growth of their environments and, most importantly, their own people.

Be Literate in Malcolm X

As I have argued, a literacy event, sponsorship, and literacy practices are always already racial. When any or all these concepts allow for communities of color to collectively construct festivals like the 2018 Malcolm X festival, a literacy event, sponsorship, and literacy practices can, then, become reconnective. Based on the structure of the festival, or the grassroots funding, numerous vendors, and organizing skills of Akwete, honoring Malcolm X prompts a reconnective process for all participants. This reconnective process initiates other reconnective processes that involve other people, businesses, cultural practices, or historical figures, thereby enabling this process to be continuous.

However, this festival does not only augment our understanding of literacy. In the next chapter, I examine the contributions of a NOI minister. His epideictic performance will reveal how a traditional form of epideictic rhetoric still contributes to modern communities. While, as I have shown, the Pan-African Connection and vendors have their own views of Malcolm X, the NOI elects to spread its own message about him. While the oratory of this NOI minister provides a vision and a form of entertainment for both vendors and attendees, Nuri also displays how epideictic rhetoric relates to literacy by expressing how he is literate in Malcolm X. Consequently, the 2018 Malcolm X festival exhibits the usefulness of rhetorical theory for local communities that unintentionally incorporate it.

Chapter 6: Reclaiming Malcolm X:
Epideictic Discourse and African-American Rhetoric

"I believe in action on all fronts by whatever means necessary" –Malcolm X (Breitman "The Ballot or the Bullet" 24).

"And all in all, attribute what is honored to what is honorable." – Aristotle (*On Rhetoric* 80).

In perhaps his most famous speech, "The Ballot or The Bullet," Malcolm X argues for a new tactic as a central value to the black community. Praising religious leaders who identified with the black struggle despite religious differences, Malcolm X envisions that successful identification (Burke *A Rhetoric of Motives* 23-27) with black people, or fighting "on all fronts," is possible only if they collectively focus on the property of blackness instead of religion. Scholarship about Malcolm X's life, rhetoric, and rhetorical vision is especially significant today as we continue to recover, reinvent, and "renarrativize" past rhetorical figures. In this essay, I examine how Nuri Muhammad, a featured speaker at a local festival, "renarrates" Malcolm X through a collective epideictic experience and utilizes the memory of Malcolm X to frame an argument that both upholds his legacy and represents the contemporary Nation of Islam (NOI), ultimately urging the audience to value the experience of eulogizing a renowned figure.

C. K. Doreski argues that "renarrativization" as a rhetorical tool provides context, motivations, and the complexities of "circulation and negotiation" to construct more accurate narratives about grounded black rhetoric in the U.S. (209). To expand our rhetorical approaches to renarrativizing, we should examine how local communities recover, reinvent, and remember such figures to strengthen our approaches to knowledge production beyond academia. For example, Cynthia M. Sheard argues that the daily use of epideictic rhetoric expands the sites of analysis for such rhetoric (771). More recently, in "Interfacing Cultural Rhetorics: A History and a Call," Casie Cobos et al. call for scholarship that examines the applicability and effects of

"cultural rhetorics outside of scholarly contexts" (150). This article answers their call by examining how the cultural acts of a festival preserve and renew Malcolm X, demonstrating how academics can discover possibilities to learn through interactions with local communities.

Academics have traditionally recovered, examined, and renarrativized Malcolm X by applying a rhetorical lens to his life (see Goldman; Perry; and Marable), to his interviews and speeches (see Breitman, Clarke, and Barnes), to his relationship with and effects on organizations and prominent figures (see Lincoln, Cone, Roberts), and to the whitewashing of him in textbooks (see Burrows). Collectively, these authors have constructed a conversation about Malcolm X that we should continue to develop and expand. However, expanding such works requires more than a scholarly examination of his oratory and life. We can learn more about Malcolm X by inviting people who honor and celebrate him to educate us about his everyday rhetorical effectiveness.

Nuri's speech does not simply celebrate Malcolm X's life, or praise and blame a community; rather, it intensifies an experience by exemplifying the character of Malcolm X. Moreover, I call for an approach that encourages researchers to attend rhetorical performances, *especially if they are not members of the community of study*. Several communities, including Oakland, CA, Harlem (in NY), Atlanta, GA, and Greenville, SC, honor Malcolm X (see Meline; "Malcolm X Day;" "30th Annual;" "Malcolm X Festival"). To inform my work, I attended a Malcolm X festival hosted by Pan-African Connection Bookstore on May 19, 2018, in Dallas, TX. Prior to the festival, journalist Kevin Krause covered the police mishandling of area resident Christopher Maurice Daniels, or Rakem, which Daniels argues violated his first amendment rights.[41] Though raised near the location of the festival, I want to acknowledge that I am not a

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[41] According to Krause, the FBI allegedly surveilled Rakem as a result of him "marching with weapons during protests" and his anti-police rhetoric, moments captured on Facebook and *YouTube* videos. While he was arrested

member of this particular community or part of the people Malcolm X represented. When I

entered the festival, I was anxious because I dreaded the possibility of misrepresenting the

festival. Although many people were curious about why I was taking notes, everyone welcomed

me. By attending the festival and observing both the orator and audience reception, I could allow

the festival to, in effect, speak for itself. While each performance deserves examination, I focus

on the rhetoric of Nuri Muhammad at this event because the audience valued an atypical

oratorical performance: one that did not involve a politician, a celebrity, or an academic.

Akwete Tyehimba, the organizer of the event, explained, "'This festival is for the youth.

They can look to Malcolm X and know that they too can transform negative or even criminal

actions, to become one of the greatest leaders in world history'" ("2018 Malcolm X Festival").

The theme of transformation likely influenced several of the performances, such as African

dances and contests between children orators reciting poems, during the festival. Vendors filled

four lanes of parking spaces inside the parking lot of the Glendale Shopping Center. The excess

of visitors caused several attendees to park at one of the two nearby churches. A stage bearing a

Malcolm X banner stood at the center of the festival. Two RBG (red, black, and green) Pan-

African flags flapped at opposite ends of the stage. Several rows of chairs faced the stage. The

majority of attendees were African-American and varied across other identity markers such as

gender and age. I was one of a half dozen non-blacks in attendance. Regardless of what Malcolm

X means to me as a person, I am aware that his rhetoric emphasized his love and dedication to

his people. Consequently, to prevent myself from merely speculating about how current

communities remember him, I accepted my role as a limited, but embedded, participant and

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for illegal possession of firearms, a district judge dismissed the charge, but Rakem was still incarcerated for five
months. Rakem, and his supporters, claim his arrest is an example of the FBI's targeting of so-called "Black Identity
Extremists" (Krause).

observer of a festival. To allow this festival to represent the legacy of Malcolm X, I will analyze the epideictic rhetoric of a key speaker: Nuri Muhammad (hereafter "Nuri"). Although Nuri does indeed significantly contribute to the festival, this study illustrates how a local community not only experiences traditional oratory but also *values* the experience.

I argue that Nuri's epideictic discourse and its engagement with the festival's memory of Malcolm X create a collective experience that commends Malcolm X. This collective experience conveys that the actions of the audience will determine if they are correctly eulogizing him every day, thereby expanding the relationship between epideictic rhetoric and time to include the past, the future, and the present. Since the rhetor and audience share this epideictic experience, the audience *speculates* about the future and *judges* the past. After I provide context for Nuri's speech and background, I will analyze his use of Malcolm X's memory to foreground his praising of explicit and implicit values of a local community and blaming of specific vices concerning this community. Because specific cultures may employ both classical rhetorical and African-American rhetorical tactics, my methodological approach to epideictic rhetoric demonstrates how we are capable of understanding communities besides our own by observing, listening, and attempting to comprehend the values of such communities (if we are willing to alter our research approaches when discussing cultures and communities besides our own).

This argument expands scholarship about epideictic rhetoric in several ways. First, epideictic rhetoric in the context of this festival reconnects contemporary rhetoric to classical practices by combining different settings and emphasizing the importance of culture. As we know from Aristotle, "in epideictic the present is the most important; for all speakers praise and blame in regard to existing qualities; but they often also make use of other things, both reminding [the audience] of the past and projecting the course of the future" (48-49). While

Aristotle associates epideictic rhetoric with the present, he does not suggest that epideictic rhetoric has unchanging qualities. The interdependence of the past, present, and future requires the rhetor to be aware of all states of a society. The employment of praising and blaming values and vices can ideally eradicate past detrimental acts still affecting a community, allowing it to sustain itself for generations to come. A more expansive background to epideictic rhetoric clarifies why it is applicable in various settings. Aristotle's codification of epideictic rhetoric combined the "*epitaphios logos*," or the deliverance of eulogies, "*encomium*," or "speeches that recounted the deeds and accomplishments of a particular individual," and "*panegyric*," "or festival orations . . . given at ceremonial occasions and public festivals in Greek cities" (Timmerman 229-30). Nuri combines different types of epideictic rhetoric to fuse different settings together. His employment of epideictic narrative at a festival reconnects it to its classical origins and reveals culture-specific modifications that we should consider.

Second, my approach related to cultural rhetorics invites marginalized voices to speak for themselves (see Bratta; Mukavetz; Powell), resists colonial practices of academia that hinder and/or erase the cultural practices of colonized identities (see Baca and Villanueva; Ruiz and Baca), and conveys that academic practices should not only produce metaphorical change (see Tuck and Yang). In *Rhetorics of the Americas*, Damián Baca and Victor Villanueva argue that "accounting for historically grounded voices and communicative practices promotes a more inclusive and historically sound theory of how rhetoric is and has been practiced across regions, cultures, and migrations" (3). By extension, through analyzing the oratory of Nuri, I illustrate how *current* rhetors of color utilize rhetoric. Specifically, I show how Nuri evokes the legacy of Malcolm X by representing a current conception of Malcolm X. Mukavetz contends that we can counter the effects of colonization if we create an educational system that allows educators and

students to "build a rhetorical tradition that exemplified their histories, subject positions, experiences, and intellectual goals" ("Decolonial" 127). By allowing Nuri's rhetoric to speak for itself (and not applying certain academic conventions such as comparing the validity of his rhetoric with what others have said), one allows Nuri, who is not a traditional educator or a student, to preserve his own history.

