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T.S. Banks: Testing captions.

Angela Willits: Testing captions.

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Angela Willits: Hello, everyone, welcome. I think we'll give folks one more minute to trickle in, and then we'll get started.

Angela Willits: Okay, I think we'll go ahead and get started.

Welcome to the social workers confronting racial inputs conference, and I'm Angela Willits and I'm happy you're here for this breakout, loud and unchained. I'm a fair skinned middle aged white woman with blue eyes and brown hair and wearing brown glasses and yellow dangly earrings, which are my favorite, and a red and white scarf. This webinar is recorded and will be available at a later date on our website.

I'd like to share a land acknowledgment. On behalf of the planning committee for the Social Workers Confronting Racial Injustice Conference, we ask that you join us in acknowledging that our University of Wisconsin-Madison campus, here on the shores of Waaksikhomik, or Lake Mendota, resides within the sacred homeland of the Hoocak people, a place they call Teejop. As the-- or four lakes -- As the reach of the university extends to the far corners of our state, we also respectfully recognize the inherent sovereignty of the 12 First Nations of Wisconsin. Whether you are watching this from the land of these 12 First Nations, or you are more distant, we encourage you to learn about the history of the land you are on. as social workers, we have to look critical in on our profession, and the role it's played on the destruction of indigenous families, such as the goal of boarding schools across this state and continent. This conference is rooted in critical reflection on our work as social works, our role to bring clarity about the past but to inspire us to move into work in our communities, once the conference is over. We hope this conference provides space for critical reflection, humility and openness, allowing us to reflect here and tell truths, and move towards transformation and action to support indigenous rights, cultural equity and racial equity. With acknowledgment and gratitude we move forward today in our journey.

Before I introduce our speaker, a few Zoom incompetent foe items. To access this presentation, you were required to provide your name and email. This allows us to log our attendees, and email you information on C EU is for this presentation. And that email that we distributed will be sent at a later date.

Your cameras and microphones, dedo have a Q&A feature where you can submit questions for T. Please know that due to all of the attendees, we might not get to all of the questions.

And nows my pleasure to welcome T. S. banks to the conference. T. will be talking about how he created land and unchained for Black, queer and disabled creators, to work from their live lived experience, from psych institutions, while forming their own Mad-c/Krip

communities. It's a term to talk about bodyminds, a word from madness and cripple. T. will read from his book, and give some writing prompts.

With that, I'll turn it over to you, T.

T.S. Banks: Hi, y'all, my name is T. S. banks, and I am so excited to be with y'all today! I'm going to give a visual description of myself. I am a dark-skinned Black and fat, nonbinary trans person, with mid-length locks, can gold tips. I have on auburn-colored, chunky black glasses, and a hoodie that is orange, mostly that you can see, with some black. And around me and to the side is a trans pride flag as my background. That is blue and pink and white, and this also has the trans symbolage on it. And then right behind me, if you can see it, in gold, it says, Capricorn season -- shout out to my -- thank you Jess for getting me for that for my birthday, and a queer pride flag behind me that has the queer trans flag and the traditional rainbow flag, but also the additional brown and black stripes added as well swlg.

So, again, it is my pleasure to be with you all today for the laud and unchained Mad-c/Krip Poetry and Care workshop. (loud and unchained). So, when I get started. I always like to start out with a poem, and I'm going to start off with -- well, I guess, yeah, I'll start off with a poem, and it's called SPLIT. For its namesake, my newest chapbook SPLIT, that just came out, and then we'll get into the nitty gritty.

So, you know, this gone he a conversation between me and you, but enjoy this ride, honey. Okay? So, SPLIT: 1 when I am swept into a current, apathetic to water filling my lungs and my legs and arms cannot deliver me to the surface my only thing available for survival is spirituality my most sacred practice is sleep able to trust my body and God to react when my strength and awareness is cut true faith appears when something else controls me when I split there is always a shedding - I used to feel bad that my mind would split that it would let go and shed itself of the present I once held a smile for 18 months. every morning practicing how to hold my cheeks how wide to open my eyes.

And to hide my anxiety.

2: between me and me feel it coming in the morning just when my eyes have grabbed that glimmer between the shades something ugly peeled apart by reason unreason with me, twist me see me become a leaky faucet, and tell me to get it together when I feel the split coming I sit up in my bedRewatching, reruns within the hospital, why popsicles and bite into the cold reach for my blankets awake from alarm sounding for another appointment 3. you don't understand what happens to me feeling the right hemisphere of my skull tingle shifting to nervous laughter speaking sentences with no movement in my lips to me, I am communicating -

But -- when the split taps at the foot of my bed I choose my words carefully, but still I can't describe the feeling in my right hemisphere; aching and itching try to regulate my mood try to capture the trigger and tame my mind to see the full picture I hate when the

peeling starts. my new skin slippery and slimy trauma that compels me to over-prepare, or trauma will split me.

