A DJ SPEAKS WITH HANDS: GENDER EDUCATION AND HIPHOP CULTURE

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This dissertation titled

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this dissertation study was twofold. First, an examination of Hiphop culture as a site for educational pedagogy by extending the conversation beyond commercial rap music and examining practices associated with the whole of Hiphop culture, which includes dj’ing, emceeing (rapping), b-girl/b-boysing (breakdancing), and graffiti art. Second, this study sought to provide an understanding and exploration of Hiphop culture as a way of understanding gender as performance or social construction, with the goal of creating more anti-sexist practices within Hiphop and broader notions of gender. By gathering and collecting information on the efficacy of Hiphop culture as an educational tool this research aims to provide specific models designed to provide greater depth on the subject of Hiphop as critical pedagogy. By understanding gender as constructed performance, more complexity with regard to the ways in which women are represented, imagined and understood in Hiphop culture is possible.

This study took the design of a qualitative study. The research included four primary participants in addition to analysis of secondary sources. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources using a series of qualitative research design approaches. The primary methods used in collecting data from both the primary and secondary sources were interviews, autoethnography, cultural memory, and critical pedagogy. Analysis of the data was done through a Cultural Studies lens. Among the
major findings, the study revealed a critical Hiphop pedagogy, and strategies for gender equity in Hiphop culture.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Hiphop refers to the culture, style and behavior associated with Africana and Latino youth coming of age in the post-civil rights era. Hiphop is comprised of four expressive elements-graffiti, dj’ing, emceeing (rapping) and the b-girl/boy (break-dancing). During the 1980s knowledge, language, fashion, entrepreneurs, and beatboxing (humans mimicking musical instruments) were also recognized as integral parts of Hiphop culture (KRS, 2003).

Amazing may be the best way to describe the feeling I had the first time I heard what would later be called rap music. Beyond amazing the feeling was one of wonderment, awe, and inspiration. Little did I know at the time that this would be one of many transformational moments in my life shaped by Hiphop culture.

With funk and rap records as the sound track, I embarked on a career of b-boying, the capeoria like acrobatic dance form. Through b-boying I was able to interact with peers in healthy expressions of art, dance, and competition. Dancing for young boys was not considered cool. B-boying however was the ultimate expression of cool. There was not a flat surface in my surroundings that did not become an instant platform for my b-boying exploits.

Until writing this dissertation my participation in graffiti art was little known. Though as a pre-teen during the early1980s writing allowed me the opportunity to express myself and develop my skill as an artist. Drawing was my release from school and stress. As an adolescent the world was my canvas. I drew on everything from paper,
school folders, sneakers, and other surfaces common to graffiti writers. In junior high, English class became the place where I perfected bubble letters in my composition notebook. In addition to studying predicates, nouns, and adjectives I was learning form, style, and other writing techniques to distance myself from the unskilled and novice writers, also known as toys in the Hiphop vernacular. Though writing, or getting’ up as it was called, was interesting and remains so, I grew to appreciate the form as a fan rather than a participant.

The most recognized element of Hiphop, rap or emcee(ing), also captured my attention. Both as a participant and listener, rap music became a fixture in my life. Listening to music like King Tim III Personality Jock (1979) and Sequence’s Funk You Up (1979) was affirmation of the awe inspiring feeling I got from the first time I listened to unlabeled mixed tapes in my uncle’s collection. Each time I listened to rap music or participated in some aspect of Hiphop culture I felt as though my consciousness was being expanded. I was learning an appreciation for an art form that did not require anything but desire or seeing how others saw the world through their lyrics, or simply put just asked me to be myself.

Hiphop was also responsible for fostering community in my life - a community of other young people with similar tastes, hopes and aspirations. Kitwana (2002) defined this group as the Hiphop generation, Blacks born during the post-civil rights era, 1965-1984.

While all core elements of Hiphop, the b-boys/b-girls, graffiti writers, and emcees, were vital to transforming my consciousness, it was the DJ that captured my
imagination. The turntable wizardry of the DJ spoke to me. Like a modern day alchemist the DJ would take preexisting material, in this case albums, and create new content and meaning while like a Jazz soloist- riffing off the original. The transformational process of the DJ has always captivated me. Watching the energy created by a DJ live at a party or hearing recorded compositions on tape and figuring out how they did it, was as exciting for me as the experience was to the party goers and listeners. Unlike many cultural critics who recall the first time they heard *Rappers Delight* as a signifier of their connection with Hiphop, for many DJs, myself included, it was Grandmaster Flash’s *Adventures on the Wheels of Steel*, Malcolm McLaren’s *Buffalo Girls*, and *Rockit* by Herbie Hancock featuring Grandmixer DST.

A good DJ is somewhat of a social scientist, always observing human behavior. What are the tastes of the audience? What is the mood of the crowd? What composition of music will send this room into frenzy? Like the traditional social scientist that uses instruments such as surveys, texts, and questions to respondents, the DJ must use her/his hands to speak. A DJ speaks through the manipulation of music, creating melodies by mixing the old with the new. In this process the DJ must be immersed within the cultural space of Hiphop to gauge the pulse of the crowd to be effective at understanding what they want. A good DJ also has the ability to anticipate, to feel what the crowd needs.

The crowd or more broadly speaking those of us who embrace or are impacted by Hiphop culture, particularly men need to address sexism and misogyny. While Hiphop is not the sole force responsible for the promotion of the hatred of women or gendered
hierarchies it has the capacity to be a tool for social change. In my experiences as a DJ, I saw the liberatory and emancipatory potential generated by Hiphop.

The power, efficacy, use and complexity of expression in [Hiphop] through graffiti, b-Boying, style of dress, and rap show the power of artistic expression to respond to and change culture by negotiating power, constructing identity, and re-imagining personal and social relationships, spaces and communities (Strode & Wood, 2008, p. viii).

Because of the aspects within Hiphop, there is potential for transformation. Though these progressive possibilities exist, blatant forms of sexism can and do exist.

Prior to the mainstreaming of rap music, sexism could be seen not only in the derogatory names expressed in the music about women, though not as pervasive as contemporary commercial rap, but also in the marginal spaces for women and girls who wanted to be djs, writers, and emcees. As a male child coming of age I was socialized not to recognize male privilege as partly responsible for the difference in experience that young women had who also participated in Hiphop. Although I was socialized to think otherwise I knew gender mattered, boys did things girls could not.