A third contribution to epideictic rests on the importance of entertainment, which highlights the differences between classical and non-Western rhetoric. From a traditional standpoint, epideictic rhetoric requires a different commitment of a rhetor's audience than judicial and deliberative rhetoric. Laurent Pernot states that an audience of judicial and deliberative rhetoric accepts the duty of a judge, but an audience of epideictic rhetoric is merely a spectator (4). The rhetor encourages an audience in such an epideictic context to only spectate and consider "display and performance" (Too 251). A rhetor's effectiveness is, then, a product of audience engagement. From a non-Western standpoint, epideictic discourse warrants a different form of analysis when considering cultural practices and aims. For example, while the idea of "the common good" exists in both classical rhetoric and African-American rhetoric, the sense of agency in an environment differentiates the two. Maulana Karenga argues that African rhetoric prioritizes the following "four overarching ethical concerns": "the dignity and rights of the human person, the well-being of family and community, the integrity and value of the environment, and the reciprocal solidarity and cooperation for mutual benefit of humanity" (14). Because the sustainment of an environment pervades these ethical concerns, an audience is not always spectating. Nuri's audience judges his discourse to ensure that he appropriately honors Malcolm X by advancing the concerns of the community and quelling any doubts that the audience may have about the NOI. In his performance, Nuri's praising and blaming initiates a

continuous evaluation of how an attendee's community, actions, and role revere or dishonor Malcolm X.

At this festival, we realize that audience engagement is crucial considering competing understandings of Malcolm X: how we nationally remember Malcolm X, how African-Americans may have competing perceptions of Malcolm X, and how the NOI may currently remember him as only Malcolm X instead of El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. Available resources about Malcolm X significantly inform these competing understandings. On the day of the festival, the bookstore and book vendors were not selling Marble's *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention* and *The Portable Malcolm X Reader*, which offer a more accurate representation of Malcolm X due to Marable's access to archives containing previously unknown works of about Malcolm X. Therefore, only a few works, such as Haley's biography, Lee's biopic, and publications of his speeches, likely inform the festival attendees' interpretations of Malcolm X. Finally, festival attendees were possibly aware of Betty Shabazz's view of Louis Farrakhan[42] and Farrakhan's own questionable comments about Malcolm X's assassination[43] even if they had never read Marable's conclusions.[44] Nuri then straddles a space of tension among these competing memories that affects his performance by prompting a continuous evaluation of Malcolm X.

Nuri Muhammad's "The True History of Minister Malcolm X": Praising and Blaming through Malcolm X

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[42] As early as 1994, Betty Shabazz publicly expressed her belief that the NOI was involved in the assassination of her husband ("Widow of Malcolm X").

[43] In 1993, Louis Farrakhan stated, "And frankly, it ain't none of your business. What do you got to say about it? Did you teach Malcolm? Did you make Malcolm? Did you clean up Malcolm? Did you put Malcolm out before the world? Was Malcolm your traitor or ours? And if we dealt with him like a nation deals with a traitor, what the hell business is it of yours?" (Evanzz 462).

[44] Marable states, "Years from now, when thousands of pages of FBI and Boss surveillance are finally accessible . . . [i]t would not be entirely surprising if an FBI transcript surfaced documenting a telephone call from Elijah Muhammad to a subordinate, authorizing Malcolm's murder" (*Malcolm X* 478).

As he endorses a series of recommendations about solidarity, Nuri strengthens his rhetorical appeal by convincing his immediate audience that this epideictic moment is an extension of Malcolm X's legacy, thereby utilizing the ethos of Malcolm X to gain support for his praising and blaming. According to Nuri's poster, the title of his speech is "The True History of Minister Malcolm X" (@nurimuhammad). "True History" is not an arbitrary selection but rather a reflection of values. Nuri's title suggests that the audience will not only hear the truth about Malcolm X in an objective sense but also hear the version of Malcolm X as told by the NOI. While browsing the merchandise of vendors prior to Nuri's speech, I noticed the presence of NOI members. Many members stood near the entrances to the festival. One particular member handed out *The Final Call*, the current NOI newspaper, to festival attendees as he greeted them. I overheard conversations about a heavily guarded NOI member. I even conversed with someone about Nuri's presence. Many attendees, including myself, were unaware of his background and even his name. Since we all recognized how much the NOI valued him, almost all of the attendees eyed his movements toward the stage. As Nuri approached the stage surrounded by Fruit of Islam members, the audience noticed not only his decorum but also his willingness to engage with audience members through verbal greetings and waves. Several speakers had presented prior to Nuri, but his NOI affiliation and physical features strikingly similar to Louis Farrakhan constructed his ethos. Unknown to possibly many audience members, Nuri is a skilled orator and notable Student Minister of the NOI. At the time of this festival, Nuri is forty-four years old and has been a member of the NOI for twenty-eight years. In addition to overseeing Mosque #74, Louis Farrakhan "anointed and gave him the Holy Name 'Nuri,' which comes from Al-Nur, meaning the 'light'" ("Student Minister").

Malcolm X possesses a high level of character that an orator can use to develop his own ethos. Dale Sullivan posits that ethos determines the effectiveness of epideictic discourse. He argues that a rhetor can establish ethos through his or her "reputation, derived from being representative of the culture," a shared vision of reality with the culture of the audience, authority that he or she establishes "during the speech itself," valid reasoning, and consubstantiality (118-26). Nuri uses the character of Malcolm X to enhance his own ethos and to augment the timeliness of his speech (128). In other words, Nuri establishes ethos because he constructs a speech that aligns with the audience's rhetorical vision of Malcolm X. Nuri fuses praising and blaming to reintroduce Malcolm X's strategy expressed in "The Ballot or the Bullet." Since Malcolm X permeates the core of this experience between Nuri and his audience, the audience will likely accept Nuri's ethos through his rhetorical moves.

Nuri begins his speech by praising Allah and the notable figures, such as Elijah Muhammad and Louis Farrakhan, who were central to the NOI ("True History"). Although Nuri's opening section and final words are sermonic, he avoids explicit religious gestures, thus embracing Malcolm X's strategy regarding religion in "The Ballot or the Bullet." In consideration of his audience and the festival, Nuri states,

> So I say, if you really really really really wanna' show a tribute to Malcolm X, he can't see the flag waving, he can't hear nothing that we have to say, he can't read none of the street signs that they named after him, he can't see nobody in no X cap or no X shirt, for Malcolm X said it like this, on April 4, 1964 in the message called "The Ballot or the Bullet," he said, "I do not believe in fighting on one front. I believe in fighting on all fronts." And I'm saying to us right now, it's Mayday on the front line. Wherever you are and whatever you do, you gotta' make war with white supremacy. ("True History")

Nuri encourages his audience to abandon symbolic praising, which involves inanimate objects endorsing a value, thereby constructing not a concrete value but an abstract value (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 77). In other words, memorabilia and streets dedicated to Malcolm X's legacy praise him as a symbol. As an audience member who wore a Malcolm X shirt, I can recall the Malcolm X memorabilia at the festival. According to Nuri, Malcolm X would not recognize such symbolic praising. More importantly, Nuri's citing of "The Ballot or the Bullet" limits his audience's memory to this one speech, setting expectations that he will reinforce the rhetorical vision and values of that speech.

By paraphrasing Malcolm X's concept of fighting on all fronts, Nuri endorses praising by way of action. The first value that he commends is waging "war with white supremacy" ("True History"). "Mayday" implies that his audience has to begin embracing this value immediately to address the dire situation of its community. Nuri's decision to persuade his audience to take action and, as a result, to endorse a value is not an irregularity. Celeste Condit argues, "The speaker must avoid dividing the community as far as possible. . . . This is not to say . . . that epideictic must avoid urging an audience to action. The actions urged must simply avoid major divisiveness" (292). Nuri does not divide his audience by calling for action throughout his speech because he praises certain values through Malcolm X: acting is fighting on all fronts, and acting is an appropriate form of praise aligned with Malcolm X's infamous slogan "By Any Means Necessary." Through these connections to Malcolm X's legacy, Nuri constructs a shared value system grounded in Malcolm X's rhetoric. Put simply, to disregard or oppose Nuri's message would translate into disregarding or opposing Malcolm X. While traditional epideictic analysis accounts for Nuri's rhetorical moves, (as I will discuss later) this approach eventually can become reductive.

Nuri also commends the value of women's visible leadership. The historic invisibility of women is, in part, a result of obscuring their contributions: specifically, if we promote negative representations of black women and fail to recognize their achievements, we reduce black women (see Atwater). Nuri attributes the festival to a black woman early in his speech:

> Brothers and sisters, before we begin, I wanted to ask if we all could collectively in unity, everybody under the sound of my voice . . . let's give a rousing round of applause for our sister Akwete who put this great event together every year, the Pan African Connection, this is one of the best platforms for the unified celebration of black people that I have seen anywhere on the planet, and . . . that sister deserves a round of applause. And let's not just come out to sell our goods. Let's make sure that we support our sister. Buy art, buy books, and host our events right here at our sister's location. Can we do that? Beautiful. ("True History")

Nuri praises Akwete who is the main organizer of the festival and owner of the Pan-African Connection Bookstore, amplifying her integrity and dedication through the superlative (Pernot 88). While "one of the best platforms" emphasizes the importance of the event, the festival is possible only because of Akwete. When I was making my own observations during the festival, I realized that an attendee who did not know of Akwete would have likely assumed she was also an attendee because she dedicated most of her time to interacting with people and likely completing tasks that attendees were unaware of during the event. Therefore, his praising of Akwete made her actions visible to the audience. By recognizing Akwete before presenting the core argument of his speech, Nuri suggests that his effectiveness is a result of Akwete's efforts. Additionally, he commends anyone who supports Akwete and tacitly criticizes those who would choose not to support her. His recognition of Akwete reaffirms the tension between him and his

audience, emphasizing his ambiguous views on gender. On one hand, by professing his indebtedness to Akwete as the central organizer of the festival, Nuri disregards the NOI's reputation of reinforcing traditional gender roles (see Lincoln). On the other hand, while he does not reduce women to a secondary role at this point of his speech and attempts to represent the NOI as currently progressive, he later contradicts himself by attributing certain duties only to men.

