

# Moira E. Pirsch

---

608-772-2597 | mep2172@tc.columbia.edu | moirapirsch.com

## EDUCATION

**Teachers College, Columbia University**, New York, NY | 2018

Ph.D. in English Education

Dissertation: "It's Lit: A Critical Qualitative Case Study on the Intersections of Hip Hop Education, Spirituality and Race"

Advisors: Dr. Ernest Morrell, Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz

**Harvard Graduate School of Education**, Cambridge, MA

Ed.M. in Arts in Education

Focused on Critical Pedagogy, Hip Hop Scholarship and Community Organizing

**University of Minnesota**, College of Liberal Arts, Minneapolis, MN

B.A. in English Literature

Participated in *Civil Rights Movement: History & Consequences* Summer Course

Participated in *Writing for Social Change* Off Campus Study Program

Participated in *National Student Exchange* in Honolulu, HI

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Maui Arts and Cultural Center (MACC), Kahului, Hawai'i | 2017-Present

**Principal Contracting Artist for Spoken Word Initiative, Instructor for "Cross Currents" Workshops**

- Support multi-year initiative and teach original curriculum while blending traditional and contemporary art
- Students included, MS and HS students, Adult teachers and Boys & Girls club summer programs

Department of English & Comparative Literature, Institute for African-American Studies, Columbia University | 2018

**Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Hip Hop**

- Design and teach original curriculum on introducing the histories and theories of Hip Hop Studies

Department of English & Comparative Literature, Institute for African-American Studies, Columbia University | 2017

**Teaching Assistant, Introduction to African American Studies**

- Design and teach original discussion section/recitation of 23 undergraduate students that focuses on the themes of African American History, Literature, Black Studies, Religion, and Political Science

English Education, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2015 (co-taught), 2016 (lead taught)

**Instructor, Teaching English in Diverse Social and Cultural Contexts**

- Design and teach original curriculum that focuses on the themes of diversity, social justice, and English - Education to pre-service teachers in multiple departments

Department of Folklore & Mythology, Dramatic Arts, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA | 2012

**Teaching Fellow for Bryonn Bain, Hip Hop and Spoken Word Theater Laboratory**

- Assisted visiting scholar Bryonn Bain in the facilitation of class and assessment of student progress

- Acted as Assistant Director to the student produced production of “What It Iz,” a production written by formerly incarcerated people that explores racial, gender, and social issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

St. Paul Central High School, St. Paul Public School District, St. Paul, MN | 2009-2010

**Creator of “Poetry Friday” Teaching Artist in Residency to 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English Classes**

- Created and taught original curriculum to students to aid them in better understanding poetry, its connection to life in addition to relevant, district-required coursework
- Managed and engaged classes of 30 young students with poetry exercises

Have taught courses and workshops of all levels (K-12, College, PostGrad and Professional) on general education, English Education, spoken word poetry, hip hop education and social justice

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Department of English Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY | 2014-Present

**Program Associate**

- Manage all MA applications, arrange faculty reviews, act as liaison to admissions
- Support Departmental events and communications including website, newsletters etc

The Institute for Urban Minority Education, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2014-Present

**Graduate Research Fellow and Colloquia Coordinator**

- Coordinate all logistics and promotion for graduate student fellow presentations and events
- Support visiting lectures, large events and community building initiatives
- Coordinated “The Roots & Wings of Hip Hop” with Guest Speaker Dr. Josef Sorrett

Youth Speaks National Programs, San Francisco, CA, Philadelphia, PA, Atlanta, GA, | 2012-2015, 2018

**Housing Director & University Liaison for Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam**

- Support contract between YS and university administration, manage housing logistics for 600
- Oversee committee of six and support Director in implementation of \$500,000 Festival