Rose (1994) maintained, “In keeping with young women’s experiences in graffiti and breaking, strong social sanctions against their participation limited their ranks” (p.57). Despite these consequences there is a long list of women who have and continue to participate within Hiphop, such as “Sha Rock who was one of the innovators of the beat box” (Rose, as cited in Strode and Wood, 2008, p. 23) and DJs Jazzy Joyce, and Spinderella of Salt ‘n’ Pepa. Women’s participation in spite of sexism and misogyny
suggests space for alternatives despite their marginal status. Frequently within Hiphop women were regarded as onlookers, not fully embraced as participants unless they asserted their right to do so. While this assertiveness is indicative of the overall spirit of Hiphop when considered within a larger culture framework, the sexism is also emblematic of the unfairness of gender inequalities and the over arching influence of mainstream culture. It is vital to understand that the hyper-masculine, sexist and misogynist elements in Hiphop:

Are a reflection of the prevailing values in our society, values created and sustained by white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. As the crudest and most brutal expression of sexism, misogynistic attitudes tend to be portrayed by the dominant culture as an expression of male deviance. In reality they are part of a sexist continuum, necessary for the maintenance of patriarchal social order.

(hooks, 1994, p.1)

To maintain this order, limited space is available for how gender identity is constructed and thus performed. Given this, could something such as Hiphop, which at times reverberates capitalist patriarchy, truly serve as critical pedagogy for change, particularly with regard to gender performance?

I felt the answer was yes when examining my own lived experiences. Hiphop has served as a means by which to transform my consciousness. Listening to the politically charged lyrics of Public Enemy, X-Clan, Gangstarr, and Poor Righteous Teachers among others, helped to generate greater cultural awareness as well as a form of politicization. X-Clan’s album To the East Blackwards infused African/African American history in its
1990s styled 1960s nationalism. Rap lyrics in songs like ‘a Friendly Game of Baseball’ by Main Source expounded on police brutality and racial profiling of Black men. Yet while all this was taking place in lyrics by men, not much was being said regarding women outside of what became the obligatory “I Love My Mother” songs and themes of sexual conquest. In this process I could not help but notice the contradictions of empowerment stressed by many of the nationalist lyrics and the almost deafening silence on female subjectivity. As I began to interrogate what had been so powerful a force in my transformation it began to feel as if something was absent. Conversations with friends about potential event play lists continued to raise doubts and magnify the feelings of something missing.

Two significant events were prompts in wanting to explore Hiphop as critical pedagogy and to examine gender as performance with the goal of providing wider ranges of being. The first of two events occurred as an undergraduate student while reading Pearle Cleage’s piece Mad at Miles (1990). Cleage offers an insightful analysis of sexism and offers intentional acts of resistance by contrasting the musical genius of Miles Davis with his abusive relationship with wife Cecily Tyson.

As a Hiphop head I began to think about the connections with the music of my generation, rap, as Cleage had done with Jazz, the music of hers. During this time, circa 1994, one of the top commercial emcees was Christopher Wallace better known to rap fans as Biggie Smalls. The similarities between Wallace and Davis were striking. Both were considered to be at the top of their craft. Both had alleged documented verbal and physically abusive relationships with Black women. Despite the brutality of their
relationships both artists enjoyed wide support, and their popularity seemed to suggest the treatment of women was excused because of their prominence as artists. At the time I attempted to reason that the context was different, but felt conflicted because I also viscerally recognized there was no difference. I wondered how could Hiphop respond to this? Women should write more songs dealing with these issues, more women should be vocal within the Hiphop community. Although this seemed a logical approach to the problem, the feeling that something was lacking persisted.

The second moment came while I was Dj’ing a party while in graduate school. I had become increasingly frustrated with the mounting amount of sexism in the lyrical content of rap. Common justifications such as rap music had gone corporate or over 70% of commercial rap music consumers are White did not serve as adequate. As the commercialization of rap music began to peak in the 1990s, the eve of the 21st century did not appear to present a resolution. While Dj’ing a party a young woman requested a song by R. Kelly. Kelly at the time was in the news for charges of pedophilia. “An Illinois grand jury charged the 33- year-old singer—whose full name is Robert Kelly—with 21 counts of child pornography…stemming from a videotape that allegedly shows him having sex with an underage girl” (CNN, 2002). Though R. Kelly is not considered a rap artist his frequent collaboration with commercial rappers (Notorious BIG, Jay-Z Ludacris, T.I, Snopp Dogg) grant him credibility with many Hiphop fans. Such an accusation may have been easily shrugged off. However this was not the first time R. Kelly had been accused and it was one of many high profile cases of alleged violence against Black women with a connection to Hiphop culture. Boxer Mike Tyson and rapper
Tupac Shakur were also charged and convicted on sexual assault cases in the 1990s (Kitwana, 2002).

As a statement against such acts and my personal conviction that this was unacceptable I vowed to remove all of R. Kelly’s music from my play lists. Given the circumstances I asked the young woman if she was familiar with the accusations against Kelly whose music resonated with the Hip hop crowd as evidenced by his high chart position and consistent album sales. She said she heard but did not think it mattered and without a second thought continued to press her request. I was stunned, shocked, and outraged. How could she be so indifferent? Granted it was a party atmosphere and people were having a good time and who was in the space of considering such weighty issues? Yet surely the fact it could have been someone like her-or her would be cause for the slightest pause. However much to my chagrin she would remain unconcerned. In the moment of my righteous indignation is when I realized my earlier dismissal of the connection between Miles Davis and Biggie Smalls. My reaction was no different than her apparent nonchalant attitude about violence against women.

Statement of the Problem

Professor Ward Keeler’s lecture on Burmese rap, in which he dismissively told the audience there was nothing intrinsically progressive about Hip hop typifies mainstream thought about Hip hop (personal communication, 2008). Staples (1994) alleges in The Politics of Gangsta Rap, that Hip hop is misogynistic and serves as a sign post for social ills that plague youth in the United States. McWhorter (2008) writes in All About the Beat: Why Hip Hop Can’t Save Black America, that, “there is nothing hip-hop
music or hip-hop ‘culture’ has to offer black America in terms of political activism” (p.8). In observing these types of readings about rap music and Hiphop culture Dyson (1993) wrote:

From the very beginning of its recent history, [Hiphop], as it has come to be known-has faced various obstacles. Initially rap was deemed a passing fad, a playful and ephemeral black cultural form that steamed off the musical energies of urban black teens. As it became obvious that rap was here to stay... reactions changed from dismissal to denigration, and rap music came under attack from both black and white quarters. (p. 3)

These assessments fail to frame Hiphop with any depth or complexity, suggesting in part that Hiphop operates in isolation and is devoid of influence from larger cultural norms. Hiphop is maligned, misunderstood and undervalued in mainstream discourse. Hiphop has been largely understood as dysfunctional and pathological (Perkins, 1996, Dyson, 1996, Bynoe, 2004, Foreman & Neal 2004, Watkins, 2005). The narrow frame of reference about Hiphop contributes to forms of stereotyping, sexism, misogyny and hyper masculinity (hooks, 1994; Pough, Richardson, & Raimist, 2007). These factors limit the range, depth and scope of both women and men participating in Hiphop culture.