As Pernot argues, historically, praising has a unique purpose for rhetors: "praise is often used in support of advice: the speech is principally a request, and it uses praise to make the listener yield to that request" (93). Nuri's advice ensures that the audience's community can apply the advice to improve itself by upholding specific values. He structures his speech around four central recommendations, each emphasizing the need for solidarity. According to Nuri, they can achieve and practice solidarity together by steering children away from crime, respecting the elderly, protecting community members from violence, and strengthening each other's businesses. First, he implies the value of solidarity by stating the following:

> Let's go back to calling one another brothers and sisters. Did you hear me? In the 50's and the 60's when we called one another brothers and sisters, there wasn't as much dope dealing going on, there wasn't as much gangbanging going on, there wasn't as much black men raping black women, there wasn't as much molestation, there wasn't as much black homicide going on. Why? Because if I'm your brother and you're my sister, then your daughter is my niece and my son is your nephew. So, any time I see any young solider gone astray, I don't walk around and gossip about them. That's my nephew. That's my niece. It's my job to pull their coattail. Before we were kidnapped and Caucasianized, we knew that it took more than a good mama and a good daddy to make a

great king or queen. It took a village to raise a child. Well, we gotta' return back to that

concept. ("True History")

As Nuri asserts himself, ignoring or accepting the consequences of "caucasianization" is the

main vice. Cultural assimilation and integration result from this process of caucasianization,

which, as Nuri suggests, detaches his audience from its natural roots. He attributes the problems

that affect some black communities, specifically the community at the festival, to

caucasianization. This vice rivals the U.S.'s virtue of integration, or, for example, the rhetoric of

Dr. King's "I Have a Dream." The implication of coupling caucasianization and integration is

that in order for this community to move forward, they have to psychologically and literally

resist further caucasianization and integration, reconnecting attendees with the separationist

rhetoric of Malcolm X during his time with the NOI. By reconnecting attendees with this version

of Malcolm X, Nuri can depart from all tensions related to the NOI and advance his proposal.

To amplify the value of solidarity and the need for action, he offers examples of the

absence of solidarity. "Dope dealing," "gangbanging," rape, "molestation," and "black

homicide" are vices, which Malcolm X also condemned in "The Ballot or the Bullet" (Breitman

39) that represent the consequences of a disconnected community. Instead of blaming the

community for its disunity, Nuri attributes such division to slavery and cultural assimilation. His

advice to create unity among each other is to begin with interacting with the children of the

community and ensuring the well-being of children. This non-tension move demonstrates Nuri's

rhetorical awareness of the festival. In addition to the children in attendance, one of the earliest

events of the festival featured an oratory contest for children. His advice to participate in the

communal development of children would not divide or alienate his audience because the

festival shares that value.

In Nuri's second recommendation to unify the community, he argues that a community cannot truly endorse solidarity without valuing the elderly. He states,

> Second principle, if you are a man, whatever neighborhood you live in, find all of the homes of the elderly in your community, and whenever the summer is here, cut their grass for them. Whenever the spring comes, rake their leaves for them. Whenever the weather changes, pick up trash for them. Turn down the music. Respect them. Make sure they got safe passage to walk through our hood. ("True History")

Establishing and maintaining a relationship with the elderly is not unusual for many communities. Wilson, for example, cites the value of indigenous communities listening to and learning from elders of communities (109-16). Nuri's rhetoric displays a different perception of the elderly as he advises his audience to take action that expresses appreciation of their elderly presence. He effectively employs the trope of blaming through his examples of applaudable behavior. As Pernot argues, "Blame is always presented, in rhetorical treatises, as the 'opposite' of praise . . . In order to construct a speech of blame, you must start from praise" (63). However, Nuri's rhetoric demonstrates how traditional praising is limited because praising can employ unexpressed blaming. If applaudable behavior includes performing maintenance assignments for the elderly in addition to ensuring the respect and safety of the elderly, executing the opposite type of actions are then worthy of blame. In effect, he averts audience alienation by *implying* blame through his indirect critique of specific behaviors, thus expressing the restrictions of classical epideictic rhetoric. Nuri's attention to the well-being of children and the elderly oppose any audience skepticism of his sincerity regarding the memory of Malcolm X because they all should share the same value: sustaining Malcolm X and the black community.

Unfortunately, he targets men in this section of his speech, complicating gender roles in the community. According to Nuri, solidarity requires security. In his third recommendation, he urges the men of his community to intervene more than they do for each other. First, he focuses again on the safety of children as he argues, "Number three, every black man whether you got a child or not, if you gonna' fight on all fronts, when our babies get on the bus in the morning, it is your job as a man . . . to . . . be on the lookout for any damn pedophile trying to violate one of our daughters or our sons. And if you find them, hell, don't take out your phone and start filming" ("True History"). In his praising of hypothetical behavior that counters the sexual predatory acts against children in the community, Nuri is explicit about one of the actions that he considers a vice. In his diatribe against pedophilia, using technology to record an incident is a prime example of the illusion of intervention. By reiterating "fighting on all fronts," Nuri's criticism of simply recording an event reconnects his audience with the legacy of Malcolm X. His audience is likely aware of Malcolm X's criticism of inactivity against white supremacy. In "The Ballot or the Bullet," Malcolm X ultimately argues that "A ballot is like a bullet. Don't be throwing out any ballots," but if the ballot fails, then the bullet signifies revolution (Breitman 38). Despite the differences between the ballot and the bullet, both require active participants. Therefore, Nuri does not contradict the community's memory of Malcolm X.

Nuri's other example reinforces the exigence for communal intervention. Less than a month before the festival, a bystander video captured the troubling arrest of Chikesia Clemons.[45] While conflicting details concerning the arrest exist, an officer labeled the rhetoric of an officer

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[45] A time gap occurs before the video shows two white male police officers placing Clemons on the ground. While Clemons's breasts are exposed as she lies on her back, an officer places his arm clearly around her neck before turning her around to arrest Clemons on her stomach (Horton and Siegel). Although witnesses allegedly stated Clemons "shouted profanities at the Waffle House employees" and "refused to comply with the officers on multiple occasions," Detective Collette Little confirmed himself "that one of the officers told Clemons that he could break her arm during the arrest if she did not cooperate" (qtd. in Horton and Siegel).

who threatened to break Clemons's arm as "'a cause-and-effect statement, rather than a threat'" (qtd. in Horton and Siegel). If we consider the arrest of Clemons as an isolated rhetorical situation (Bitzer), people will interpret the treatment of Clemons as either warranted or unwarranted. However, if we consider this event as a rhetorical situation part of a rhetorical ecology (Edbauer) that involves black men and women—such as Danroy Henry, Mike Brown, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland and unfortunately too many others—and police officers, the video documents another example of excessive and unwarranted force against an historically oppressed race of people. He passionately adds,

> I'm tired of all these camera cops. Look at our little sister Chikesia at Waffle House, hearing you all you sitting there videotaping that. I heard the police officer say "Hey, you. Step back." And then Chikesia said, "He's with us." And then when they panned it out, come to find out, it was black men there while them crackers were doing our sister like that. No real man would . . . allow no police officer, no FBI ATF. ("True History")

He attempts to galvanize his audience into enacting the value of intervention by amplifying the passivity of all black men present during the arrest of Clemons. According to Pernot, amplification as a means of comparison highlights praise (88). Nuri's use of "Camera cops," or a comparison of male bystanders who choose to record an incident and police officers, collocates passivity of black men and the harm of police officers who exercise aggressive force and/or racialize citizens. The epideictic rhetoric depicts the passivity of black men just as negatively as it represents police brutality. Passivity is, then, a form of participation of community male members who decide not to defend their community from white supremacy, thereby abandoning the work of Malcolm X.

His criticism of passivity reminds attendees, who included me, of Malcolm X's own criticism of passivity. Despite the inconsistencies about a protest involving Malcolm X and the NYPD in 1957, Malcolm X, Fruit of Islam members, and a crowd of protestors coerced the NYPD to allow Malcolm X to gain medical assistance for Johnson X Hinton, after NYPD officers allegedly assaulted Hinton (Marable 127-29). Because books, documentaries, and Spike Lee's biopic about Malcolm X highlight this crucial protest, the theme of intervention quite likely reminded attendees of this protest. Likewise, Nuri's decision not to criticize Clemons's female friend who recorded the arrest and other present black female bystanders suggests the following: 1) the possible participatory approaches of women are invisible and/or 2) traditional gender roles should be part of the vision of the community.

In his final recommendation, Nuri conveys the economic relationship necessary to guarantee productive solidarity and the limitation of traditional epideictic discourse. Nuri employs three distinct African-American rhetorical strategies. While this multi-layered critique is beyond the scope of this chapter, I identify these strategies to illustrate how they relate to the audience's memory of Malcolm X. Woodyard argues that a "*lyrical approach to language*" involves rhetoric that "is fundamentally lyrical: suited for poetry and song" (140-41). Additionally, the call and response technique requires participation of an audience to complete a speech and forces an orator to adjust his or her performance based on the audience's response (141). Finally, Woodyard argues that "communicators conventionally use repetition of a single idea or image to move from one level of intensity to another until saturation is experienced," thus "*repetition for intensification*" distinguishes African-American rhetoric from others (141). He utilizes these techniques to appeal to his audience. Without altering traditional approaches to epideictic discourse, we would likely overlook such non-Western rhetorical practices.

Nuri incorporates an end rhyme when he says the following: "Last but not least, shop with your brother before you shop with another" ("True History"). Since many vendors were present, he was intensifying values. While the end rhyme assists the audience with recalling his final recommendation, "brother" and "another" reiterate the implicit dichotomy of the entire speech: black independence versus black and white interdependence. He praises the value of an economic commitment between community members, who are likely members of the same black race, and he blames the decision to circulate revenue with non-community members, who are likely non-black community members, for the absence of unity. Nuri then claims, "Find a black business that can supply your needs and your wants and be willing to drive a little bit farther and pay a little bit more. Stop being so hard on black-owned businesses and being so merciful for these white people. . . . in a black business, the person you're looking at is the cashier, the janitor, the chef, the accountant, the repairman" ("True History"). His message aligns with Malcolm X's conception of black nationalism in "The Ballot or the Bullet" as Malcolm X condemns those who do not spend money in their own community (Breitman 39).

