

AWP2020- Cultivating Authentic Voice in Black Writers

Panelists: Daniel B. Summerhill, Quintin Collins, Raych Jackson, Brendan Kiely

Overview- Does it smack of racism or classism to demand that these students [black students] put aside the language of their homes and communities to adopt a discourse that is not only alien, but that has often been instrumental in furthering their oppression? How can we teach students of color the art of writing while also encouraging the use of their native discourse, their native voice? How do we foster voice if students aren't invited to the table? Using Whitman, Hughes and Kendrick Lamar, we discuss.

- I. Introduction
 - a. I, Too Hughes
 - b. Why is this discussion important?
- II. Authenticity? Voice?
 - a. Definitions
 - b. Acclimating vs Assimilating
- III. Code Switching
- IV. Prescription/Description
 - a. Bell Hooks
- V. So What?
 - a. Lamar, Hughes, Whitman

Moderator Questions:

1. What constitutes authenticity when talking about voice in writing?
2. In what ways do teachers/instructors contribute to oppression in writing courses?
3. What is the role of a teacher/instructor when it comes to fostering authentic voice?
4. How do we foster authentic voice in black writers, what are some examples of effective exercises/best practices?