Thank you. So, I like to do that poem, like I said, to get us into the space -- a little bit about me. Yes, I'm T. S. Banks, you can call me T. my pronouns are he/him/his. And this workshop, kind of like how it's going to go, because there's so many of us, we're not able to read back to each other. The prompt that I'm gutting give you. So kind of how this workshop is going to go (the prompt that I'm giving you) is that I'm going to lecture a little bit. This is a poetic lecture, so I'm going to give you some poetry, I'm going to give you some of my own philosophies behind things, and then I'm going to give you some writing prompts that you're able to take with you and gnaw about and think about, and hopefully you have enough prompts by the end of this to compile your own poem and/or just go into your own journaling mess and write more about this.

So, I, right now -- I hope that you can hear me all right -- sorry, let me just check this chat real quick appearing.

Angela Willits: T, I wanted you to know that it says you're screensharing, but all we see is a black screen, we don't see your slides anymore. You might be at the end of your slides, so if you go back to the end and start sharing again. We can see your slides now.

T.S. Banks: Perfect. So, yes, that was split. I'm sorry, I'm going to retrack a little bit. That was SPLIT, a poem by me, and the cover art that you're seeing right in front of you is a black cover with a skull -- the skull is white and there are cracks in it. There is a butterfly coming out of one of the eye sockets, a butterfly on the side of the skull, and a butterfly at the top of the crack. And in white letters, there's SPLIT above the art, and T. S. Banks beneath it. Shoutout to Dequadray White, ho who is also an awe lum of UW as well as the first wave hip-hop assemble on campus.

So, like I said, because there's so many of us, we're not going to be able to write and share, so as I'm giving this poetic lecture, and I'll be throwing out some writing prompts to you all, and then hopefully at the end, you will have something to write about in longer form, or just take it back to your writing mess, and think about things a little bit more for yourself.

I also want to say before I go any further, that I want to put some care warnings out there. Some folks might refer to them as content warnings, but as a care warning, I do talk about suicidality, I do talk about self-harm. I talk about violence from psych institutions, and people, wellness practitioners. I talk about institutionalization and psych survivorship. And at any point in time, that those topics may become a bit heavy for yourself, please don't hesitate to leave. I won't be offended, and I believe this is being recorded, so please be able to ingest this when it works better for you.

All right. So, definitions!

That I want to kind of bring into this space: To kind of guide why LNU, the guiding principles of L 'NU and I think I got a little bit ahead of myself, so I'll say it like this. Loud 'N Unchained theater corporation, we're going to give the story of how it started, why it

started, and why I had to drat create this -- gosh, is it an organization? That's scary to, say, but why I created this hub of Black artists was really to center the stories of Black Queer trans disabled folks, specifically psych survivors. And so, in order to talk about being Black and mad, I need to be able to tell you all what my definitions are. So that when you go back or when you're listening to me, we kind of have a common understanding, so some definitions that I would like to bring into this space:

Is Krip, mad, ill, disability. There's going to be a definition by me but I'm going to be leaning on a definition by TL Lewis. Autonomy. And sanism, I want to bring my friend to the space, Nancy Yang. They really just wrote this really powerful articulation of what sanism is, and L N U was created to kind of combat sanism, not just personally, but institutionally, and I think Nancy has really given a lot of truth to power, a lot of words and contexts. So I'm going to be reading some of those definitions.

So, first and foremost! When y'all saw the title to this, and you're like, okay, Loud 'N Unchained, we might have seen them around town, doing events with Black Queer trans folks, and disabled folks. But he always uses this word mad or Krip. So I'm going to break it down a little bit. So, Krip -- I also want to preface this, too:

I had access to the university, yes, but when I graduated in 2015, the disability studies track was just starting to pop. I only had one class and it was the 4R569 class before I graduated with my bachelors from UW, and it was led by Dr. Ellen Samuels, and that was kind of like a disability literature track, and that's how I kind of got some words and language for disability justice, and then I graduated, and that was it.

So, I had some access but a lot of this is hood politics. You know? And social media and other Krips that I was able to meet during organizing and things, so, it's not going to sound all pretty, but that's what you all got, okay.

So, the first definition is Krip. I want to shout out to Leroy Moore, a part of Sins Invalid, who also was very instrumental in giving structure, words, to the principles of disability justice. If you all don't know about Sins Invalid, it's a disabled art troupe out of the Bay Area, and they gave us the 10 principles of disability justice -- shout out also to patty Byrne. And the collective there. And there's ten principles, we're going to go over that in a second. We're going to get to that. But when it comes to Krip -- I spell Krip, K-R-I-P, like Leroy Moore, and I spell it like that -- Leroy also is the founder and Director of Krip hop, okay? And so, he spells Krip, or reclamationer crippled, KRIP, so that we do not disrespect or, you know, what I'm saying, acknowledge, that as Black folks we may share communities with the organization of the Cripps, it's spelled with a C, all right? So when I had access to this stagnation and was learning about disability justice and disabled identities and cripness, it was spelled with a C. It wasn't until later, after the university, I got the language behind Kripness, and now I spell it C/ KRIP. With my hopes to completely crop the C altogether, but I like

to give (completely drop the C) to give respect to myelin I can't come of the two worlds that I'm coming from and how that word exists for me now.