In his address to potential naysayers in the audience who may argue that certain black businesses may not exist in their community, Nuri urges his audience to participate in the practicing of a specific value by finding and supporting any black business, implementing non-western strategies that resemble the rhetoric of Malcolm X. An economic relationship entails patience. He reminds his audience that a black business may not be as equipped as non-black businesses to address customers in a timely manner due to restricted financial resources. In his concluding remarks that concern economic unity, Nuri reiterates, "So shop with your brother before you what? Don't buy nothing from white people unless you got to. Buy everything you can from people that look like you. And if we do that, then we can keep our money among

ourselves" ("True History"). "So shop with your brother before you" merges the call and response and repetition for intensification tactics together. The audience completes the oratory of Nuri while the repetition of the end rhyme allows the audience to intensify the overall message *with* the orator. Nuri's employment of these non-western strategies reminds his audience of Malcolm X's own rhetorical style (e.g., "Democracy is hypocrisy") (*The Lost Tapes*). In effect, participating with Nuri corresponds with honoring Malcolm X.

In his conclusion, Nuri again relies on repetition for intensification to reconnect the praising and blaming of specific virtues and vices with Malcolm X. He states, "Malcolm X said it best, 'I don't believe in fighting on one front. I believe in fighting on every front.' What front are you willing to fight on? Don't show love for him with street signs, flags, pictures, and t-shirts. Show love for him by manifesting the principles of cooperative economics and collective unity" ("The True History"). The repetition for intensification includes the vision of Malcolm X, abstract praising, and praising Malcolm X through action. This repetition reminds the audience of principles that they should associate with Malcolm X and their community.

Learning through Malcolm X

In a traditional setting, Nuri returned us to one of the many advantageous experiences of epideictic discourse. Because Nuri's rhetorical moves rely on the hypothetical commitment and participation of audience members, he leads community members to recognize their civic duty to each other and to themselves to foster communal prosperity. This epideictic performance is a collective experience between a rhetor and an audience that contributes conflicting but necessary memories of Malcolm X. While the performance is traditional, Nuri suggests that the eulogizing of Malcolm X does not conclude with his speech or the festival. His audience can continue to eulogize Malcolm X by beginning or continuing to address the ethical concerns, which Malcolm

X confronted as well, that restrict its community. While his audience does spectate, his audience *also judges* his rhetoric because his performance involves non-Western epideictic tactics and an audience likely skeptical of his NOI association. For instance, his call and response tactic would be ineffective if his audience rejects his overall message and decides not to respond.

I call for scholarship that shifts from an examination solely of Malcolm X's spoken and written texts to an analysis of Malcolm X's rhetorical legacy within the context of communities. Like Nuri's oratory, this academic shift offers one way to eulogize and renarrativize a crucial and understudied rhetor of the twenty-first century. Furthermore, this academic move also demands attention to the benefits of an altered approach to epideictic rhetoric. First, attending the event allowed me to include marginalized voices, gauge audience reception, and participate in the experience. Second, while I am not suggesting that non-white orators only offer oral performances, this particular speech highlights the significance of audience reception and the power of traditional oratory within a community that has no academic association. Finally, we should not discard traditional approaches to epideictic narrative. Nevertheless, we should continue to ask ourselves, how can we revise our approaches to assure we fully experience epideictic rhetoric? These revisions benefit the field by declaring that we analyze marginalized voices we invite to speak through not a single and reductive but hybrid and unlimiting rhetorical lens.

Chapter 7: Malcolm X's Visual Ethos

"It remains to be seen how Malcolm X's contribution will, in the end, be evaluated"
(Epps 74).

Figure 21 "Tattooed Portrait of Malcolm X"

Arguably one of the most important contributions of Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* is the use of

Ossie Davis's eulogy. In Davis's eulogy, he constructs monumental claims about the character of

Malcolm X. Davis expresses how even in death, Malcolm X was "unconquered still" ("Eulogy").

While we can speculate about what could not conquer Malcolm X, this ambiguity only enhances

his character. Perhaps, white supremacy, or the great white conqueror, was unable to suppress, or

at the very worse, control Malcolm X. Davis could have also meant that the Nation of Islam

(NOI) could not silent Malcolm X. The greatest implication is that the world can do nothing to

conquer a black person who is racially, psychologically, culturally, and ideologically self-aware

of his or her history and self-worth. Davis continues to magnify Malcolm X's character, even

crowning him as a "black shining Prince," who is "living black manhood" ("Eulogy"). In

addition to suggesting that Malcolm X embodies the standard of living as a black man, which has several complicated implications about black masculinity, Davis implies that the character of Malcolm X is somehow innately intertwined with the character of all black people: "And in honoring him, we honor the best in ourselves" ("Eulogy").

Considering Malcolm X's ethos within an academic location may motivate scholars to search for the characteristics of Malcolm X that will reaffirm their sense of the ethos of Malcolm X. For academics, as expressed in chapters two and three, their propagation of Malcolm X typically involves his life and his rhetoric. Despite such contributions, this dissemination of research concerning Malcolm X can and has removed his legacy as it thrives in black communities. Studying Malcolm X's ethos within a black community that does not have any academic affiliation does not return his legacy to where it belongs but rather follows his legacy home, thereby suggesting that the South Oak Cliff festival (re)constructs an authentic ethos of Malcolm X. The rhetorical legacy of Malcolm X, then, exemplifies how Malcolm X is an example of how a community propagates and uses the ethos of a prominent rhetor to regenerate its own ethos, an ethos that links particular behaviors and personalities to place (i.e., this community's festival). In other words, examining Malcolm X's legacy within this festival conveys how this community uses visual rhetoric to circulate its interpretation of Malcolm X's ethos while reinforcing its own.

The image and not just the oratory or written legacy of Malcolm X reiterates this argument about a collective character (i.e., Malcolm X as a collective representation of this community), so we can examine the visual representations of Malcolm X to better understand community versus academic propagation. In "Image Control: The Visual Rhetoric of President Obama," Timothy R. Gleason and Sara S. Hansen illustrate the significance of visual illustrations

of rhetors and rhetoricians by advancing this position: "A visual rhetoric analysis of images distributed by the White House when the visual press was not present can explain symbolic representations the administration wanted to communicate to the public" (56). An organization, community, and culture can similarly control the visual representation of a rhetor (or rhetorician) of color. In this chapter, I depict an example of how a community does control a specific image (just like a powerful institutional office can) to further its value system. Moreover, due to this power dynamic, an organization, community, and/or culture can change the ethos of any rhetor (or rhetorician) of color when considering the influence of visual rhetoric. Put differently, a community can shape a rhetor's ethos through visual means, affirming and/or shaping its own ethos in the process. Additionally, a community can attempt to spread the rhetorical legacy of the real version of Malcolm X, challenging both mainstream and academic depictions of him.

It is impossible to discuss epideictic rhetoric without considering ethos. In my last chapter, I showed how epideictic rhetoric in the classical rhetorical sense (i.e., traditional oratory) is a collective act when a rhetor uses the virtues and vices associated with Malcolm X to appeal to his immediate audience. Here, I turn my attention to the role of ethos in a different form of epideictic display: visual rhetoric. In *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, Chaïm Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca argue the values that epideictic discourse praises create the foundation for all forms of rhetoric (52-53). These values can, then, normalize[46] behaviors and personalities associated with a character that is worth praising and, by way of contrast, a character that is worth condemning. In this situation, these values are the results of

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[46] According to Michel Foucault, "the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialties and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another" (184). Unlike Foucault, however, I use normalize and normalization to mean how a community imposes homogeneity based on the legacy of Malcolm X, responding to the state power that Foucault focuses on in his argument.

different interpretations of a complex rhetor. The 2018 Malcolm X Festival's interpretation of Malcolm X, however, also includes the dispersing of specific behaviors and personalities that it associates with the values related to Malcolm X.

In this chapter, I argue that the visual artifacts associated with several Malcolm X festivals are a form of epideictic rhetoric that (re)constructs the ethos of Malcolm X, encouraging attendees to take on and develop values that are central to his ethos. This community (re)constructs its own ethos *through* normalizing Malcolm X to honor the values central to his legacy and its continued rhetorical effects. Additionally, this community's role empowers it to offer its own (re)construction of Malcolm X's ethos, rivaling what other institutions may claim. I contend that these visual artifacts use the ethos of Malcolm X to (re)normalize the cultural practices of this festival and prompt a value change in viewers and the community. As I will explain, while ethos relates to character, one's character is intertwined with a person's character and habits. Simply put, our acceptance, rejection, understanding, and misunderstanding of a person's ethos relates not simply to character but also to how our culture or community perceives this person's habits. Despite the differences in these concepts, they cannot be discussed in isolation of each other.

To prove my argument, I begin my discussing ethos beyond a classical context. Specifically, I connect my position with what scholars have said about the interconnectedness between community, race, and ethos. I, then, rhetorically analyze five visual artifacts: the 2013 Malcolm X Festival visual, the 2015 Malcolm X Festival visual, the 2016 Malcolm X Festival visual, the 2017 Malcom X Festival visual, and the 2018 Malcolm X Festival visual. As I will convey, these visuals reveal crucial characteristics about Malcolm X while placing these characteristics in an appropriate context in relation to race. Finally, I reiterate that the visual

ethos of Malcolm X becomes the ethos of this festival, and by extension, the community. Since these visuals aim to persuade attendees to recognize and ideally adopt the ethos of Malcolm X, the ethos of Malcolm X continues through the character, habits, and personalities of attendees.

To ensure that I consider the importance of race and location regarding ethos, I will rhetorically analyze each visual to focus on how each visual depicts the ethos of Malcolm X. By sanctioning his ethos, each visual strongly suggests that the festival approves and will continue to uphold a particular values-rich version of his ethos. This analysis does not, however, consider the creator or the creator's intent (although the visuals were evidently created by one or more people with extensive knowledge of Malcolm X, his life, and his legacy). Because each visual does not disclose the identity of the creator and only attaches itself to the festival, the visual is simply an extension of the festival, which aims to represent a vision for the community. In other words, since each festival distributes and circulates this visual via the Pan-African Connection's physical location and the Pan-African Connection's Facebook page, each festival approves each rhetorical text for potential attendees to ascertain how the character of Malcolm X validates each festival's theme. Following Malcolm X's legacy into this black community and analyzing its propagation of him does not necessarily clarify if the black community's ethos created the ethos of Malcolm X's or if the reverse order is true. What this chapter does clarify is that the Pan-African Connection authorizes each poster and implicitly shapes the expectations of viewers to spend time with each visual artifact. Although a naysayer could argue that my readings of each visual artifact is likely not the standard reading at this festival, this constraint itself can develop an ethos. The fact that some visuals are not readily accessible is what enhances the magnetism of Malcolm X's character (e.g., the practice of self-education).