Youth Speaks, National Programs, San Francisco, CA (+20 cities) | 2016-2017

**Project Director, Brave New Schools #RethinkHighSchool National Tour**

- Supported the development of an online open competition as detailed on bravenewschools.org
- Direct nation-wide project supporting 20 local youth poetry organizations to curate and host youth centered, intergenerational events connected to a national conversation about education
- Oversee budget of \$700,000, all logistics, evaluations, staff members and community partners

Anna Myer Dancers and the North American Family Institute, Boston, MA , | 2012-2014

**Poetry Performer, Lead Youth Poet Educator for “Hoop Suite” Multigenre Performance**

- Create, write, workshop and rehearse original poetry in collaboration with dancers and musicians
- Faciliate teenage poets in the creation of their own poetry in relationship to other artists and mediums

Hip Hop Education Center, Teachers College & NYU, Schomburg Center, New York, NY | 2012-2014

**Think Tank Committee Coordinator - Teaching Certification, Defining the Field & Marketing**

- Oversaw, coordinate and take notes for meetings for three monthly committees of scholars from ten states and two countries
- Co-coordinated conference, managing presenters and production of conference materials.

Hip Hop Archive, Hutchins Institute for African and African American Research, Harvard | 2013-2014

**Education Associate**

- Acquired materials for the hip hop education collection and prepare presentation strategies
- Coordinated and oversaw the development of the Hip Hop Afterschool online presence

Hutchins Institute for African and African American Research, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA | 2013

**NEH Summer Seminar Logistics Coordinator**

- Coordinated readings, travel, food, payment and accommodations for 13 visiting NEH fellows
- Acted as primary contact and on-site support staff for three-week intensive seminar

Office for the Arts, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA | 2012-2014

**Associate Coordinator for the Arts First Festival**

- Coordinated and oversaw logistics for 200 student-produced events over the 3-day festival
- Managed team of 15 key stakeholders/contributors to the festival from across Harvard

Arts @ 29 Garden, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA | 2011-2012

**Arts @ 29 Garden Graduate Assistant**

- Acted as general support for visiting scholars and artists in residence at Arts @ 29 Garden
- Helped program manager in supporting faculty and students produce curricular related arts events

Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs (HECUA), St. Paul, MN | 2008

**Student Advisor and Recruitment Support Staff for Writing for Social Change and City Arts**

- Recruit potential HECUA students through in-class presentations, tabling events and other publicity efforts
- Support UMN students in navigating the HECUA application, planning and enrollment process

## DISTINCTIONS, HONORS & AWARDS

**Outstanding Dissertation Award**, American Education Research Association, Spirituality SIG | 2018

**Excellence in Teaching Assistance Award**, (1 TA) General Studies Student Council, Columbia U | 2018

**Dean's Grant for Student Research**, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2017-2018

**Dean's Fellow for Teaching and Diversity**, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2015-2016, 2017-2018

**Provost's Grant for Professional Development**, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2015-2016

**College of Liberal Arts Student Commencement Speaker**, University of Minnesota | 2010

**Community Engagement Scholar**, University of Minnesota | 2010

**President Student Leadership & Service Award**, (.05% of students) University of Minnesota | 2010

**Alumni Association Award**, (1 of 8 students) University of Minnesota | 2010

**Engaged English Department Scholar**, (1 of 9 students) University of Minnesota | 2010

**Top 20 Artist under 20**, Star Tribune and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN | 2008

## PUBLICATIONS

Pirsch, M. (*Forthcoming*) The Light: The Past and Promise of Youth Spoken Word and Hip Hop Based Education. Chapter in *United We Stand: The Role of Spirituality in Engaging and Healing Communities*, Information Age Publishing, Charlotte, NC

Pirsch, M. (2018) Lords above us and within us: Race, Spirituality and Hip Hop Based Education. *Journal of Interreligious Studies*, Issue 23, Fall 2018

Rajan, S. Roberts, K. Guerra, L. Pirsch, M. Morrell. E. (2017) Integrating health education efforts into core curriculum classrooms: Successes, challenges, and implications for urban middle schools. *Journal of Adolescent Health*

Pirsch, M. (2011, March 28). A Place to Blossom. *Minnesota Women's Press*.