Mad is in the title, but a reclamation of the word "madness". And I don't really like saying mentally ill. I used to feel empowered by that phrase. I don't feel empowered by that phrase anymore. I like madness. And I also like the play off of mad, because as a Black Queer person that is -- uses he/him pronouns, I'm fat, I'm tall, it's always -- there's always this thing that I'm angry, that I'm mad, and so, I really love the reclamation of madness instead of mentally ill, because I feel like culturally it's a bigger significance, it holds more parts of me. And I am mad at the state, first off. I'm mad at how they treat me, how institutions do, but I also love just how colorful the term madness is as it exists. Ill: When I'm talking about ill, shout out to Nas, shout out to the ill mattic and still mattic. NAS, one of my favorite rappers, and my first track was Call Me ill. So hip-hop has a very intrinsic, it's very in me, inherent, it is T. and so I like to bring those different elements, but obviously ill as in illness, but when I'm talking about illness and ill I'm really referring to chronic. And not just the one that you smokers but chronic as in this is reoccurring. And so, disability: Mm being, so T. L. Lewis, shoutout to you, really just gave us so many definitions. You got to check out T. L. Lewis' article on truth out. You know what I'm saying. So I'm going to be reading some of the stuff as to what T. L. Lewis is saying about disability from there. But for me, disability is -- exists not only as a way of, like, physical disabilities, but also invisible disabilities. Things that -- and that disabledment is coming from lack of access to/no access of things to live in your full self, but also that my body/mind/spirit works differently than what society says is --quote, unquote-- normal. And so, mm, we can get into that a little bit later, but I kind of really want to bring fl some stuff that T. L. Lewis said about disability, and one thing that they said was that disability is radical because it's fluid. Point blank: There are thousands of disabilities and disability communities. Notably ableism, racism, classism, sexism, are alive and well within and across disability communities. Disability can exist due to biology and can be caused by environment, virus, illness, accidents, oppression, deprivation, trauma, violence, climate, and disruption. (coughing lightly) some disabilities are readily apparent and some are not. Disability can be fleeting or it can be chronic. I can say that I have lots of different disabilities. If you would consider being a diabetic a disability, then it's there. If you consider what you can see that I'm in a power chair -- well, you can't really see it right now, but I use a power chair, because my mobility, I use different mobility aids. I used to say that I have a psychiatric disability, but I really just identify as bipolar. That word really just doesn't offend me. It offends me when people who aren't bipolar or refer to the weather, it's bipolar. Don't do that, okay? But having that identity, offing with that clinical definition, it resonates with me, it gives me a

sort of power, but it can be limiting.

Another word I want to bring up is autonomy. Autonomy is also part of one of the principles of disability justice by Sins Invalid that's articulated. But in my own definition of autonomy is really the access, able to, to be able to determine your own, in the purpose of healing, your own journeys, and paths to healing, being able to operate and live in the ways that -- ways in which empower you and give you the most choissments right now, we're hearing a lot of stuff about bodily autonomy with respect to reproductive justice, and on that note, reproductive justice is a disability justice issue, and vice-versa, they go hand and hand, so I just want to put that out there. But autonomy, yes, for us to be able to say how we want, but in the terms of disabled folks and their access to healing, being able to get all of the information that is out there, know about all treatments, be able to reject, take what you want, leave the rest, right? So that's what I mean about autonomy. And then sanism, I am so excited, because L N U was started, when I first recognized myself as disabled, I was 19, so let me do the math. So, like 2007 is when I was recognizing myself as disabled. Yeah, my body mind was not only different but it was preventing me from not only living the life at that time that I wanted, and I felt like the way the system was interacting with me, from getting the things that I needed, including safety, housing, food, all of that stuff, even going on vacation, or even to be able to ride the bus. (body miepped) or receive treatments or whatever. And so -- sanism, I would say that L in U was formed out of the need to combat sanism.

I'm going to read a little bit about the working definition from Nancy Yang. Shoutout brim, I know you on the line. Woo-woo.

So, they say sanism is the systemic way that mental, emotional, and spiritual states are categorized, labeled, forced to be put on display as commodity that is either prayed or punished. Sanism is where ... to the myriad spiritual and emotional states that exist by those in power, arbitrarily decided by those in power. Sanism is a carceral system, like jail and prison, that polices all mental, emotional, and spiritual states, that exist by those empowered solely based on what those in power understand (those in power) but also can claim and abuse power, so as long as they are willing to participate in that policing. Sanism encourages folks, even mad and disabled communities to misunderstand police and announce each other based on how we externalize our mental, emotional, and spiritual stasis and experiences. Sanism is the way that the exeerns of disembodiment, so not being able to be in one's self and misunderstood undervalued and compared to embodiment. Now, there's a lot gonna be gone right now because there's a lot of people out here that's wellness practitioners that's going to tell you that they know about embodiment and disembodiment. Let's say talk about that lineage, we're getting a lot of that learning from somatics, and although it has been co-opted by white people, but Black and indigenous folks we've been doing semantics even if we don't call it that name. So embodiment and intoiment disembodiment is inhelicopterly Black, intirnlings brown.