Understanding a Racial Ethos

Classical rhetoric's interpretation of ethos could limit the character of Malcolm X to his oratory. As Edward P.J. Corbett argues, "The ethical appeal is exerted, according to Aristotle when the speech itself impresses the audience that the speaker is a person of sound sense (*phronesis*), high moral character (*aretē*), and benevolence (*eunoia*)" (72). While ethos clearly connotes the combination of moral goodness, practical intelligence, and goodwill to rhetorical scholars (Mirhady 115), we should continue to consider the contemporary complexities of this rhetorical appeal. Aristotle claims:

> [There is persuasion through] character whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence; for we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly [than we do others], on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt. And this should result from the speech, not from a previous opinion that the speaker is a certain kind of person . . . character is almost, so to speak, the most authoritative form of persuasion. (38-39)

While Aristotle possesses a classical conception of a rhetor and audience, our understanding of ethos has evolved, emphasizing the relationship between ethos and location more so than the relationship between rhetor and immediate audience. Factoring in location allows us to dissect all rhetorical legacies since various locations may celebrate the ethos of numerous rhetorical figures differently.

In "*Ethos* as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority," Nedra Reynolds chronicles our evolving interpretation of ethos. She explains:

> Character is formed by habit, not engendered by nature, and those habits come from the community or culture. One identifies an individual's character, then, by looking to the community. An individual's ethos cannot be determined outside of the space in which it

was created or without a sense of the cultural context. That cultural context, however, does not necessarily mean a conflict-free environment; a social group is not necessarily made up of like-minded individuals who gather in harmony. (329)

According to Reynolds, an individual's character is the product of his or her community or culture. Consequently, we cannot isolate an individual from his or her community or culture, and, then, analyze his or her ethos. Reynolds identifies a crucial detail about ethos: the habits of an individual may reinforce or challenge the hegemonic structure of his or her community. Additionally, *a community or culture normalizes specific habits because it encourages specific habits and disowns others*. However, an individual or group of individuals can always critique these habits by creating a new form of ethos. If every cultural context involves conflict, conflict implies potential change. Cultural context and potential conflict imply, as this chapter will convey, that when a community or culture endorses particular habits, it is also upholding a specific ethos, which will likely challenge the ethos envisioned by other cultures and communities (i.e., challenging academic propagation of Malcolm X).

Location has always determined the acceptability of ethos. As Charles E. Scott writes, "The word *éthea* in Homer was used to name the places where animals belong. The animal's *éthos* is the place to which it returns, its dwelling place" (143). Similarly, Scott notes how "Hesiod and Theognis used *éthos* to refer to a locale of characteristics and to the hidden but characteristic part of a person—the place, as it were, to which one returned when one was really him—or herself" (144). Today, the tension between a performative ethos (i.e., academics and biographers [re]constructing Malcolm X for primarily academics) and one's actual ethos (i.e., community festivals [re]constructing Malcolm X to honor itself through his legacy) still exists and, as I will argue, still relates to location. Considering the importance of location, the ethos of

Malcolm X as perceived by the community is contingent upon this festival just as this festival's own ethos is dependent upon the rhetorical legacy of Malcolm X. Because this community is a black community, focusing on the racial context for this interpretation of Malcolm X's ethos is necessary.

To understand one's racial ethos, we have to assess the racial context that affects the habits of an individual and his or her community or culture. Richard Schur states:

> Bourdieu's concept of the habitus offers an important and necessary adjunct to classical notions of ethos, by emphasizing that character is not simply the product of individual decisions and actions but part of an existing structure. Race operates similarly as both a social structure and an individual experience, limiting the rhetorical choices of African Americans and the kinds of stories they can tell. (2)

Similar to the argument of Reynolds, the character of an individual is a product of *a structure* that dominates his or her community or culture. As Schur conveys, the ethos of a person of color, or a group of color, is a result of the racial structure that permeates his or her community or culture. However, this definition of ethos also reveals the community agency based on racial identity. For example, Schur writes, "Malcolm X's project of rebuilding African American identity through a revisionist history that place Africa—and not Europe—at the center of world history was, at heart, a program in character development," encouraging "African Americans to take pride in themselves and become people of character who built black families, businesses, and communities" (9). In this case, a rhetor of color, or Malcolm X, rejects a Eurocentric context and endorses an African culture. As a result, Malcolm X influences how his audience should interpret his ethos: his African character will not reflect the ideal American character. Visual artifacts also influence interpretations of one's own ethos. Scholarship on visual rhetoric

highlights the relationship between reading skills and visual rhetoric for students (Andersen) and the different ways academics can read visuals (Goodwin). Reading visuals, however, is also a racial process. Roberta Price Gardner contends "that negative societal scripts about blackness can influence and limit interpretations of the visual rhetoric in African American picture books" (122). Gardner encourages educators to train students to read "multiple versions of texts," "teaching children . . . to understand, resist, and reframe aspects of colorist logic and other forms of internalized anti-black oppression they may have absorbed" (122). Visuals that depict people of color, especially black Americans as Gardner conveys, could easily misrepresent these individuals for readers. Although Gardner does not explicitly focus on the concept of ethos, conditioning readers, particularly readers of color, to associate their racial identity with negative stereotypes can damage the character of this racial identity. Conversely, associating racial identity with positive visuals can strengthen it.

Inanimate objects visually represent a community's or culture's ethos. Emma Engdahl and Marie Gelang state, "Our research has taught us that a mannequin's nonverbal expressions reflect a diversity of ethos and persona. By their postures and proxemics, they form an ethos that creates as well as mirror ongoing ideals in society" (24). To understand *a type of ethos* that permeates a community or culture, rhetorical critics do not have to study people. Instead, we can inspect the visual creations of a society to understand the kinds of habits and characters that each society values. As Engdahl and Gelang assert, "In modifying one's ethos in accordance with one's own choices and the circumstances of a given situation, one experiments with different personae. Choosing persona involves (over)emphasizing a particular side of one's complex personality" (25). Ethos is, then, not only character but a community's ability to instill a value system for community individuals to take up for themselves. The ability of a community to select

an aspect of one's personality or prioritize particular habits above others demonstrates the rhetorical versatility of ethos.

Following Scott's and Schur's positions on ethos concerning race and location, I will examine how the 2018 Malcolm X Festival visually represents Malcolm X's ethos, or "a dynamic unity of our habits, our social roles, and the wisdom to know how to live well" that "includes both our way of life and the social structures that allow that way of life to come into being" (Schur 2). Simply put, I aim to convey how the past habits, social roles, wisdom, and structure that influenced Malcolm X's ethos still affect the black community today, thereby motivating this community to identify with and (re)normalize Malcolm X's ethos. Although a visual analysis of photographs that contain Malcolm X (Aidi), an examination of how Malcolm X incorporated animal imagery to galvanize his black audience (Flick and Powell), and an assessment of the aesthetic value of Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (Lee) have revealed the interdisciplinary significance of an understudied rhetor and rhetorician, this chapter considers what the visuals of a festival proclaim about an authentic Malcolm X and our comprehension of ethos.

A Visual Ethos

To invoke the legacy of Malcolm X, a visual should promote characteristics that a potential viewer could incontestably associate with Malcolm X. The dominant colors of

Figure 22 "Annual Malcolm X Birthday Celebration: Sat. May 18th, 2013."

the visual that advertises the 2013 Malcolm X festival are unsurprisingly red, black, and green, promoting Marcus Garvey's (Red, Black, and Green) Pan-African Flag (See Figure 22). These

colors reinforce the theme of this festival, or "Forward To An African United Front!," through

positioning. A black and white image of Malcolm X is directly in front of Africa. Similarly, two

quotations of Malcolm X are also in front of symbols. The top row of symbols includes Adinkra

symbols (see Figure 23). According to Charles M. Korankye, while the first usage of this

language is unknown, many people of West Africa communicate via Adinkra symbols, which

possess a literal, physical, and metaphysical meaning. Considering the complexities of these

symbols on their own, combing these Adinkra symbols with Malcolm X visuals warrants an

extensive analysis of Figure 22. As seen in Figure 23, the first symbol on the left means

funtunfunefu denkyemfunefu, "the crocodile," which "symbolizes the importance of working

together and avoiding tribalism and racism" (Korankye). By avoiding tribalism and racism, this

symbol suggests that the character of Malcolm X at the end of his life inspired to unify Pan-

Africans across the world and likely rejected the Nation of Islam's (NOI) perception of white

people. The second image means *Ohene Tuo*, or "The King's Gun" ("Ohene Tuo"). This

funtunfunefu denkyemfunefu "*The Crocodile*."	*Ohene Tuo* "The King's Gun."	"*Dwennimmen*."	"*Kramo Bone* > Bad Mohammedan."	"Discover."

<div align="center">Figure 23. Adinkra symbols used on the 2013 Malcolm X Festival poster</div>

image intends to encourage "citizens to support the people in authority who protect and defend

the land ("Ohene Tuo"). In relation to the character of Malcolm X, *Ohene Tuo* reinforces the

self-defense rhetoric of Malcolm X. The third image, or *Akan Dwenni*, resembles the horns of a

ram (Korankye). *Akan Dwenni* connotes humility working with strength (Korankye). The

character of Malcolm X, then, represents that a strong black person should also be humble. The

<div align="center">163</div>

fourth image, or *Kramo Bone*, is a "Symbol of Warning Against Deception and Hypocrisy" ("Kramo Bone"). Furthermore, *Kramo Bone* motivates "people to remain loyal and faithful in whatever they do and with everyone they know" ("Kramo Bone"). If we consider the legacy of Malcolm X, this symbol implies that Malcolm X was always loyal and faithful to his cause. Therefore, the narrative that he betrayed Elijah Muhmmad and the NOI is misleading. The final image, or *Okodee Mmowere*, has two layers of meaning: "strength in unity" and "strength and power" (Korankye). The implication is that Malcolm X's character possesses strength and power due to the unity, or black nationalism, that he embraced. Instead of allowing a Eurocentric context to define the ethos of Malcolm X, this collection of symbols make an argument: To understand the personality, character, and habits of Malcolm X, a viewer has to familiarize him or herself with the African roots of Malcolm X.

