



DOI: [10.3998/mpub.12584348](https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.12584348)

Digital online | 2024
ISBN 9780472999088

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Art, and hip-hop in particular, effectively nurtures critical conversations among students. *Owning My Masters (Mastered)* offers a model for social justice activism (and particularly campus activism) through hip-hop music, ideology, and practice. Carson's poetry/music, videos, and multimedia timeline (i.e., the context he was operating in) will not only inspire important dialogues and questionings, it should provide a template for how other communities might plan to take on this work.”

—Anthony Kwame Harrison,
Virginia Tech

OWNING MY MASTERS (MASTERED)

The Rhetorics of Rhymes & Revolutions By A.D. Carson

Owning My Masters (Mastered) is a digital archive of original rap music and spoken word poetry containing two volumes of music, an annotated timeline, videos, and a digital book. In this project, A.D. Carson exposes the artificial boundaries imposed on understood ideas about knowledge production in academia by employing hip-hop creative and compositional practices to interrogate ideas of citizenship, history, historical imagination, race, home, and humanness. Using sampled and live instrumentation and repurposed music, film, and news clips, an introductory video, and original rap lyrics, he offers a new examination of how to create theory through hip-hop.

The unmastered album was originally submitted to Clemson University in South Carolina as the author's dissertation, composed against the backdrop of the growing unrest across the U.S. and the world in response to the public attention to the deaths of Black people, many at the hands of police and vigilantes. As such, the songs highlight outlooks on Black life in America—on campuses and in communities across the country—and how they fit with geographic and temporal place and space. For this publication, the tracks have been mastered, and Carson has written a new introduction to contextualize and reflect on the moment in which the songs were written.

A.D. Carson is Associate Professor of Hip Hop and the Global South at the University of Virginia. His mixtape/e/ssay, “i used to love to dream” won the Association of American Publishers (AAP) 2021 PROSE Award for Best E-Product.

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