That's how we've been viesk these carceral states of prmt and policing, oppression, and colonialism (how we've been viesk) but anyway, I digress. Sanism is the way that we experience disembodiment, disembodiment that is misunderstood and devalued in comparison to embodiment. Where spiritual embodiment and otherwise varied relationships to our bodyminds are feared and therefore punished. Sanism is where indigenious folks of a global majority and their spiritual/emotional practices, and ontologies are devalued. Pushed to the margins, and made to not exist. Sanism is where white supremacy and colonialization claim ownership of the body-mind-spirit and mental and emotional and spiritual states.

Okay, Nancy, yes, honey. Okay, because that term just in itself is -- it just compasses so much. I really thank T. L. Lewis for their working definition of also ableism, and also giving us ways to define disability. And I thank you Nancy for also articulating sanism, which is a type of ableism. Especially when we refer to folks who are mad. And other folks who have -- may or may not have different embodied spiritual experiences that is not understood by the oppressive norm. So, I want to ask you all -- I told you all that this is going to kind of operate as, you know, writing prompts, okay? For you to think about -- and I'm going to give you some poetry. So the writing prompt right now for y'all to think about is actually -- hold opposite one second, I see something in that Q&A. What's the Q&A say.

Angela Willits: Yeah, so, T. a question was, can we get a copy of that definition of sanism.

T.S. Banks: OMG! I really like that you said that. I think, because it was public on the social, that it could be shared. I can reshare those socials, I can reshare those socials if -- hmm, Nancy is in the chat? If you could please share your socials so that -- oh, okay, it's okay to share? Okay, yes. Can you share your social where people can find you? And your literature. Y'all, Nancy the bomb out here. They be teaching me all the time. So that he going to be sharing that, hopefully. And then itch something else to show y'all, too.

Angela Willits: And we'll be happy to post this on our conference website, as well.

T.S. Banks: Okay, that's cool. Sorry, y'all. I'm trying to close the thing so I can see. Okay, (chuckling) so the prompt that I'm going to give you all right now, is have you ever felt ill., and yeah, have you ever felt ill?

This poem that I'm going to read you is sometimes when I feel ill. This poem is in the Call Me ill chapbook. My first chapbook, Call Me ill details when I first got sick with bipolar disorder that later I got to know as schizophrenia, or a form of schizophrenia, deciding to get help, going to the waiting room, the emergency room, admitted to the psych ward and then coming home. So, sometimes when I feel ill. Sometimes when I feel sick, I disappear into another world, into lose my grip, three, binge, four, insulin shot six times a day, five, the morbid owe beerkts six, the schizophrenia, 7, the mania, 8, the depression, 9, the sex that I wish would last longer, the second

person to tell me that I was beautiful and meant it. When I, 10, brought off the cusp of what I thought was spiritual, always a contrast two spirkts health and sickness, 11, sucks at a posed, ... nade my head, I can't name it. 12, the babble, the noises, how they pin my ear to the wall, leave me stiff and rigid, a closed mouth. A tear, a smile. So, if you get the chab chapbook you'll see that's the opening poem, and really, like, I'm sick, I'm losing everything around me, and I really need some help (saying that) and I'm a reaching out to people in my church, and my parents, and at the time, I didn't even have a therapist, and the only thing I knew was I was so ill that I needed to go to the hospital, but I didn't know what that process was going to -- I didn't know what that was going to -- I didn't know what was going to happen.

But I do know that I was hospitalized over 13 times, and the span I was hospitalized or psych institutions, forcibly or on my own, even though it was 13 times, I spent an average -- not an average but a culmination of 8 1/2 months institutionalized, over a span of about five years. And I had this doctor at Meriter, and he was, like, you're just coming in and out, you're not -- your depression is treatment-resistant. I just believe that there's all of this stuff else going on, and that it's really just your lifestyle that you haven't reconciled with, and that is what is preventing you from being well. And, I'm about to quote Dr. Freeman, because not only was that so detrimental to me, but also with starting forth as to why I had to start LNU, which was tell my story, living Loud 'N Unchained, because.: That the way that their medicines and treatments were not working for me, a Black body, that is living under this colonialization, that their treatment and medicine weren't helping. That didn't have nothing to do with me. That's not a moral issue. That means that whatever you got is not working for me, but it doesn't make what I'm going through any less real. Right? And so Dr. Freeman was said to me that -- and this is straight quote: I'm not saying that being gay is wrong, but you think that it is. That's why you hear voices. It's just your inner thoughts and convalesce coming to the surface. We're taking you off of the Halperado scwhrrk taking you off of the antidepressants, only therapy will help, because we can't help you here. We don't cure issues of mortality. That pissed me off. That's so dangerous so say to someone that you are not going to give them any help, to forcibly put them on medicine, have them on medicine for so long, and then strip you of it without any type of guidance on how to taper off. It's just you're done, we're sending you home.

