

6-11-2012

The Unsung and Transformative Power of African-American Urban Adolescent Literature: Using an Adolescent Identity Taxonomy to Understand and Teach Inner-City Students

Krista Shauntae Lewis
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: <http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Lewis, Krista Shauntae, "The Unsung and Transformative Power of African-American Urban Adolescent Literature: Using an Adolescent Identity Taxonomy to Understand and Teach Inner-City Students" (2012). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 390.
<http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/390>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.

STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

THE UNSUNG AND TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN URBAN
ADOLESCENT LITERATURE: USING AN ADOLESCENT IDENTITY TAXONOMY TO
UNDERSTAND AND TEACH INNER-CITY STUDENTS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Krista Shauntae Lewis

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

May 2012

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
The School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Krista Shauntae Lewis

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

James Cahalan, Ph.D.
Professor of English, Advisor

Linda Norris, Ph.D.
Professor of English

Jo-Anne Kerr, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English

ACCEPTED

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
The School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: The Unsung and Transformative Power of African-American Urban Adolescent

Literature: Using an Adolescent Identity Taxonomy to Understand and Teach Inner-City
Students

Author: Krista Shauntae Lewis

Dissertation Chair: Dr. James Cahalan

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Linda Norris
Dr. Jo-Anne Kerr

This dissertation explores how the power of an underrepresented genre and subgenre of literature—African-American Urban Adolescent Literature (AAUAL)—can have instructional value in secondary English language arts classrooms. The use and function of AAUAL is threaded throughout each chapter. Keeping AAUAL at the forefront, I discuss the following: (1) the emergence of AAUAL; (2) a contextual pedagogical framework with eight components of an effective curriculum and with AAUAL as core pieces of literature; (3) a taxonomy suggested by AAUAL that highlights the black, urban adolescent identity construction; and (4) the reading-writing connection in relation to AAUAL and the taxonomy and in regards to meeting the argumentative writing strand in the Common Core State Standards. I use these four premises to discuss the affective and instructional implications of using AAUAL in secondary English language arts classrooms, explaining why I believe that this subgenre is a complementary segue to canonical texts and provides a platform for students to learn strategies when cognitively processing concepts. I also explain that both teachers and students will benefit from this subgenre of literature and proposed instructional model. If implemented authentically and with fidelity, they can offer wonderful learning opportunities and experiences for both teachers and students.

The major literary theory undergirding this research is Reader Response. More specifically, I draw on the work of Louise Rosenblatt—transactional reading—and Norman Holland’s notion of identity themes because of the content of AAUAL and the taxonomy which calls themes forth for black, urban teens when reading this body of literature.