Stereotypes misrepresent, over represent and under represent (Lippman, 1956; Dyer, 1993). These stereotypes produce limited and fixed representations of gender in contrast to socially accepted images of how people should behave. Because of its difference, Hiphop culture as educational pedagogy and anti sexist practice is further undermined. The trio of stereotyping (misrepresentation, over representation and under representation)
leaves women particularly vulnerable as these factors take place in a patriarchal culture
where women are already on the fringes of access and power. Perkins (1997) asserted
“stereotyping . . . [is] a group concept held by one group about another [which] results in
a simple structure that hides complexity . . . ” . (O’Sullivan & Jewkes, 1997) Stereotyping
takes on an added meaning when combined with the multiple oppressions Africana
women face (Davis, 1981, Hudson-Weems, 1998). These constructions justify the
treatment and status of women in society.

The assignment of roles and privileges as a function of gender is usually described
as sexism. Because the roles and privileges assigned to women are almost always
inferior to those assigned to men, sexism plays a central role in implementing and
justifying the oppression of women. (Forbes, 2007, p. 266-267)

Sexism and sexist behavior have specific consequences in relations between women
and men. Sexism as a social construct is specific to behavior by men and its negative
impact on women. Rothenberg (1998) asserted:

While some women may dislike men intensely and treat them unfairly, and while
some women may be equally guilty of prejudice towards other women, the balance
of power throughout most, if not all, of recorded history has allowed men to
subordinate women in order to maintain their own privilege . . . An individual
woman who treats men or women unfairly simply because of their gender may be
called prejudiced, and may be criticized as unjust but she cannot be guilty of
sexism. (p. 212)

Sexism in Hiphop is often only understood in the content of rap lyrics and music
videos. However Hiphop is comprised of various expressive elements (DJ’ing, graffiti art, emceeing/rap, b-boying/girling). While rap music persists as the dominant form by which most comes to know or understand Hiphop, it is not the whole of Hiphop. Indeed rap music is loaded with meaning central to the discussion of challenges facing contemporary Hiphop, however to fully understand Hiphop, a comprehensive understanding of Hiphop functioning as a culture primarily on the outside of the commercial music industry is necessary.

Commercial rap music is a product. Commercial rap operates within the sphere of multinational corporate control. With a superficial lens Hiphop culture and the commercial rap industry seem similar, though upon a more critical observation these are two completely different concepts, often with conflicting agendas. The corporate medium relies on the commodification of Hiphop, diluting the culture to a base level product or hip-pop. The purpose of commercial rap is to offer a product to the widest possible audience without consideration of the quality of content. Houston (2005) maintained “Hip-pop is the commercially viable byproduct of the exploitation of Hiphop culture, which defines rap as its central component in its least complex terms. Hip-pop negotiates success as the acquisition of material goods and utilizes homophobia and sexism toward that end” (p.153). Hiphop as a culture offers much more than rap music and is a site for multiple progressive possibilities including critical pedagogy and a wider scope of gender as performance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is twofold; this study seeks to examine Hiphop
culture as critical pedagogy and anti-sexist practice. By examining Hiphop culture as a site of critical pedagogy and extending the conversation beyond commercial rap music, a broader more complex understanding of gender as performance creates space for Hiphop culture to serve as emancipatory and liberatory critical pedagogy. A fuller critical analysis of the whole of Hiphop, which includes the various expressive elements, increases opportunities for engagement and an awareness of why it is a viable and vital space for teaching and learning. By reading Hiphop as critical pedagogy, it creates a broader space. These spaces can be for teaching and learning, they also provide alternative readings of gender and extends the possibility of anti sexist practices.

Significance

This dissertation seeks to add to the body of literature focusing on the intersections of Hiphop culture, anti-sexism and critical pedagogy. As Hiphop continues to expand as a research interest this project will offer valuable insights from the insider perspective and offer material for educators and community activists interested in advancing the discourse regarding Hiphop scholarship. This work also seeks to provide a working blueprint for women and men engaged in anti-sexism work and how to use Hiphop as a pedagogical tool. By nature of intersections in this study, such as gender, race and class, this work will be of significance to interdisciplinary research that addresses concerns of social justice and equality.

Theoretical Framework

My research work is grounded in the discipline of Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies takes an interdisciplinary approach as a way to understand lived experience and
phenomena since understanding lived experience in a holistic way cuts across many disciplines (Giroux, 1988, Storey, 1996, During, 1997, McRobbie, 2005). “This project was inaugurated by the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, which developed a variety of critical methods for the analysis, interpretation, and criticism of cultural artifacts” (Kellner, 2003, p. 10). This interdisciplinary approach has developed as an effort to critically engage and challenge the traditional disciplines to include the multiple voices of marginalized others (Giroux, 1997, Dines & Humez, 2002). Cultural Studies’ theory examines relations structured by power within a given society.

Marxism has influenced the field of Cultural Studies scholarship (Storey, 1996, 2003), with differences of degree, focus, and intent. Marxism is the name of the varied field of theories and ideas developed by Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx in 1867, (Marx, 1976). Among the many features of Marxism is a theoretical understanding of the tension between social classes and a strategy for a more equitable distribution of resources and power (Marx, 1976). Echoing the ideas of George Hegel, another German philosopher, Marx stated that social change came about by the battle between conflicting societal forces. Marx understood this exchange as the dialectic process. In this struggle Marx identified the ‘have’ and ‘have nots’ as central positions in the battle. According to Williams (2003):

The ‘haves’ were the bourgeoisie, the capitalist owning class, who exercised power through their control of the means of production—that is land, factories, and labour. The ‘have nots’ were the proletariat or working classes, the masses. The
power of the bourgeoisie is exercised according to the material exploitation of the working classes through extracting their surplus value and making excess profit. Marxism emphasizes the proposition that class struggle is central to the historical development of society. (p. 38)

Given the intersection of and interest in uneven power relationships as articulated in the philosophy of Marx and Cultural Studies, Cultural Studies as an interdisciplinary academic discourse has been shaped, influenced and expounded upon by various scholars working within the discipline. One of the key interests in the field has been questioning dominant cultural practices by examining relationships of power and conflicting interests in a society.

Textual sources of disciplinary Cultural Studies theory has origins within two books published in the 1950s (Sparks, 1996). *The Uses of Literacy* by Richard Hoggart and *Culture and Society* by Raymond Williams (Sparks, 1996, p. 14) are key texts outlining the critical application of Cultural Studies. It is within these texts that a rejection of a dominant conception of culture is found. “It is out of that rejection, with all hesitations and evasions, that cultural studies issued” (Sparks, 1996, p.15).

According to Storey (1996), academic disciplines are identified “by three criteria: first, there is the object of the study; secondly, there are the basic assumptions which underpin the method(s) of approach to the object of study; and thirdly, there is the history of the discipline itself” (Storey, 1996, p. 1). In the context of Cultural Studies, the emphasis of culture is political, and requires a multilayered lens of analysis. This analysis
takes gender, race, class, and sexual orientation as central sites for the production of knowledge when examining culture.