The second row of Adinkra symbols also contains five images (See Figure 24). The first image on the left is *Mata Masie*, symbolizing "receptivity to learning and education" (Korankye). By reiterating Malcolm X's character with his legacy of self-learning and self-

"Mate Masie."	*"Owue Atwedee."*	*"Nsoromma."*	*"Duafe."*	*"Donno Ntoaso."*

Figure 24. Adinkra symbols used on the 2013 Malcolm X Festival poster
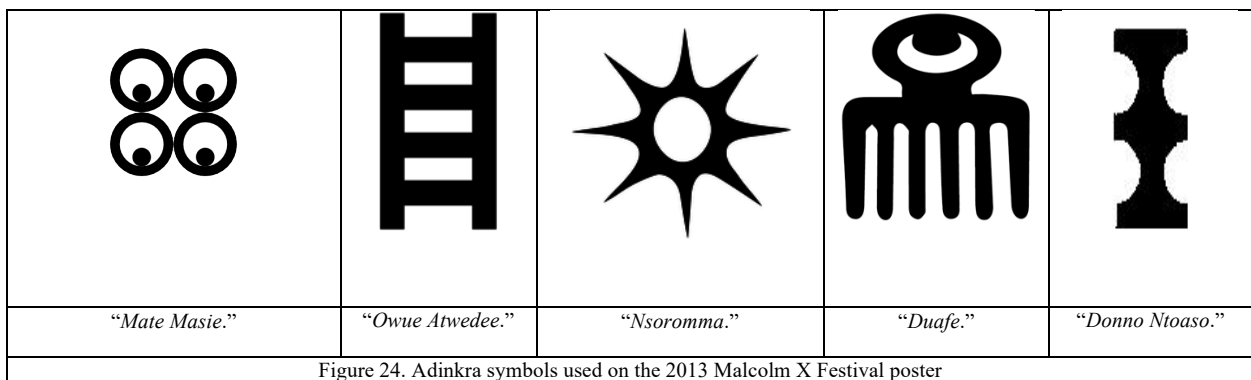
education, viewers who want to emulate Malcolm X's habits or personality would have to begin or currently practice a routine of self-learning and self-education. The second image is *Owuo Atwedee*, which means "the ladder of death" (Korankye). Since *Owuo Atwedee* connotes that everyone will eventually die, the implication is even the most legendary rhetors and rhetoricians,

such as Malcolm X, will too die. Additionally, for the viewers, particularly children, who are starting to learn about Malcolm, they can infer that Malcolm X has already climbed this ladder of death. In the middle, the third image is *Nsoromma*. This image is "a symbol of a person who is a leader or a guardian" (Korankye). Leader or guardian associates a level of prestige with the character of Malcolm X. For viewers, he is deserving of an annual festival due to his leadership or role as a guardian of his people. The fourth image on the right, or *Duafe*, a "symbol of beauty and cleanliness" (Korankye). This symbol is crucial because of the use of an image of Malcolm X. His natural hair, natural skin color, and facial features should all signify how black is beautiful. For viewers of this visual, blackness as a form of beauty may likely not be a message that social media, film, or advertisements disseminate. The fifth image on the far right is *Donno Ntoaso*, or the "talking drum" ("Donno Ntoaso"). The talking drum represents both "poetic excellence and goodwill. It can also be used to send praises and goodwill to the people of the community" ("Donno Ntoaso"). Since Malcolm X has goodwill toward his people, his character can also spread goodwill throughout his community.

If we examine these symbols together, this image reconstructs the character of Malcolm X through the following characteristics: rejection of tribalism and racism, self-defense, humility and strength, loyalty, strength and power due to unity, self-education, and self-learning, ladder of death, leader or guardian, beauty, and goodwill. If the festival truly intends to move "Forward to

An African United Front," attendees should aim to normalize the habits of Malcolm X's character. Furthermore, to more fully understand the words of Malcolm X represented by the quotations in front of Adinkra symbols (see Figure

Figure 25 "Annual Malcolm X Birthday Celebration: Sat. May 18th, 2013."

25), one would either immediately recognize these Adinkra symbols or recognize a need to self-educate him or herself, positioning an attendee to adopt a habit of Malcolm X's character. These traits and the Pan-African rhetoric do not construct a new ethos for Malcolm X. Instead, this visual, like the other visual artifacts, stands in for the complexity of his ethos in the deep context of his life. If potential viewers dismissed any of these characteristics or the Pan-African rhetoric of Malcolm X as habits and a personality of Malcolm X that is inaccurate, the festival would, then, harm its own ethos. Furthermore, even if the average viewer only skimmed this visual, the placement of Malcolm X in front of the continent of Africa still represents his character as Pan-African. In any case, this rhetorical text does not distort the character of Malcolm X and does put forward a values-rich ethos of Malcolm X that aligns with the festival's aims for the community.
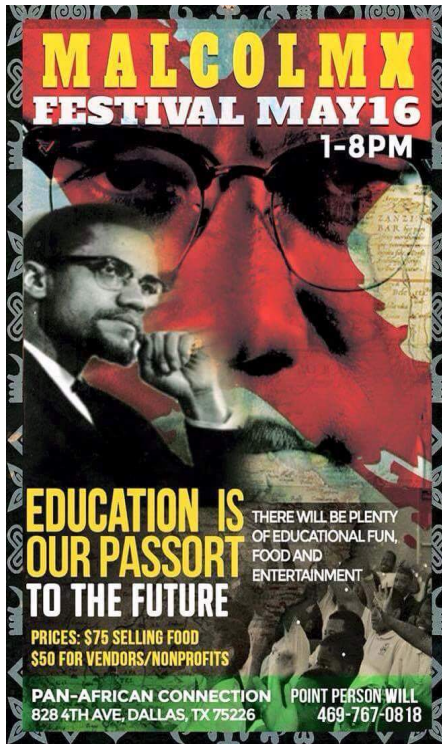
Figure 26 "Malcolm X Festival: May 16."

Historical accuracy implies authenticity. The visual advertisement for the 2015 Malcolm X Festival equates travel with education through its theme: "Education is our Passport [sic] to the Future" (see Figure 26). The basis of this image also includes Adinkra symbols, but less prominently. However, viewers can clearly identify portions of a map near the face of Malcolm X (which a red X runs across). Inside the right lens of Malcolm X's glasses, a portion of this map reads Zanzibar. As Manning Marable documents, during Malcolm X's "nineteen-week sojourn to the Middle East and Africa" (360), "Malcolm subsequently received an invitation to address the Kenyan parliament on October 15. In the interim, he decided to visit Zanzibar and Tanzania, with the hope of solidifying the Pan-African political relationships with Tanzanian leaders he had met at the Cairo conference" (371). Associating Malcolm X with this international trip is made possible by highlighting Zanzibar. Even if viewers do not recognize the correlation between Malcolm X and Zanzibar, they might be prompted to discover the connection between them, or, at the very least, link Malcolm X's character with Africa and Pan Africanism. In other words, Malcolm X's character evolved because he traveled to Africa. Therefore, viewers should do the same or at least explore it in other ways. Since the use of the map and words like "education" and "passport" do not diverge from the accepted narrative of Malcolm X, this rhetorical text is not speculating about Malcolm X's character, but it is drawing a particular focus on values grounded in his worldview and quest for education.

Additionally, the image of Malcolm X's face with a red X over it is similar to a cover of Spike Lee's *Malcolm X* (see Figure 27). While the DVD cover features Denzel Washington, who portrays Malcolm X, the positioning of Malcolm X's face is exactly the same. Additionally, the red X over the face of Malcolm X constructs a grand implication. The red X could represent blood (as seen in Figure 28). The implicit message,
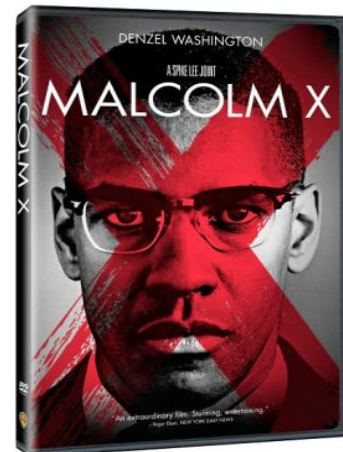
Figure 27 *"Malcolm X: DVD."*

Figure 28 *"Malcolm X Festival: Moving from Mobilization to Organization."*

then, becomes, as Malcolm X traveled more often and gained more knowledge through self-education, the threat on his life began to intensify. For example, in a scene of Lee's *Malcolm X*, the film explicitly states that Malcolm X claimed U.S. governmental officials were following him during a trip. Manning Marable corroborates this scene as he writes: "Yet with each stop in his itinerary, the FBI received fresh reports about Malcolm X's expansive social calendar and his growing credibility among African heads of state" (373). The festival's visual establishes the character of Malcolm X by reminding attendees of his traveling experiences founded on his quest for education. However, leaving the confinement of the U.S. is threatening to white America if a black person can establish international relationships based on an African identity. Malcolm X's character is a reminder: an educated black person who ideologically, culturally, and physically has reconnected with his or her black roots must be mindful of being a target in the U.S.

Figure 29 *"Malcolm X Festival: Moving from Mobilization to Organization."*

For the 2016 Malcolm X Festival, the visual promotes a theme that (re)constructs the background context for the photo of Malcolm X that it uses: "Moving from Mobilization to Organization" (see Figure 29). At the top left corner, the festival, again, incorporates Adinkra symbols. What makes this visual unique, though, is the photograph of Malcolm X. When we juxtapose this visual advertisement with the original photograph of Malcolm X, several changes become apparent. The first obvious change that the festival elects to make is the color change. The original photograph of Malcolm X is black and white.

The festival's image adds a shade of red. Second, the original photograph (see Figure 30) does not contain any horizontal lines that divide the photograph like the festival's visual (see Figure 29). According to *Malcolm X: The Great Photographs*, Truman Moore took this photo of

Figure 30 *Malcolm X: The Great Photographs*

Malcolm X on March 10, 1964, two days after "The Nation of Islam sent a letter to Malcolm asking him to vacate his home, which was owned by the organization" (111). While Marable claims that the NOI sent this letter to Malcolm X on March 10th (295), this picture was taken two days before Malcolm X began his trip to complete his Hajj (297-320). The argument that the

visual creates is this: The Malcolm X who was part of the NOI mobilized his people. The Malcolm X in this photograph was about to become the Malcolm X, or El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, who would organize his people. Again, the visual's message about Malcolm X's character is not based on theory but historical accuracy.