After that, I did -- care warning -- I did try, okay? To end things. Because I felt like there was no way out. You felt like that they were telling me that it was made up, and that, because I was going through so much trauma, was the reason why, and it doesn't matter the reason why anyone is having mental wellness crisis. If you are a practitioner, your main job is to find out how to help, not to -- not to minimize. I want to say any folks on the line who identify as queer, trans, and nonbinary, don't let practitioners gaslight you into

anything. Your family, your community, spiritual, people, don't let them gaslight you. If you find something that is helping you, if you find a term that will help you understand yourself, or a term that feels good to you, if you find treatments and practices that work for you, then that is what works for you. Don't let anybody shame you or prevent you from getting what you need, but that's what happens when people that have access to these hospitals and knowledge and things -- when they gatekeep when they let racism, ableism, sizeism, racism, ((gate-keepers) they create a dangerous, dangerous cocktail where people either succumb to violence from others or onto themselves. And I know I've got a lot of social workers here so I want to address the social work to prism pipeline. If you share a building with people who have the capacity, don't be calling the police on people, don't minimize or gaslight folks. Don't give answers or offer things or take things away as if you know the best thing. Your job is to offer all of the things you that know and support the person in making their own decision. And I think right now there's been a couple of articles going around about how folks are dealing with folks that are like homeless, and what they're doing is trying to forcibly hospitalize people, medicate them, institutionalize them, and that is not the answer. So I'm asking us, with sharing my story, and why I had to start LNU and for us to start thinking about and imagining other ways in which we can provide care for folks, in which ways we can de-escalate crises, without institutions, without violence, without police. And so, with that, I got another poem for y'all. Okay?Ing and it's called BadgerCare, and if y'all have heard or seen some of my o'er work, you probably have heard BadgerCare before. But this is just to kind of -- to kind of say that when you have the responsibility of providing care, you need to, like, really do it. So -- White people want us dead. The way they write us dead Quick to pronounce the time of death Tear out our tissue Examine us without consent Write out the toxicology report Contribute to the CDC statistics on black bodies Have coffee, laughing about how people still dying from lung cancer Asking why they not pickin. Apples from their own backyards to eat. Sometime I want to hold them doctors' medical charts Prescribe them racist, murderer, criminal randomly drug test them Have their practice taken away pay out the reparations Their white hands so loose

Diagnosing us with no regard For the danger they put us in. Calling the police when therapists share the same building as you SHAME! Blood From them black bodies tinting your cheeks red?

So, in response to that and to let it sink in, and also to save my voice, I'm going to let us have a little three-minute break. So, I'm going to just mute myself and go on pause, and we gone come back at 2:46. Okay? All right!

T.S. Banks: Allrighty. Thank you all for being with me. So, please feel free to interrupt me at any time. I'm going to go off script because I'm losing my voice, chile. You know with the pa not eveni going on, masking (the panini) I've not gotten sick in three years, thank you to masking. But this little cold is taking me out, so I'm

steady, losing my voice. So I'm going to try to take us as much as I can, but I kind of want to get into the nitty gritty. I've given you all these definitions on sanism, ableism, autonomy and all of those things, and I want to talk to you about why I had to start L and U, and I'm going to talk to you all in this conversation and get it popin'. Twrr things I'm going to give you to the committee so that you all can see the slides and some of the other working definitions that I've been using today, and all of that will be for you all. But let me get to LNU. So, Loud 'N Unchained is first and foremost a theater company. Right? As a playwright, I, I -- sorry (pause). As a playwright, I decided the name loud and unchained be as a theater company because its namesake, Loud 'N Unchained came from these plays that I did through the line break festival. That's through the first wave, and when you're in first wave, you get to write like your own one-persons, or whatever, and then submit it, and then if you get chosen, you get to be part of the line break festival every year, I think they're on the 15th or 16th one this year, somewhere around there. And usually the in the spring, and so, because I was in and out of the hospital, I came from a very strict, Christian, like, household. We can get to that at a different time. Mm. m-Kay. So they believed in pray everything away. You don't have depression, you've got all of these different things, and so it made me not talk about what was happening. And that was very dangerous for me because, yeah. So, anyway. When I was going through psychoses and mania, I identified with those terms. Other folks that were going through mental wellness crises or things, they may not identify with those terms, but that's the language that I identified with, thought disorder, all of that, I identified with that. But anyway, when I was going through mania or psychoses, I would report myself. Or I would record what happened afterwards or my interactions. That happened, either with police or other physicians, right? Other psych institutions. And when I would do it that, and after I did that, I transcribed a lot of those recordings, and those recordings that I transcribed or poetically transcribed, I put into a play, that was also cowritten with Rai will your n Wilson, who was the art ifng director at the time for First Wave. (Rain Wilson). And put on stage. And the first one, Loud 'N Unchained, it had a chorus of actors that represented the auditory hallucinations that I would go through, and then I had several different actors that would represent myself in the different states that I would be in, whether that was mania I can't, psychoses, depression. Whether I was, like, in my body or not. There were different actors tho represent that. And that's kind of like how it was written. I had sound that would play throughout the play that would mimic the way my auditory hallucinations would be. So, you not only had this this chorale of folks who were embodying what I was going through, but you could also hear what it sounded like to me. And every time after I would do a play, there would be -- there would always be a talkback, and after the talkback, it would always literally be like a group therapy session. I don't know how else to say it. It would be a whole bunch