A Cultural Studies theoretical approach recognizes that gender, race, class and sexual orientation constructions are part of a larger social, political, and economic framework, and that how we understand gender and race does not come from a vacuum, but as a result of the dominant cultures’ arrangement of the powerful and powerless. Within this arrangement women and Africana people, and by consequence, their cultural creations are often viewed as low culture or insignificant. Both contexts, according to these assumptions, are not worthy of serious consideration. Cultural Studies challenges the notion of a high and low culture by inviting scholarship from women, lesbian, gay, (and/or) Africana people, and other so called minorities, to interrogate the hierarchy that orders the culture of others into categories of high and low (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993; Giroux, 1996).

Cultural Studies is not a monolithic theory, it is a series of theories, methods and concepts, which at times can be in contention and conflict. In addition to Marxism, Cultural Studies is influenced by feminism, post-colonial theory, critical race theory, and African centered theory. According to Hall (1992):

Cultural Studies has multiple discourses; it has a number of different histories. It is a whole set of formations; it has its own different conjunctures and moments in the past. It included many different kinds of work. . . It always was a set of unstable formations. . . many people had and have different theoretical positions,
This theoretical perspective is a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-perspective discussion, in which all voices are encouraged to be heard in order to provide shape and substance to critical social justice theory and practice. A critical piece of this framework is what critical theorist Paulo Freire (1993) referred to as *consciencization*. Consciencization is a process of coming to awareness through a careful analysis and questioning of culture, schooling and society.

The study of Hiphop culture using cultural studies theory provides the space for educators, students, and Hiphop heads to meet within academic discourse. As hooks (2004) asserts, “Cultural studies can serve as intervention, making space for forms of intellectual discourse to emerge that have not been traditionally welcomed in the academy” (p. 151). This inclusion is critical as it allows for an examination of Hiphop beyond the scope of traditional disciplines. By extending examinations of Hiphop culture as a theoretical praxis that moves beyond only rap music, interested parties create the space for critical teaching. As hooks (1994) notes, critical teaching is the “catalyst that calls everyone. . . to become more and more engaged, to become active participants in learning” (p. 11). Critical teaching provides the space and possibility for a liberatory and emancipatory critical Hiphop pedagogy that is inclusive of anti sexist practices.

Significant among Cultural Studies methods of analysis, interpretation and criticism is Gramsci’s notion of hegemony and its relationship to popular culture. According to Gramsci (1973) hegemony describes the ability of a dominant group to exert their
control over non-dominant populations, as well as to maintain the status quo of power relations that benefit the powerful. Hegemonic methods of control involve ideological, political, and economic control that is exercised primarily without violence. Further Gramsci (1973) suggested that subordinated groups would accept this control as inevitable, normal and common sense. When the institutions and their influence are seen as “normal” the population rarely questions that which they take for granted as the way things simply are. Hence, control occurs without engaging in physical or violent forms of control. (It should be noted however, that some of this control may involve police action in response to what the dominant culture has defined as “crime”.

Among the distinguishing characteristics of hegemony is the willful active consent of the subordinated groups. An analysis of Hiphop culture with an understanding of the forces of hegemonic control favors readings of culture that illuminate the social constructions of knowledge.

**Research Questions**

- Please share with me how you came to be involved with Hiphop culture?

- How can Hiphop truly serve as critical pedagogy?

- If possible, how do you think Hiphop can be used as an educational tool?

- How can Hiphop broaden our understanding of gender as performance?

- What insights would a critical Hiphop pedagogy offer anti-sexist activists and educators?

- Why would Hiphop be a viable resource for teaching and learning?
• What would you consider examples of the use of Hiphop culture beyond entertainment?

Limitations of the Study

This dissertation was limited to four primary respondents/sources, secondary sources, such as audiovisual and document analysis and a selected review of literature over a three-year period. This study focused on the experiences and reflections of the respondents interviewed in the field research portion of this study. The depth and breath of the study was a reflection of the time and resources available at the time this study was conducted.

Definitions

Africana: a term preferred over Black in describing people of African descent that centralizes the geographical, historical, and cultural experiences in the naming of people.

B-boy/girl: break boy/girl. One who danced during the ‘break’ of a song. The break is when the singer stops for a break and the instrumental part begins. (Westbrook, 2002, p. 8)

Gender: marker of the socially constructed ideas, behavior, and assigned value within a particular society to designate one typically, as woman, man, or transgendered.

Gender as performance: a concept that refers to how a given society understands how female and male are constructed or ‘acted out’ in everyday life. These performances are constructions based on the cultures understandings of gender, rather than fixed biological concepts.

Hiphop: [An] artistic response to oppression. A way of expression in dance, music, word
Song. A culture that thrives on creativity and nostalgia. As a musical art form it is stories of inner city life, often with a message, spoken over beats of music. The culture includes rap and any other venture spawned from the Hiphop style and culture (Westbrook, 2002, p.64)

**Hiphop head**: A person who has a deep affinity for Hiphop culture and considers the elements of Hiphop (dj’ing, emceeing, b-girl/boy, and graffiti art) culture as a fundamental aspect of their identity (KRS, 2001, Fricke & Ahearn, 2002).

**Hyper-masculinity**: the display or promotion of values such as; violence, over sexual, homophobia, and misogyny. A street value often considered a part of Black macho persona (Foreman & Neal, 2004, Williams, 2007).
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANT LITERATURE

This section details the related literature of the major themes in this work. The primary threads emerging from this work consist of: gender as performance, particularly gender and Africana women, and Hiphop culture. These contexts are relevant for investigation because they represent places where a critical Hiphop pedagogy can be found, and anti-sexist practices can be articulated. A prefatory statement regarding the omission of certain texts within this section is necessary. This absence reflects a conscious choice rather than a lack of intellectual precision in an effort to privilege works that are often on the periphery.

While primary attention is given to Africana women and gender, exploring intersections of race and class within a discourse of masculinity is necessary as it highlights the ways in which gender is understood and performed within Hiphop culture. Framing such literature will provide greater access to possible alternative spaces

Gender as Performance

By investigating how femininity and masculinity are constructed a context for understanding gender as performance is possible. In order to examine Hiphop culture as site of anti sexist practice, it is vital to examine the power and production of feminine and masculine constructs. The power to assign meaning is a function in the discourse of gender as performance. Power enables a person or group “to structure and restrict the action range of the subordinate person or group and to limit the options available” (Wilson, 1998, p. 8). Historically constructions of gender/sex as performance have been figured against the backdrop of patriarchal power, which is a central site of masculine
production. As a result these notions have produced problematic readings of gender.