Pirsch, M. (2010, December 1). Learning to Live. University of Minnesota's English Alumni Newsletter. Winter 2010. <http://english.umn.edu/engagement/newsletter2010.php?entry=263366>.

Pirsch, M. (2010 December). Broken Backbones. In HECUA's Newsline Newsletter (pp 3). Minneapolis, MN

Pirsch, M. (2010 October 10). UWomen Rap. *Minnesota Women's Press*.  
<http://www.womenspress.com/main.asp?SectionID=124&SubSectionID=27&ArticleID=3759>

Pirsch, M. (2008) A Quilt. In *Someone Might Hear You: An Anthology of First Wave Poets* (pp 50). Madison, WI: OMAI/First Wave Press

Pirsch, M. (2008). We Women. Printed in *Minnesota Youth Writers Poetry Chapbook*. Minneapolis, MN

Pirsch, M. In Kepecs, S. (2006) *Hip Hop Goes to College*. Wisconsin People and Ideas (pp. 14-19). Fall 2006.

Published poet and performer in multiple publications and venues in 12 states.

## PRESENTATIONS & INVITED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**Strengthening our Shine to Live our Best Lives: Honoring our Pasts and Dreaming Futures** Workshop  
Hip Hop in the Heartland Conference, University of Wisconsin - Madison | 2018

**Revolutionary Love in Education: Race, Spirituality, Spoken Word and Hip Hop** Panel Presentation  
AERA American Educational Research Association Conference, New York, NY | 2018

**Strengthening Our Shine: Exploring Spirituality & Healing in Diverse Contexts** Poster Presentation  
NCTE National Council of Teachers of English Conference, St. Louis, MO | 2017

**The Road to Rev Love: Race, Spirituality & Hip Hop Based Education** Panel Presentation  
NCTE National Council of Teachers of English Conference, St. Louis, MO | 2017

**Learning Revolutionary Love: Race, Spirituality & Hip Hop Based Education** Poster Presentation  
National Conference on Race and Education, Fort Worth, TX | 2017

**Cypher Circle Wisdoms: Healing with Hip Hop and Spoken Word** Invited Presentation  
Split This Rock Poetry Festival, Washington, DC | 2016

**Reflections in Ojai: Exploring Nature Based Spirituality and the Concept of Council** Invited Presentation  
SMBI Grand Rounds, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, NY | 2016

**To Heal a Butterfly: Exploring Lessons and Blessings through Spoken Word** Invited Facilitator  
Youth Workshop at the Cyphers for Justice Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University | 2015

**The Movement Continues: Brave New Voices Returns to DC** Invited Presentation  
Words, Beats Life, Teach-In, Kennedy Center, Washington DC | 2015

**Because the Conversation Can't Stop: A Forum for Healing at Teachers College** Invited Presentation  
Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Teachers College | 2015

**A Brave and Startling Truth: Exploring our Best & Worst in the Hip Hop Cypher** Workshop Presentation  
International Conference on Education, Honolulu, HI | 2015

**Poems in Different Area Codes: Using Digital Media to Build the Hip Hop Network** Invited Presentation  
PreEmptive Ed Conference, Urban Word, NYU, Columbia Teachers College | 2012, 2013, 2014

**Writing a New World: Exploring Privilege Through Spoken Word** Invited Presentation  
Social Justice Workshops, Harvard Graduate School of Education | 2012

**Furthering Scholarship that Frames Hip Hop as an Agent for Social Change** Panel Presentation  
Student Research Conference, Harvard Graduate School of Education | 2012

**Leading with Story: Youth Spoken Word & Taking Mass Leaps Toward Change** Invited Presentation  
Finding Voice, Arts in Education Continuing the Conversation Conference, Harvard University | 2011