of other mad Krip folks that would stay after and they would say how their experience was the same -- or different. Now, one thing that I did when I was different than other folks, or what I hadn't seen at the time, because I knew that I was bringing up very traumatic experiences, I asked local therapists and other wellness workers and practitioners, that I trusted, that I knew were safe, to come and not only facilitate the talkback, but also, if somebody was like, if something was being activated in someone by hearing these stories or hearing what was going on, that they would have someone safe to talk to, that warrant going to force them into any treatment but was just going to listen to them, give them some techniques, to de-escalate the activation that was going on, present to them options, and give them some tools, breathing tools, imagery, whatever, so that they could safely move through whatever was happening while witnessing. And after all of those talkbacks, they would always go so much longer than the time was allotted, because that space was sacred. Anytime this you have mad Krip ill folks -- thank you, I'm seeing love in the chat, thank you. Anytime you have mad Krip ill folk, that space is sacred, right? And it should not be disturbed in any way. And I think that if you are producing art in some type of way that is going to elicit a response, if you are talking about things that are very deeply traumatic in order to free yourselves, in order to break the chains, unchain yourself, be loud about it, right? Then I think it is also okay to think about what ways can you bring in support to round out the space right? What do you use as grounding techniques. Something that I use, like I'm using with y'all is bring in writing prompts. Are there ways in which during the performance, you can allow folks to breathe. Right? What ways can you allow them to feel themselves, recognize what is going on. And give them tools to move through it. Right? Not shaming, not judge what you're going through, to recognize it. And safely move through it. Right? And so, after all of these things, I then -- that was happening, and then also at the same time, which is very real, a part of this assemble or intloa ensemble, a predominantly white institution. UW-Madison, I'm talking to you all, we know what it is. But when you have these hip-hop artists, building, brownrtion intirnlings other folks, coming into a university that is predominantly white, and their trauma, their pain, their art, which a lot are coming from the spoken word, slam world, and in that slam world, which can be so toxic, is to put your trauma, or your poem, whatever you're going through that is deeply intense, to elicit a response, right? To get points, to win, whatever. A lot of us were coming from that lineage, so we were taught and brought up to, that that's what we needed to perform, without any other way or context or to ... so what was happening was a lot of students were dealing with mental wellness crises (brown, indigenous, other folks were involved) we weren't being supported. And that's not fair. Even in COVID we saw -- and we're still in COVID, still in the pandemic, not that make it sound like it's over, because it's not. So wear your masks, wear y'all masks. We saw an artist, as the pandemic is still on, that art, when we went into strict lockdown, the only thing that

was getting people through was artists. The onus has always been on the artist, right? And it was disabled artists, who had already been forced into isolation, me and lots of other folks, right? Okay? That had already learned to deal with isolation. The onus was on us to create content so that folks would be able to survive. And that's just the truth of it. Let's be real. Right? And so when you have a big, multimillion-dollar university, you have this only hip-hop ensemble in the nation, how it is, and you coming from these lineages where talking about our trauma elicits a response or support that can be very vial and detrimental when you don't have support. So I decided that I was going to go talk about being Loud 'N Unchained, okay? I was going to go to the head of first wave, and they agreed with me, that there needed to be some support to support the artists (First Wave) who heartedly. If we're going to bring this gift, this healing! To this space, then we need to be wholly supported, so they went with me, and I argued to the greater powers that be at the university, that we needed to have a full-time therapist on call for all of the artists that was in the First Wave division, or OMAI, whatever you want to call it, and that there would be a therapist that was available, and that there was a certain amount of allotted spots -- I think at the time, I argued for at least 12 or, enough to cover what was in the chorkts when was usually between 12 and 14 people, and -- from the cohorts would have therapy sessions from BIPOC therapists that were either being trained or employed by the university. We won that. And that's kind of the history and lineage that Loud 'N Unchained grows out of, always saying that our mental wellness comes first, that whatever we need to survive, that's what -- those safety and supports that need to be in place, and so that's kind of the history and the lineage of LNU. So, speed it up, graduate it. Right? Okay, so now I have these plays, now there are other people that are writing me that are telling me, you know, their stories, I'm advocating for other folks, right? Protesting. For folks whose lives had been taken because they were going through mental wellness crises, that were not de-escalated by the police. And the name I'm going to bring up is Tony Robinson. Okay? 19-year-old, shot by police officer Matt Kenny, okay? Was going through a mental wellness crisis, person was called, he was shot, and the last shot was point-blank range, okay? And that was based off of it wellness check. Okay? And then, another person in make, was Dantre Hamilton, whose life was also taken going through a mental wellness crisis, and we know all of these stories in which folks' lives are taken by police when situations are escalated, or you the police escalate situations because they should not be handling folks that are in crisis. If someone is going through crisis, you need to be calling their family, their friends, you need to be calling Nemes people without people without weapons, and I wanted to break the chains not only of stigma but of overpolicing of our body-spirit-minds, right? It just came to the point where LNU just had -- Loud 'N Unchained had to exist. Has had to exist outside of other white and queer organizations, other Black organizations that also may have been queer and trans at the time. LNU is different