Butler (1990) maintains:

The power relations that infuse the biological sciences are not easily reduced, and the medico-legal alliance emerging in nineteenth-century Europe has spawned categorical fictions that could not be anticipated in advance. The very complexity of the discursive map that constructs gender appears to hold out the promise of an inadvertent and generative convergence of these discursive and regulatory structures. If the regulatory fictions of sex and gender are themselves multiply contested sites of meaning, then the very multiplicity of their constructions holds out the possibility of a disruption of their univocal posturing. (p. 94)

Nineteenth century Greek observers regarded the sexes as one; women were simply men on the inside. This logic, the one sex model, serves as a testament to the permanence of masculinist imagination. Laqueur (1990) writes:

For two millennia the ovary, an organ that by the early nineteenth century had become a synecdoche for woman, had not even a name of its own. Galen refers to it by the same word he uses for the male testes, orcheis, allowing context to make clear which sex he is concerned with. (p. 4-5)

While constructions evolved over time from the one sex model it is clear these understandings about sex and gender serve to reinforce the hegemonic patriarchal status quo. Hegemony, as Gramsci articulated it, is concerned with society’s super structure and its ideology-producing institutions constantly in struggle over power and meaning (Gramsci, 1973). Within a specific political cultural moment these notions determine how
and what gender and sex mean despite science concluding it is “understood that our bodies are too complex to provide clear-cut answers about sexual difference” (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, p. 4). Moreover Fausto-Sterling maintains:

The more we look for a simple physical basis for ‘sex’, the more it becomes clear that ‘sex’ is not a pure physical category. What bodily signals and functions we define as male or female come already entangled in our ideas about gender. (p. 4)

These readings make it increasingly apparent that fictions regarding difference, are not fixed, but serve as rationale to perpetuate the current nexus of power rather than definitive realties regarding gender and sex (Foucault, 1978; Butler, 1990). This concept is in alignment with what Gramsci suggests, in that hegemonic ideology connects to ideological representations of culture and for these ideological assertions to become self-evident they must appear as common sense or naturally occurring (Bellamy and Cox, 1994). This prompts Fausto-Sterling (2000) to assert that:

The truths about human sexuality created by scholars in general and biologists in particular are one component of political, social and moral struggles about our cultures and economies. . . scientists create truths about sexuality; how our bodies incorporate and confirm these truths sculpted by the social milieu in which biologists practice their trade, in turn refashion our cultural environment. (p. 5)

This historical snapshot reveals the continually shifting notion of gender and sex. From the one sex model to the two sex model, to explorations of intersexuals, which can be considered the three sex model and beyond, gender and sex have been heavily contested as well as socially constructed. With collusion from the sciences and the underwriting of
a male-centric society the only certainty regarding sex and gender is it is a relation among
socially delegated subjects in specifiable contexts. As Butler (1990) suggests:

gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free floating attributes, for we have
seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and
compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the
inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be
performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense,
gender is always doing. (p. 33)

Foucault (2000) observes of power in the context of gender and sex:

Juridico-discursive. . . is the conception that governs both the thematics of
repression and the theory of the law as constitutive of desire. . . what distinguishes
the analysis made in terms of the repression of instincts from that made in terms
of the law of desire is clearly the way in which they each conceive of each the
nature and dynamics of the drives, not the way in which they conceive of power. .
both rely on a common representation of power. . . depending on the use made of
it and the position it is accorded with respect to desire, lead to two contradictory
results: either to the promise of liberation, if power is seen as having only an
external hold on desire, or, if it is constitutive of desire itself, to the affirmation:
you are always-already trapped. (p. 82-83)

The meaning of performance and representation are constructed through the mediation of
whom—or what wields power in a given cultural context. If always already trapped as
Foucault (2000) maintains, liberation is possible, yet will constantly need renewal and
modification. These modifications are necessary in that power shifts as counter
hegemonic tendencies emerge in the cracks and seems of the powerful.

Scott (1990) asserts:

The powerful, as we have seen have a vital interest in keeping up the appearances
appropriate to their form of domination. Subordinates, for their part, ordinarily
have good reasons to help sustain those appearances, or at least, not openly
contradict them. Taken together these two social facts have . . . important
consequences for the analysis of power relations. (p.70)

Gender performance is not simply and neatly assigned, or relegated to a static oppressor
and oppressed relationship but rather a constant unstable series of negotiations.

Gender Performance and Africana Women

While women regardless of ethnicity or social class have been derogated, scorned,
and positioned in the subordinate status within the sex and gender discussion, it is with
peculiar exception that Africana women have been constitutive of male longing, both as
that which is desired and simultaneously despised. The goal is not to contest oppressions,
but rather highlight the specificity with which race and gender connect with Western
cultures’ gender expectations and the ways in which gender is acted out or performed on
the Africana woman’s body. The specific focus on Africana women privileges insights
into gender performance both within larger cultural practices and in particular Hiphop
culture. This particular view can create “a broader context and contrasting perspective
from which to examine . . . beliefs and behaviors, social relations and institutions”
(Harding, 1991, p. 286). While there are a variety of languages, ethnicities, locales, and
class variables making Africana women anti-monolithic, (hooks, 1981; Nnaemeka, 1998; Brock, 2005) the ways in which Africana women have been understood bring together a commonality of reading in terms of how sexuality and gender is performed and constructed. Collins (2000) maintains:

> Despite differences of age, sexual orientation, social class, region, and religion, U.S Black women encounter societal practices that restrict us to inferior housing, neighborhoods, schools, jobs, and public treatment and hide this differential consideration behind an array of common beliefs about Black women’s intelligence, work habits, and sexuality. (p. 25)

As a part of the unstable categorization of gender Africana women must negotiate the constructions of identity. “Identifying with a gender under contemporary regimes of power involves identifying with a set of norms that are and are not realizable, and whose power and status precede the identifications by which they are insistently approximated” (Butler, 1993, p. 126). The justification for the treatment of all women has been to preserve male privilege. Jeffords (1994) maintains masculinity is defined in terms of its dominance over the feminine e. These practices of masculine dominance take place within Hiphop culture as well. Though the area of specific focus is Africana women it is necessary to explore and critique masculinity.

**Masculinity**

Through critical analysis of masculinity, gender constructions that restrict and privilege become more transparent. Examining the production and performance of masculinity demystifies one of the sites dominant social groups use to retain power,
indeed “Masculinity in general is about privilege” (Golden, 1994, p.19). As long as masculinity remains obscured in discourse regarding gender performance the idea that sexism only impacts women remains unchallenged (Katz, 1999; Hurt, 2006; Jhally, 2007).

Hyper-masculinity emerges as an exaggerated representation of masculinity. Hyper-masculinity is the aggressive performance of what is considered manly. In this context notions of manhood are limited to displays of toughness, force, and violence. Hyper-masculinity is critical in the maintenance of male privilege throughout United States history (Digby, 1998; Katz, 1999, Dyson, 2003, Neal, 2005; Hurt, 2006; Tarrant, 2008). “As commercial hip-hop has evolved over the past three decades, it has become an increasingly accurate mirror for American values” (Hopkinson & Moore, 2006, p. 86).