**"What about your Friends?" Collaboration towards Building Hip Hop Education** Invited Presentation  
Hip Hop & Healing, PreEmptive Ed Conference, New York University | 2011

**Hip Hop in Academia** Invited Panelist for Words. Beats. Life. Teach In.  
Remixing the Art of Social Change: Chicago Hip Hop Teach In, Columbia College | 2011

**Building Community and Bridging Culture to Academics: English Education, Spoken Word, Hip Hop & Theater Original Curriculum and Research** Invited Presentation  
First Undergraduate Conference for Students in English, University of Minnesota | 2010

**"Speak Up!" Spoken Word Youth Activism Workshop** Invited Presentation  
**Open Mic with the MN Spoken Word Association and Voices Merging** Invited Organizer  
Pedagogy of the Oppressed Conference, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, MN | 2009

**"If I Were in Charge," Arts, Education and Social Change** Invited Facilitator and Presentation  
Youth Noise Social Change Summit, Minneapolis, MN, Orlando, FL, Denver, CO | 2007

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Health Literacy and Core Classroom Literacies**, Teachers College, Columbia | 2014-2015

Acted as Lead Research Assistant and Qualitative Research Author for study in 4 NYC Schools

**Catalyzing Comprehension through Discussion and Debate**, SERP, Harvard University | 2012-2014

Acted as Lead Research Assistant and School Site Liaison for the 6 year-longitudinal study in BPS

**The Better Life Initiative**, Hip Hop, Wellness and Urban Youth, with Brigham and Women's Hospital Hip Hop Archive, Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University | 2012

Acted as project coordinator, research assistant, primary grant writer and editor of website content.

**A Functional Art: Freestyle as Spiritual Practice**, Hip Hop Archive and Research Institute, Harvard | 2012

Research exploring the spiritual functions of oral freestyling in hip hop communities.

**Healing Wars**, Investigating the Impact of War on Medicine through the Arts

Led by visiting scholar in Music, Liz Lerman, The Office of the President, Harvard University | 2011-2012

Acted as research assistant in collecting archival materials and securing student involvement.

**Critical Race Theory and the Arts at Harvard**, Harvard, Graduate School of Education | 2011

Research paper exploring racism and the arts at Harvard University

**White Teachers Teaching Hip Hop in Multiracial Classrooms**, University of Minnesota | 2010

Senior Thesis completed on implications of white teachers utilizing urban cultural arts

**Bridging Culture to Academics: Spoken Word & English Class**, University of Minnesota | 2009

Completed research on spoken word in high school classrooms and created original curriculum implemented at St. Paul Central High. Part of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

**In the Tradition**, Hip Hop Educators Conference

Department of English in partnership with the MN Spoken Word Association, University of MN | 2008

Acted as research assistant, grant writing assistant, and documenter of the organizing process.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

English Education Diversity Course Redesign Committee | 2016-2017

**Meeting Coordinator and Facilitator at Teachers College**

MASS LEAP (Literary Education and Performance), Boston Area, Massachusetts | 2011-2014

**Harvard University Liaison, Co-Producer of Louder Than a Bomb MA**

Speak Out Loud (SOL) Spoken Word Student Organization, Harvard University | 2011-2012

**Graduate Adviser, Mentor**

Pacific Tongues (Formerly Youth Speaks Hawai'i) Honolulu, HI | 2012  
**Workshop Facilitator, Youth Mentor**

Harvard Educational Review, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA | 2011  
**Volunteer Reviewer, Arts in Education Issue 2013**

Hennepin County Home School, Minnetonka, MN | 2010-2011  
**Spoken Word and Hip Hop Workshop Facilitator and Mentor**

Voices Merging Spoken Word Student Organization, University of Minnesota | 2006-2010  
**Board Member, President '10, Secretary '09, Treasurer '08**

Minnesota Spoken Word Association Minneapolis, Minnesota | 2006-2010  
**Youth Literary and Program Associate, Conference Coordinator**