On one hand, the festival's visual is not necessarily placing two versions of Malcolm X against each other. Instead, the visual is (re)circulating habits of Malcolm X, or mobilizing and organizing, that demonstrate his ethos. On the other hand, the horizontal lines could imply that a mobilized group of people can still be divided. For example, if we consider the NOI, despite its benefits and persuasiveness, it is still one faction. The Malcolm X within this photograph was about to realize that other positions on blackness exist internationally. As a result, Malcolm X sought to organize Pan-Africans on a global level instead of simply a national level (within the U.S.). Additionally, these horizontal lines could represent prison bars, invoking mobilization against mass incarceration.

Figure 31 *"Malcolm X Festival: 'Don't Give Up on Our Youth: Educate, Educate, Organize!'"*

The myth of Detroit Red enhances the position concerning the ethos of Malcolm X that the 2017 Malcolm X Festival visual communicates in "Don't Give Up on Our Youth: Educate, Educate, Organize!" (see Figure 31). This visual places a photograph of a young Malcolm Little next to a photograph of Malcolm X. The photograph of young Malcolm, which appears in Bruce Perry's *Malcolm: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America*, likely captures Malcolm when he was without his father (Marable 30-31) and possibly on his way "to the Ingham County Juvenile Home in Mason" (36). If we consider

the background information to contextualize this photograph of young Malcolm Little, the stereotypical odds were that he would not earn a formal education, which he did not earn, and would resort to crime and end up in prison, which he did (70-99). Despite the circumstances of young Malcolm's life at the time, nobody would have imagined that he would become Malcolm X. Giving up on the youth is not a characteristic that reflects the ethos of Malcolm X due to his backstory. Due to the circulation of Malcolm X's legacy via Spike Lee's biopic and Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Malcolm Little becoming Detroit Red to transform into Malcolm X is widely known.

To further publicize the backstory of Malcolm X, this visual reiterates the value of education in regard to young Malcolm. Since some teachers would "try to discourage him from taking courses that black people weren't supposed to take" and another teacher would discourage him from becoming a lawyer by using a racial epithet (Marable 38), the young Malcolm did not value a formal education even in Boston: "He arrived at the school the first morning . . . and promptly walked out, never to return to a classroom" (39). Although the formal educational system clearly failed to motivate young Malcolm, education is what transformed young Malcolm into Malcolm X. As previous chapters have covered, the habit of self-education is not a stretch:

> Once he had started educating himself, there was no limit to his search for fact and inspiration. Through Norfolk's library, Malcolm devoured the writings of influential scholars such as W.E. B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, and J.A. Rogers. He studied the history of the transatlantic trade . . . and African-American revolts. He learned with satisfaction about Nat Turner's 1831 uprising in Virginia . . . Nor did Malcolm restrict his studies to black history. He plowed through Herodotus, Kant, Nietzsche, and other

historians and philosophers of Western civilization. He was impressed by Mahatma

Gandhi's accounts of the struggle to drive the British out of India. (91)

In addition to the inspiration that the NOI provided to Malcolm X when he was incarcerated,

Malcolm X created and normalized a reading habit. As Marable highlights, Malcolm X was

clearly interested in black history. However, his interest in history and philosophy that involved

non-blacks and international struggles convey why the 2017 Malcolm X Festival visual included

"educate" twice in its theme: Malcolm X educated himself about his own history and

philosophies and the histories and philosophies of others. Again, while the visual either expects

viewers of this visual to be familiar with the context for both photographs or willing to discover

the context, the rhetorical effects of Malcolm X's legacy are apparent: any young child can

become a (black) human rights activist if this child receives an education and appropriates

beneficial habits of an education, such as constant reading. Even if potential viewers are unaware

about everything but what they can see, or how Malcolm Little became Malcolm X, the visual is

still accurate.

For the 2018 Malcolm X Festival visual, the theme focuses specifically on an identity component that informs everyone's racial identity: culture. The use of red, black, and green colors correlates to this festival's theme: "Using Culture as a Tool for Our Liberation" (see Figure 32). The combination of the RBG flag colors and background of Adinkra symbols complement the text besides the photograph of Malcolm X. This

Figure 32 "Malcolm X Festival: Saturday, May 19th."

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quotation (re)constructs the ethos of Malcolm X in various ways. First, he provides a working definition of race: use of talent, historical pride, identification, appreciation, and performance of culture, and affirmation of selfhood. The employment of talent demonstrates self-worth. Simply put, every race, especially arguably the most marginalized race in the U.S. (i.e., blacks), possesses talent. According to Malcolm X, however, talent is insufficient unless this talented person recognizes what his or her talent means in relation to his or her racial history. For instance, if a person is unaware of the sacrifices or marginalization that involved his or her ancestors, a modern society may not associate this talented person with these ancestors. Furthermore, a person should proudly express his or her culture when honoring his or her history and demonstrating his or her talent. The Adinkra symbols reiterate this point. Even if nobody can identify or understand these symbols, the visual is still expressing its African culture through these symbols. In other words, it is declaring "its own selfhood" because it possesses self-worth with or without support.

Second, this quotation attaches the ethos of Malcolm X to a very particular speech and place in his life (see Figure 33). This quotation appears in "The founding rally of the OAAU," a combination of two speeches that Malcolm X gave on June 28, 1964 (*By Any Means Necessary* 57-96). To provide context, Malcolm X gave this speech, which Malcolm X presented to "a thousand people . . . at the Audubon Ballroom" (Marable 350), after he visited Mecca (*By Any Means Necessary* 57-58). In this speech, Malcolm X accuses "the man" of stripping black

Figure 33 "Malcolm X Festival: Saturday, May 19th."

people "of all human characteristics," such as their "language," "history," and "cultural knowledge" (81). Despite his Pan-African rhetoric, Malcolm X had a different position on whites: "Why, brothers and sisters, when you wake up and find out what this man here has done to you and me, you won't even wait for somebody to give the word. I'm not saying all of them are bad. There might be some good ones. But we don't have time to look for them" (81). Considering that Malcolm X once credited God with getting "rid of 120" whites in reference to a plane crash that killed 121 people (Marable 212), his qualifying statement about white people shows a shift from race based on essentialism to a much broader understanding of race. As Marable states, "Taken in the broad view, the OAAU's founding marked the first major attempt to consolidate black revolutionary nationalism since the age of Garvey" (351). The visual's theme about culture and liberation suggests that this speech mirrors these characteristics of Malcolm X's personality.

Together, these visual artifacts (re)construct the ethos of Malcolm X by using visual and text to place the words and/or characteristics of Malcolm X within a Pan-African context. This move is perhaps the most important because, as I have explained earlier, the habits of Malcolm X may seem radical or anti-white within the boundaries of the U.S. When we examine these habits in a Pan-African context at a Malcolm X festival, his actions and characteristics are not appalling. As an attendee, I interpret his actions and characteristics, if anything, as a response to the hegemonic influences of American whiteness. Malcolm X would simply say, "I am a creation of the Northern white man and of his hypocritical attitude toward the Negro" (Haley 276). Additionally, these visual artifacts identify and (re)construct several habits of Malcolm X: rejection of tribalism and racism, self-defense, humility and strength, loyalty, strength and power due to unity, self-education and self-learning, ladder of death, leader or guardian, beauty,

goodwill, international traveling (i.e., a return to Africa), mobilization, organization, transformation (i.e., every child has the ability to have a global impact if society does not give up on this child), culture, and liberation. The unstated argument of each festival's visual is that if attendees have not normalized any of the habits of Malcolm X associated with a theme, they should begin the process. Consequently, these visual artifacts encourage attendees to employ and enhance the ethos of Malcolm X.

<p align="center">**The Living Ethos of Malcolm X**</p>

While the legacy and the rhetoric of Malcolm X likely inspire people to attend this festival, these visuals do more than advertise this festival. As I have argued, these visuals make use of both text and visual. Isolating such elements would skew how they are working together to form a visual that epitomizes a theme for a particular Malcolm X festival. Moreover, if an attendee scans any of these visual artifacts, the ethos of Malcolm X becomes more apparent. Although a naysayer could proclaim that rhetorical training via a formal education would be necessary in order for attendees to discern the habits of Malcolm X, I would argue that even if a visual drew someone's attention to RBG colors or Adinkra symbols, the visual has encouraged self-learning.

This festival's usage of visual rhetoric displays how the rhetorical legacy of Malcolm X lives beyond Lee's respectable biopic or the abundant documentaries that feature Malcolm X (see Figure 34). Similar to how a

Figure 34 "Annual Malcolm X Birthday Celebration: Malcolm X Festival."

documentary or a biopic could represent a version of Malcolm X, these visuals (re)construct specific habits of Malcolm X. Whereas these visual artifacts should expose attendees to new knowledge about Malcolm X, and possibly themselves, turning any of these habits into a culture practice would honor the legacy of Malcolm X outside of this annual festival. In the next chapter, I will conclude with how these visual artifacts and the other rhetorical concepts that I have covered in previous chapters (i.e., literacy practices and use of epideictic rhetoric) are working in unison to (re)construct Malcolm X.

Conclusion: Following Malcolm X and Becoming Christ-Like

Figure 35 "Malcolm X Statue"

As I stood in front of the Malcolm X statue, which is located in the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center, I thought about how Malcolm X has impacted not only my academic goals but also my life. For the majority of the time that I dedicated to learning about (and learning from) Malcolm X, I only appreciated him as *the man of color*. Because of Malcolm X, I learned that a formal education is a reflection of opportunity as opposed to natural aptitude. Because of Malcolm X, I learned how to navigate white spaces. Because of Malcolm X, I prioritize racial integrity. However, I was ignorant to what his faith meant to him. Once I became a Christian, I saw Malcolm X differently. To me, he was *the man of color* trying to maintain and balance his faith and his racial pride. Despite how his Islamic faith may greatly differ from my Christian faith, I understood why he needed his faith in a white world. Beyond the dissertation, I encourage every person of color to follow Malcolm X because I believe following Malcolm X will reveal the importance of faith.

Chapter two conveys the academic benefits and potential consequences of only following the life of Malcolm X. To past (and potentially contemporary and future) scholars, following the life of Malcolm X is necessary. First, it is highly possible that we do not know every detail about Malcolm X. Second, everyone who has interacted with Malcolm X could offer something new about his life. By discovering these details, we can construct a newer and more thorough representation of Malcolm X life. These benefits, however, relate to the literal representation of Malcolm X. The literal representation as a key focus of research may not consider the rhetorical representation and impact of Malcolm.