In the context of Hiphop definitions of masculinity are extremely narrow and problematic (Cheney, 2005). This masculine ethos is informed by confrontations with life in a White supremacist-capitalist patriarchy (hooks, 1996). While replicating the same repressive values of mainstream patriarchy this baadman or hard pose, masculinity defined within Hiphop, is a response from young men of color as resistance. Katz (1999) suggests that men of color in particular have so few resources that the physical body, threat of violence, and the use of words to project become a means to construct masculinity. This masculinity is both a performance and act of resistance. As Kelly (1994) asserts:

Irreverence has been a central component of black expressive vernacular culture, which is why violence and sex have been as important to toasting and signifying as
playingfulness with language... Both the baadman and the trickster embody a challenge to virtually all authority which makes sense to people for whom justice is a rare thing. (p. 187)

While resistance represents a social dialect, it can be particularly damning when rap music as an expression is filtered through corporate channels and privileges hyper-masculinity as the singular representation of Black masculinity. As Alexander (2006) asserted:

The Black male body is polemical. It is a site of public and private contestation; competing investments in Black masculinity that are historical and localized affecting notions of intellect and character, as well as virility and fertility. The diversity that exists within the character of the Black man is not acknowledged, hence he is relegated to a stereotypically pathologized position, in which any variation might be constructed as inauthentic or not being real. (p. 74)

As a result of the narrow confines of masculinity, this filter reduces rap music, and by extension Hiphop culture, as a liberatory means of survival and mobility. hooks (2003) revisits Julius Lester when he argues:

Today resistance manifests itself in what whites can only see as the social ‘ills’ of the ghetto, i.e. crime, high school dropouts, unemployment, etc. In actuality, many blacks have consciously rebelled against the system and dropped out. After all, why waste your life working at a job you hate, getting paid next to nothing, when you make more money with half the effort. So, a new class is created, the hustler who gambles, runs numbers, pushes drugs, lives off women, and does
anything to avoid going to ‘meet the man’ five days a week year in and year out. It is dangerous, rough, and none to beautiful life, but it has some compensation: A modicum of self-respect and the respect of a good segment of the community is gained. (Lester, as cited in hooks, p.19)

Over the 30 plus year period of Hiphop history this form of masculinity has developed into a working class affirmation of capitalism, which in turn produces contradictory conclusions, affirmed notions of manhood at the expense of women. Referencing storyteller and poet Brother Blue Perry (2004) writes, “When the society in which you live scorns you, you become the glorious outlaw” (p. 102). In this role of the outlaw an oppositional perspective and persona develops. The perspective of assuming characteristics mainstream society considers deviant as central to ones individual and collective identity.

Tupac Shakur emerges as a reference point in the discourse of masculinity from the pantheon of Black cultural archetypes to Hiphop cultures embrace of the gangsta, the fashionable persona of masculinity. Tupac is a central figure not because he is the first or subjective best so-called gangsta rapper but because he is the prototype from which contemporary identities are constructed in the gangsta persona. Dyson (2003) maintains:

A considerable measure of Tupac’s cultural heft was certainly extramusical, especially his well-publicized clashes with the law and his shamanistic thespian efforts. Above all, Tupac was a transcendent force of creative fury who relentlessly articulated a generations’ defining moods-its confusion and pain, its
nobility and courage, its loves and hates, its hopelessness and self-destruction. (p. 106-107)

Tupac’s recorded body of work embodies the contradictions of narrowly defined masculinity, offering both resisting representations of masculinity and the hyper masculine constructions. Tupac in his solo debut, *Strictly for My N.I.G.G.A.Z* (1993) symbolically suggests he has become the outlaw by use and appropriation of the problematic term “Nigger”. As Tupac’s musical career progressed he further developed this position as he adopted the thug life ideology. For Tupac the concept of T.H.U.G L.I.F.E related closely with the use of the term N.I.G.G.A.Z. Thug life was a response to repressive conditions. Thug life is an acronym for “the hate you give little infants fucks everybody” (Shakur, 1993). From this emerges an awareness of the cyclical nature of prevailing forms of poverty and self hate. According to Tupac N.I.G.G.A.Z means never ignorant, getting goals accomplished (Shakur, 1993). Thus the concept of the outlaw within Hiphop is complex and cannot simply be read as an embrace of degenerative values. Perry (1999) asserts:

The outlawry present in [Hiphop] is multifaceted. At times, it is literal, appearing in the personification of the outlaw or through outlaw values, but it is also present in the sense of opposition to norms that unfairly punish black communities or discount the complexity of choices faced by those black and poor in the United States, and presents itself in the creation of alternative values, norms and ideals in contrast to those embraced by America society. More over, outlawry may manifest itself as an individual
assertion or as a collective sensibility, either in the form of an archetype (the ‘bad nigga,’ the thug, the roughneck, the convict) or in a celebration of outlaw community. (p.103)

In *So Many Tears*, a single off the 1995 *Me Against the World* album, Tupac offers a perspective on the significance of Thug Life when he raps on the opening verse:

> Back in elementary I thrived on misery, left me alone I grew up amongst a dying breed, inside my mind I couldn’t find a place to rest until I got that thug life tatted on my chest. Tell me can you feel me? You wanna last? Be the first to blast.

These experiences heighten the tensions of what a man is supposed to be and the lived experiences of some poor and working class men of color. This dynamic thus fosters a context of hyper-masculinity whose goal is to assert manhood at the expense of a broader concept of manhood and also by consequence an assault of a broad range of womanhood. Madhubuti (1990) asserted of Black masculinity:

> Your people first . . . The positioning of oneself so that observation comes before reaction, where study is preferred to night life . . . a listener, a student, a historian seeking hidden truths. One who develops leadership qualities and demands the same qualities of those who have been chosen to lead . . . Sees material rewards as means toward an end and not an end in themselves. (p. 16).

Madhubuti’s concept of manhood allows for a greater range in possibilities however much of what is offered in the performative context of hyper-masculinity restricts such possibility and attempts to assign values based on gendered and racial difference. Neal
(2005) suggests a vision of a *NewBlackMan*. Neal interrogates the landscape of Black masculinity and proposes an expansive understanding that seeks to abandon the limiting sexist and homophobic philosophy that has informed notions of a *real* man. Neal (2005) avoids narrowly constructing this vision as plainly positive and offers that the *NewBlackMan* is not a utopian vision of masculinity, but rather:

> About resisting being inscribed by a wide range of forces and finding a comfort with a complex and progressive existence as a black man in America. As such, NewBlackMan is... a concept that acknowledges the many complex aspects, often contradictory, that make up a progressive and meaningful black masculinity. The words ‘new’ and ‘black’, and ‘man’, are literally scrunched together here to reinforce the idea that myriad identities exist in the same black male bodies.

