

Bad Boys¹

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Teachers who cannot write,
Prophets who cannot read,
Poets who cannot spell,
Preachers who raise, rhyme, and rap
A new blues,
Lighter in color,
But darker in passion
And deeper in pain.

Bad boys.

They live in the margins
And huddle at the borders,
Where they slowly suffocate from the weight
Of sagging dreams-
Or no dreams—
As the world moves on.

Bad boys.

Black fingers that flash cryptic signs,
Brown hands that tag clean walls,
And Dark bodies that stain White classrooms,
Casting Death's glances to all who pass,
While feeling more dead than alive.

Bad boys.

¹ Inspired by Ferguson's (2000) *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of Black masculinity*.

In the meantime,
Wounded teachers smuggle
Loaded pistols and blame weak principles;
Broken mothers weep alone and blame themselves;
Mute fathers walk away,
Slowly suffocating from the weight
Of sagging dreams-
Or no dreams,

As the world moves on . . .

Bad boys.

References

Ferguson, A. A. (2000). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of Black masculinity*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Timothy B. Spraggins, a doctoral candidate in Curriculum Studies at DePaul University, is currently the Associate Vice President for Diversity Education at DePaul. In addition, he supervises DePaul University's Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, the Cultural Center, and the Office of Diversity Education. He received a B.S. in English Education and an M.S. in Counseling and Guidance from the University of Alabama. His dissertation topic focuses on W. E. B. DuBois as a multicultural curriculum specialist.