because it's the only Black Queer trans disabled-led organization in Madison right now, and arguably in Wisconsin just in general, that believes in abolition, that we are made up of abolition, that we do deescalation, crisis intervention, we do all -- we provide trainings, but it is from the lens of being Black and queer and trans and disabled, and that's important. No matter what words you may put on it, or what you may describe, or your definitions of queer trans or disabled, it's a collective of folks that believe that in order to provide trauma-informed care, that it needs to come from the folks who have been the most marginalized and the most oppressed, right? Ooo, I just had to get that off my chest, because I believe that the way that we remember providing care, especially a lot of people as professional caregivers, right? Or, folks that are wellness practitioners, are really coming from these colonized ways, where it leaves no room for empathy, it leaves no room for accessing, or solving problems outside of major institutions. Like, the police. And that's dangerous. And we see where that's gotten us. It's getting us lives lost, hundreds of lives lost every year, just in the United States alone. So, LNU exists as it does today to make space for Black, queer, trans and disabled artists who ask questions, for us to build new worlds, for us to ask each other what is care, what do we need for compare care? What is autonomy. How do we define our own autonomy? You know? What are our own systems of healing? What is distinct for us? Understanding that we are divine, right? And the ways in which our body mind spirits exist are divine, just the way that they are. Just the way that they are. And so, today, LNU exists as, like I said, a collective of abolitionists and playwrights and poets, that believe in expressing our full selves and our whole selves, through different mediums of art, to ask questions (whole selves) ask questions of care, to debunk and abolish ableism and sanism. We give ableism 101 workshops, disability justice 101 workshops, we do crisis intervention and deescalation. We write plays and poems. I have an artist that just came out, under LNU publishing house. LNU publishing house just started last year, and I have my three chapbooks under it, but we have another artist, Lexi Linez. Check out her work, check us out at LNU theater CO.com. I have a slides that says that, I just needed to get to the nitty gritty but that slide will have my information and I'm slur there are other ways to get to it. Because I'm losing my voice, and I want to get to any questions you have, I'm going to end my lecture right there, but if y'all have any questions, lets dive into it, let's have conversations. I know I use a lot of different terms what is Kripness, madness, different definitions we got from in advancey Yang as far as sanism, working definitions of disability and fluidity from T. L. Lewis. So if you all have any other questions, let me know. We can -- Angela, if you all have anything to say, let me know. And I'll just kind of leave it open. Oh! Yes. Care plans. Thank you, Nancy. Yes. Also creating care plans, like who is in your networks. Who are in your care webs. We also do that type of work. And yep, so, I'm opening it up for questions at this time. oh, you're welcome, Rachel. Mm. Do you