Chapter three reviews how scholars have examined the rhetorical, educational, and cultural effects of Malcolm X as a rhetor and rhetorician. On one hand, these scholars demonstrate *why* we cannot only focus on the life of Malcolm X. For example, simply studying different drafts of the same speech of Malcolm X could reveal a connection between him and the writing process. On the other hand, as I have shown, scholars can easily resort to a western methodology or theoretical framework to discuss a rhetor of color. Although a western methodology or theoretical framework can and have assisted scholars, only using a western methodology or theoretical framework minimizes the importance of race. In response to the intricacies of race, a researcher's methodology or theoretical framework should underscore the significance of race instead of disregard it.

Chapter four discusses my methodology: the rhetorical circle of Positionality, Motive(s), and Community Accuracy (P.M.C.). Since I am a Mexican American writing about Malcolm X, I start this chapter by explaining what positionality means regarding this project. Positionality, for this project, involves (1) reiterating that Malcolm X's legacy still belongs to (and will forever belong to) the blacks that he represented and (2) emphasizing that this project is an act of cultural

appreciation and not cultural appropriation. Both cultural appreciation and appropriation relate to the motive(s) of a researcher. As a former resident of the Oak Cliff area, I did not write about a community that I knew nothing about. Therefore, my motives involve respecting Malcolm X and honoring an environment that I once called home. Together, positionality and motive(s) underline the value of community accuracy. In other words, this section relating to community accuracy communicates how this project is an accurate representation of this festival. P.M.C. shows that researchers should be constantly reflecting on their positionality, motive(s), and community accuracy throughout their research processes.

Chapter five holistically analyzes this 2018 Malcolm X festival because I focus on literacy practices. Contributing to scholarship about racial literacy, I offer the term: reconnective racial literacies. At this festival (i.e., a literacy event), vendors, volunteers, and attendees utilize racial literacy practices to (1) mitigate colonialism and to (2) reconnect with their racial ancestry (e.g., Malcolm X) and their race (e.g., other vendors, volunteers, and attendees). The first major portion of this chapter argues for more reconnective racial sponsorship. When an event represents a community of color, more than one sponsor is necessary to ensure that this event is a collective representation of this community and its beliefs. The second major portion of this chapter uses multiple interviews to show how this literacy event includes reconnective racial literacies. While each interviewee is, obviously, different, each interviewee uses his or her literacy in Malcolm X to develop relationships at this festival and to navigate life in general.

Chapter six focuses on the traditional epideictic oratory of Nuri Muhammad. Unlike chapter five, chapter six returns us to the importance of orator and immediate audience. As I have stated, this audience may be hostile or indifferent toward the Nation of Islam (NOI) due to conspiracy theories about the NOI's involvement in the assassination of Malcolm X. Therefore,

Nuri has to gain or strengthen this audience's trust. Throughout this process, Nuri's performance represents how epideictic rhetoric can be a collective experience. Using the legacy of Malcolm X, Nuri attempts to persuade his audience to continuously practice the virtues that Malcolm X valued and condemn vices that Malcolm X disapproved of to uplift its community.

Chapter seven evaluates the rhetorical meanings of five visual artifacts. Unlike chapters five and six, this chapter focuses on artifacts that this festival produced instead of the festival as a whole or a specific individual. As I have argued, each visual artifact (re)constructs the ethos of Malcolm X. Simply put, each visual highlights specific habits of Malcolm X for potential viewers. I want to be clear that *what* each visual claims about Malcolm X is not more important than *how* each visual constructs its claim about Malcolm X. For example, while some visuals rely on text, other visuals rely on symbols (e.g., Adinkra symbols) to create multiple layers of meaning that relate to specific habits of Malcolm X. Ultimately, through these visuals, this festival normalizes the ethos of Malcolm X.

Major Takeaways and Implications

This festival provides us with a very complex understanding of Malcolm X. Unlike a book, documentary, or docuseries, this festival conveys how Malcolm X influences a community to this day. However, this is just an understanding of Malcolm X and not *the understanding of Malcolm X.* While an accurate representation of Malcolm X is beneficial, this festival ideally reminds our field that we will never produce an accurate representation of Malcolm X. His rhetorical legacy has and will continue to impact people and communities in different ways. As a result, people and communities will continue to (re)construct his legacy based on their understandings of him. These understandings are just as important as understandings of Malcolm

X based on academic scholarship. All of these understandings and representations are necessary if we intend to expand scholarship about him.

Additionally, our research processes will have to continue to evolve if we intend to strengthen our relationships with communities that have no formal affiliation with academia. In particular, our methodologies and theoretical frameworks should not racially decontextualize a rhetor or community of color. When we only use a western methodology or theoretical framework, we risk concealing the effects of white colonialism and responses to it. Since Malcolm X was a black rhetor, researching Malcolm X from within a black event was appropriate. Removing Malcolm X from the people that he represented removes him from blackness, which I would argue is the foundation of his legacy. Furthermore, this attention to marginalized identity markers, such as blackness, should motivate researchers to contemplate the thin line between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation. Ideally, researchers will ask themselves before, during, and after their research process: How does your positionality influence this project? Why do you want to conduct this research? Do your positionality and motive(s) cause your commitment to accuracy to expand or shrink? Ideally, these questions bring both tension and anxiety. Since I care about any representation of Malcolm X and of Oak Cliff, I was always tense and anxious. Together, they motivated me to start and complete this project.

Finally, this collective memory of Malcolm X is impossible to fully assess without analyzing this festival's employment of literacy practices, epideictic rhetoric, and visual rhetoric. Although I could have only examined this festival's literacy practices, I wanted to show the festival in its entirety. In other words, I did not want to reduce this festival to its literacy practices because—from Nuri Muhammad to a volunteer and from the books to the visuals—everyone and everything are essential. Furthermore, chapters on literacy practices, epideictic rhetoric, and

visual rhetoric are intentional. In defense of our field of rhetoric and composition, what we research and teach have real world effects on different levels.

Going Forward

If I revisit this project, I would like to connect each chapter by arguing that literacy practices and visual rhetoric have an epideictic function. This move would (1) clearly connect these chapters to the chapter specifically about epideictic rhetoric and (2) expand scholarship about epideictic rhetoric. Since Malcolm X was a rhetor, concentrating on epideictic rhetoric emphasizes Malcolm X's nature as a traditional orator. Additionally, concentrating on epideictic rhetoric within the context of a community event would emphasize Malcolm as a rhetorician. I would, then, expand scholarship about Malcolm X while revealing how this festival deepens our understanding of both Malcolm X and epideictic rhetoric.

Despite potentially revisiting this project in the future, a final word is appropriate. Malcolm X, I am eternally grateful for all that you have taught me. As I navigated academia, I never made a decision that I believed would contradict my understanding of you. No disrespect, but academia became my Nation of Islam (NOI). It was turning me into a person that I did not want to become. I thought the sacrifice was necessary until, like you, I discovered that it's just a business. As you would likely say, it's just a hustle. *Everything is a performance.* You had nothing when you left the NOI. Because of you, I am not afraid of change. When I was at the Schomburg Center and reading your unpublished chapter (Yeah. I know. You would rather be going door to door. You're a product that they hustle now.), you said that the most segregated time is Sunday service at a Christian church. It still is, but you have my word: I will try to change this issue. How do I conclude? I think you would agree. "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a

fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries" (Hebrews 10:26-27).

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Vita

Danny Joe Rodriguez was born on October 29, 1990 in Dallas, Texas, specifically Oak Cliff, which is in Dallas, Texas. He is the son of Jesse Rodriguez and Rosa Elena Guzman. A 2009 graduate of W.H. Adamson High School in Dallas, Texas, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in English from the University of Texas at Arlington, in Arlington, Texas, in 2012.

After receiving his Master of Arts degree in English from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2014, he taught at the community college level for two years. As a graduate instructor at Texas Christian University, he started his doctorate in Rhetoric and Composition in 2016. While earning his degree, he was a Radford Research Assistant, a Graduate Teaching Assistant, and a Research Assistant. In addition to conferencing and publishing, he was a 2019-2020 recipient of the New York Public Library Short Term Fellowship program. This fellowship allowed him to develop his understanding of Malcolm X at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Upon completion of his degree, Rodriguez will remain on his academic path while balancing his faith. Watch him faith walk with unshaken faith.

ABSTRACT

THE RHETORIC OF MALCOLM X'S LEGACY:
BY ANY (AVAILABLE) MEANS (OF PERSUASION) NECESSARY

by Danny Joe Rodriguez, Ph.D., 2021
Department of English
Texas Christian University

Dissertation Advisor: Brad E. Lucas

This dissertation examines the cultural practices of the 2018 Malcolm X Festival, hosted by the Pan-African Connection: Bookstore, Art Gallery, and Resource Center on May 19, 2018. Analyzing literacy practices, rhetorical theory, and visual rhetoric, this dissertation project explores how this festival utilizes cultural practices to (re)construct Malcolm X's rhetorical legacy. Chapter one introduces the general outlines of upcoming dissertation chapters. Chapter two discusses the literal representation of Malcolm X by reviewing what scholars have concluded about his actual life. Focusing on his interconnected roles as a rhetor, rhetorician, and cultural figure, chapter three chronicles the rhetorical representations of Malcolm X within academia. Chapter four explains my methodology of Positionality, Motive(s), and Community Accuracy (P.M.C.) to argue for the need of methodologies that respond to communities of study. Throughout my study, P.M.C. constantly encourages me to revisit my positionality, motive(s) for conducting this research, and my representations of this community. Chapter five assesses the 2018 Malcolm X Festival on a larger scale since I incorporate six interviews to illustrate how being literate in Malcolm X can produce reconnective racial literacies. Returning to traditional oratory, chapter six focuses on the epideictic rhetoric of Nuri Muhmmad, a student minister of the Nation of Islam, to convey epideictic performance is a collective performance at this particular festival. Finally, chapter seven evaluates five visual artifacts that advertise different

Malcolm X festivals of the past. By evaluating each visual artifact, this chapter illustrates what each visual artifact claims about the ethos of Malcolm X and how it (re)constructs his ethos for different festival occasions. Ultimately, this dissertation emphasizes the importance of studying Malcolm X beyond his literal life and the benefits of understanding how local communities (re)construct rhetors in general.