(p. 29)

Masculinity within Hiphop as it is currently understood is at the heart of the limited range of gender performance expectations. “Many of [Hiphop’s] woman problems come in the monolithic and repetitious representation of [Hiphop] as simply a sexist male rapper surrounded by an entourage of nameless and faceless gyrating bodies in video after video” (Pough, Richardson, Duram & Raimist, 2007, p. 2). Objectifying women functions as source for male identity and construction of power (Powell, 2003; hooks, 2003; Neal, 2005; Hurt, 2006; Katz, 2006). “The idea of objectification, as defined by Gines (2007) in *Queen Bees and Big Pimps*, is the reduction of a person to an object to be dominated, manipulated, constrained or even ignored” (p. 81). Since “sex is an image that sells... once again, the bodies of Black women and other women of color are being
commodified and sold through the entertainment industry for economic gain” (Gines, 2007, p. 81). By expanding notions of masculinity this not only broadens the scope possible for men, it increases the diversity of images of women in a male dominated industry.

History of Africana Women’s representation

Contemporary images of Africana women reinforce the prescribed notion that women of color are extremes without depth. Extreme images are comprised of the sexually promiscuous and the caretaker (White, 1985; hooks 1994; Turner, 1994; Guy-Sheftall, 1995; Cole, 2003). Though representations such as the Welfare queen (Hancock, 2004), baby mama, hood rat, and video vixen seem to be creations living within the context of Hiphop culture these tropes are descendants of a long line of public social constructions.

Collins (1990) maintains the treatment of Africana women’s’ bodies in nineteenth century Europe are the foundation for present-day objectification and dismemberment of women’s bodies. “African women exhibited as Hottentots Venuses-there were many were the inspiration for the bustle” (Jones, 1995, p. 76).

These limited notions of Black womanhood must be understood within the context of racist, sexist, and classist systems (Davis, 1980; Gordon, 1987; hooks, 1990; Collins, 1990, Wallace, 1999; Bogle, 2001; Cater and Steiner, 2004; Houston, 2005). As an example of such an analysis, Jones (1995) maintains “The Hottentot Venus became the dominant icon of black femininity in the nineteenth century, reduced in the European imagination to her two sexual attractions-butt and apron”(p. 75). Saarjite Baartman, also
known as the Hottentot Venus, was a young South African woman of the Khosian community whose body was on display in England and France (Gilman, 1986; Ugwu, 1995). Baartman was viewed as an exotic object with particular attention paid to her genitals.

Long after Baartman’s death “pseudo-scientists interested in investigating ‘primitive sexuality dissected and cast her genitals in wax” (Thompson, 1998, p. 2). Anatomist Georges Cuvier and other medical scholars of the day argued that Baartmans’ oversized genitalia was physical evidence of the Africana woman’s primitive nature (Gilman, 1986; Hinsley, 1991; Ugwu, 1995). As Thompson observes:

The history of human displays of people of color demonstrates that cultural difference and ‘otherness’ were visually observed on the ‘native body’, whether in live human exhibitions or in dissected body parts on public display. Both forms of spectacle often served to promote Western colonial domination by configuring non-white cultures as being in need of discipline, civilization and industry. (p. 2)

In this context gender as performance is understood as sexual pleasure and exotic other for the dominant gaze. However this pleasure is not personable, suggesting respect, but distanced by the inferior status placed on the Africana woman’s body. The pleasure comes from confirmation that the other is inferior. The exotic displays and linking Africana woman’s sexuality with animals reinforce the idea Africana women and people of color in general, are not normal. By contrast this legitimizes the superior position of the dominant group.
The institution of enslavement further solidified the idea Africana women were sexual objects and or caretakers. Representations in the developing mass media showed an affinity for the mammy and jezebel stereotypes as comforting figures in the maintenance of White supremacy and Black subjugation (Bogle, 2001). These representations were necessary fictions in the creation of the public identity of Africana women. “Public identity as a political psychological construct reflects the influence of political culture upon the dialogical interaction between actor and spectator. In this sense, it represents a fundamental step in bridging the gap between political theory and political psychology” (Hancock, 2004, p. 14). The stereotypes of the Mammy and Jezebel represent the caretaker and sexual object respectively (Bogle, 1999; Collins, 2000). Mammy is the antithesis of the qualities and virtues of womanhood. “The mammy image also serves a symbolic function in maintaining oppressions of gender and sexuality” (Collins, 2000, p.73). The Jezebel, because she is sexually promiscuous by nature, justifies her cruel treatment. These fictional images both in print and visual form emanate from the history of enslavement. Pilgram maintains:

Slaves, whether on the auction block or offered privately for sale, were often stripped naked and physically examined. In theory, this was done to insure that they were healthy…In practice, the stripping and touching of slaves had a sexually exploitative, sometimes sadistic function. Nakedness, especially among women in the 18th and 19th centuries, implied lack of civility, morality, and sexual restraint even when the nakedness was forced. . . Conversely, Whites, especially women, wore clothing over most of their bodies. The contrast between
the clothing reinforced the beliefs that White women were civilized, modest, and sexually pure, whereas Black women were uncivilized, immodest, and sexually aberrant. (2002)

White (1985) further contends “conditions under which . . . women were known to reproduce . . . were often the topic of . . . dinner table conversations. . . something so personal and private became a matter of public discussion prompted one ex-slave to declare . . . ‘women wasn't nothing but cattle’ (p. 31). Africana women were seen in the context of their role to preserve an enslaved society. This context maintained a dual-purpose, Africana women as both objects and primarily defined through sexual reproduction. In spite of their marginal status, sexual liaisons between Africana women and White men accounted for high numbers of births, rapes and other forms of sexual domination during the era of enslavement (Davis, 1998). Freydberg asserts:

White men not only appropriated the labour and the children of Black women under slavery, but they also appropriated Black women’s bodies through rape. And, when the colour of their mulatto offspring bore silent witness to rape, these men profited from the unholy harvest by selling their own children and justified their violet subordination of Black women by labeling them promiscuous seducers. White women to some extent accepted the rationale offered by their husbands and brothers. Although their acceptance of the rationale of promiscuous Black women may have been motivated by the need to repress an unpleasant truth. (p.266)
Jones (1995) offers, “that which you are obsessed with, that you are afraid of, that you have to destroy, is the thing you want more than anything” (p. 77). This history marks a legacy of choices by the dominant groups, both male and White, interested in maintaining privilege at the expense of Africana women. This rationale is informed by the social and political milieu of the day regarding gender performance rather than a fixed biological truth.

Though the era of physical enslavement ended with abolition of slavery and the passage of the 17th amendment, the psychological residue continued to inform readings of Africana women beyond this period (Davis, 1981; hooks, 1990). As a result of the history of representation Africana women have had to reconstruct redeeming narratives of identity and empowerment.

_Africana Women and Feminism_

An examination of the history of Africana women and feminism is significant in highlighting ways in which Africana women have historically produced resisting survival strategies and practices. This exploration of epistemology provides a historic context for the use of Hiphop as an anti sexist strategy and practice.

Though collectives of individual Africana women have resisted limited constructions of gender performance, feminist movements challenging the marginal status of women emerged as an alternative. These large moments have been constructed as waves, with waves marking major moments of thought and or activity. Historically Africana women have had ambivalent feelings regarding participation in these mass movements. The first and second wave feminism(s) presented the promise and possibility
of alternative readings of Africana women, however these movements as a whole have also restricted full participation of women of color.