have any prompts for children who might be struggling to communicate how they feel? Yes. I actually have a lot of prompts that (coughs) sorry. I have a lot of prompts that are on the slide that will be uploaded. And I think that those will be helpful. Also, if you go to LNU theater co.com, I will place, during national poetry month, which is April, I have a whole bunch of lists of prompts, that I uploaded from years to come, and you can pull from those prompts that will also help -- especially for children to explore how they're feeling. And a really cool prompt -- there's also directions on there and ways on how you can teach that or lead them in that. Do you have any prompt suggestions for people to write, reflect on being new to their disability? Mm, yes. So, I have a prompt that's called -- just like bone, ligament, tissue, bones, ligament, tissue. Mind, spirit. That's one. And then, I can make some more -- and I think I muting also be a prompt on there. When people are new to disability -- so, I was new to this term of diagnose dullah, okay? Shoutout to care work, shoutout to Leah. So disability dullah-ship. I think that's also the space in which LNU existed. So, when you realize that your bodyspirit-mind be disabled, it's really kind of scary, right? And I feel like in that sense, I encourage folks to write about the ways in which they're feeling at that moment. Outside of the word disability, what is it feelings like internally just as yourself? How is sound interacting with you? How is vision, sight, interacting with you at the moment, is it not? Right? How are you physically feeling within any apparatus that you may be sitting 0 laying down, and really trying to give words to that. What is the website for us to use -- writing prompts and practice. Okay. It is: You know what? This is what I'm about to do. I'm about to share my screen. (singing) I'm about to share, okay, yeah. In k, mm-hmm, yep. Okay. Hold on. Okay, that's where you all can get LNU. Can you all see that? Yeah. Okay. When you go to that website, you can pull down the tab, the little hamburger at that point tab, and it's going to briive bring you to writing prompts, and there's going to be a lot of writing prompts on there. Oh, would love to see/hear the last poem you read again, if you are able to digest it some more and sit with it again. No worries if not. Ooo, what was the last poem that -- Oh! Hmm. That was from Left and that was BadgerCare. I probably won't do that again, because I had to -- but there is a poem, there's two poems that I probably do want to bring into the space. What have been some of your moments of joy with LNU? My biggest moment of joy with LNU was become in 2021, I started this care group called unchained, and that's where I met Janine. Also, I met a whole bunch of other Krip folks, and I would say that that was a big joy. I would say that the big joy was even though my plays have been very hard, and my books have been -- like I tell you all I write that fat boy poetry, there's no shame in my game, but that's just how I do it. Those have been a joy for me. Releasing every chopbook has been extreme joy. Every talkback is extreme joy. Every message that I get when folks say they have read or taken in my stuff, and they resonate with it, like, that (every chapbook) yeah, that really make me feel some kind of way. Black,

happy.

I would say that, oh, I cannot see -- oh, there they go. I see them. Sorry, I didn't mean to click on those. Mm. I'm just looking over some of these questions, y'all, make sure I didn't forget any.

Angela Willits: I think you've got to all of the ones that have come in so far.

T.S. Banks: Okay. Cool. I'd like to leave on a poem, and this poem I didn't really get into -- I got into a little bit about how the church, it was really like, oh, you're like not necessarily like worthy of how you exist in the world, and so, I just wanted to bring this back in that spirituality for me, no matter what the lineage is, like spirituality in general for me has been a saving grace for me, as far as for me to define my own defiant -- divinity. And my own self, and that I'm worthy to exist in the world. If I didn't write poetry or teach or didn't do anything, me existing is enough, and is worthy. So, I want to read this poem and it's from SPLIT, my newest chapbook. And I just think that it is a way -- yeah, I just love it. Mm-kay? I just love it. Actually, I'm going to read a poem called 3:00 a.m.

with pain. 3:00 a.m. convo with pain. Glainchts because like I said, LNU exists because the artists -- art is what saved my life, and it it be continues to save my life, and I hope that LNU, Loud 'N Unchained, on the intersections that exist and the oppressions and us talked out about that will fix those and get us to dream in those ways. So this is the last poem of SPLIT, and it'ses and this title, the called 3:00 a.m. convo with pain. And thank you for joining, and my contact info is there. But this is called 3:00 a.m. convo with pain. In the middle of the night My pain shifts me awake Trying to have a conversation about its needs Pain argues with me for attention Opens up about their grief Makes several attempts to star

The conversation, warning me to listen. In the middle of the night My pain shifts the conversation Needs unavailable Awake and usually opens up about their grief Pain has written a lamentation For every 4th watch they are awake Witnessing a spiritual awakening Scribbling their interpretationThrough my respecters of receptors. I don't want to be susceptible My body just responds every time there is a request Every night we end up arguing Rainbow cascades, the way the sound overlays my ear drum A rattle that gets trapped between my ear and throat Melodious around my rib cage Feel my body quake with the 808 A piece inside me starts to develop At 3 am, nothing pretty comes on the keyboard Strokes labored, sentences that repeat Couplets with the same rhymePaterring, intefg over the time, Obsessing over the time When the music in my headphones Makes me comfortable amidst the pain I am blessed. Blessed be the ministers of music Blessed be the engineers Blessed be the producers Their prayer-beats, a rest for the pain weary. Blessed be the mind who thought up this healing Bless the writer who understood Desperation at 3 amin the morning, blessed, bleived the artist. Hope that you all were blessed by this.

Presentation, and thank you for coming. Discovering how LNU came to be, I'm T. S. Banks, check out me at LNU theater co.com, and I hope to hear from you, soon. Thank you.

Angela Willits: Thank you so much, T. many, many thanks for sharing your time, your passion, your expertise, your joy today. Thank you everyone who attended this today, for being a part of the event, and for your commitment so confront racial and disability inputs. Please watch for an email for a link to complete an evaluation on today's presentation, and watch for a separate email regarding CEUs for those of you who requested them when you registerland. We hope to see you next week, February 3rd for day 2 of this conference. Thank you all. Take care.
(end of event)