First wave feminism is acknowledged to have begun in 1792 with the publication of Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Gamble, 2000). Though there were earlier works such as *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) Wollstonecraft’s work was considered the first call to generate a mass movement (Gamble, 2000). These notions of feminism were concerned with making women into more rational citizens without challenging the perceived role of women as homemakers.

Also during the first wave there were instances of White women being supporters of prison reform and the abolition of enslavement, such as the work of Sarah and Angelina Grimke (Baxandall, 2001). Scholars (Staples, 1972; Tobias, 1997) suggest though these movements attempted to aid others there was a less egalitarian agenda informing these activities.

Second wave feminism(s) is generally acknowledged to have two beginnings. The first start is recognized as beginning with the ending of the first wave, with the right to vote for women, the second, when women began articulating a new ideology reflective of the then contemporary women’s agenda. While there was disagreement whether the second wave was an extension of the first, or a complete separate movement, second wave feminism(s) was marked by various ideological debates, positions, and challenges. Rowbotham (1973) argued that while women’s liberation has similarities with the older equal rights efforts, the second movement was much more complex and demanded a more radical feminist.
While these two feminisms were a worthy counter balance to the marginalization of women (Crenshaw, 1993; Heywood & Drake, 1997; Weir & Faulkner, 2004; Armstead, 2007) they have primarily served the interests of white women (Collins, 1990; Hudson-Weems, 1993, Brock; 2005). Race proved to be a particularly insurmountable obstacle in cross-racial alliances between women in the early feminist movement(s). Though there were exceptions, segregated racial customs were the rule. As Evans maintained (1997) “Racism and the slave system made solidarity among women impossible. Though northern elite and middle-class women could claim working women and prostitutes as sisters, southern white women found it inconceivable to... consider slave women similarly” (p. 89). As a result Africana women found themselves isolated from larger organized mass movements. The emergence of Africana club women and associations served as a rallying point for the interests of women of color. Organization such as The Colored Women’s League, a forerunner of the National Association of Colored Women called on a united Black womanhood to solve the race’s problems of which gender was central (Guy-Sheftall, 1986; White, 1999). Though there were cross racial alliances, race in many instances, cemented the divide between White and Africana women as White (1999) asserted:

Although a few white organizations, most notably the National Council of Women made an effort to include black women, most of the major women’s associations, especially those anchored in the South or with a large Southern membership, were openly antiblack. (White, p. 41)
In addition to the classist assumptions of well-intentioned club women both Black and White, Africana women had to contend with race and gender discrimination, the triple burden of oppression (Davis, 1981; Collins, 1990; Marable, 1983). With the burgeoning second wave of feminism(s) Africana women again found themselves on the fringes, whether by the sexism of men of color in organizations constructed around racial solidarity, or by the racism of organizations constructed around gender solidarity. “The pervasiveness of racism and sexism that existed in the Black and women’s liberation movements rendered Black women almost nonexistent in both worlds” (Breines, 2002). Black women disillusioned by the sexism of many of the Black Power movement organizations were active in the creation of the first radical feminist groups. The National Organization for Women (NOW) included Africana women like Aileen Hernandez, Pauli Murray, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Shirley Chisholm among others. Despite their foundational participation many Africana women concluded “the women’s movement was virtually synonymous with NOW-which itself was undergoing a transformation that would further alienate it from the majority of Black women” (Giddings, p. 305).

These frequent rebuffs led Africana women to the conclusion that White feminist scholars and activists resisted having Black women as full colleagues and partners in a movement that centralized race as well as gender and class (Nemeaka, 1998; Gamble, 1999, Ransby, 2000; Collins, 2000). Gamble (1999) wrote “Black women were on the whole skeptical about a movement which claimed sisterhood but in which they had to struggle for visibility” (p. 32). Spelman (1988) emphasized, for feminism, when it is lacking a race or class analysis, asked a diversity of women to think and act as women, it
unwittingly replaced the cultural norm of white middle class man with a norm of white middle class woman. This institutionalized marginalization has resulted in the “suppression of Black women’s ideas [and] has had a pronounced influence on feminist theory” (Collins, 2000, p. 5). As a result many Africana women concluded “Since the dominant voice of the feminist movement has been that of the white female . . . the issue of racism can become threatening, for it identifies white feminists as possible participants in the oppression of blacks” (Terborg-Penn et. all, 1987, p3).

The inability or unwillingness to promote a multi-dimensional feminist theory resulted in restricting not only participation, but interest in feminism by Africana women. Giddings (1984) argues, “before 1973, virtually the only Black women who acknowledged the value of feminism were those ensconced in the women’s movement itself” (p. 311). Contributing to disinterest in feminism(s) because of the lack of a racial analysis, feminism(s) did not interest many women of color because of its orientation toward the suburban middle class. Marbley (2005) asserted, “Historically, middle class White women have not appreciated the differences among themselves, Black women and other women of color” (p. 605). Friedan’s (1963) *The Feminine Mystique*, while eloquently expressing the mundane lives of middle class White women who were expected to find fulfillment primarily through their husbands and children hardly captured the same attention from women of color. Friedan’s observation that “I never knew a woman, when I was growing up, who used her mind, played her own part in the world, and also loved, and had children’ seemed to come from another planet” (Giddings, 1984, p. 299). These fissures in ideology formation encouraged Africana
women to move on their own. As has been characteristic of Africana women historically, Africana women during the second wave of feminism(s) created and developed a space for themselves. The Combahee River Collective Statement maintained:

Black, other Third world, and working women have been involved in the feminist movement from its start, but…racism and elitism…have served to obscure our participation…It was our experience and disillusionment within these liberation movements, as well as experience on the periphery of the white male left, that led to the need to develop a politics that was anti-racist, unlike those of white women, and anti-sexist, unlike those of Black and white men. (Smith, 2000, p.273)

The foregrounding work of the second wave created the space for Africana women and their involvement in post feminism and the third wave. While the work of the second wave Africana women created space for participation, a key theme was centralizing the importance of creating their own theory and practice.

Post feminism and the third wave are periods marked by coming of age during the 1980s and 1990s (Zabel, 2005). Heywood (2006) differentiates post feminism from the third wave by suggesting that third wave is feminism with a complexity, while post feminism regards struggles emphasizing women’s oppression and victimization as obsolete. These feminist movements occurred during the cultural backlash of the 1980s. Gilley (2005) wrote:

Some young women who were coming to feminism during this time, most commonly as part of the women’s studies departments that second wave feminism had fought for and won inside academia, felt pressure to conform to some
standard of ‘good’ feminism and began to resent feminists they saw as ideologues. (p. 188)

Third wave feminism is marked by a contentious and often contradictory message. Which is a reflection of the multiple ideological intersections. Heywood and Drake (1997) suggest:

Because our lives have been shaped by struggles between various feminisms as well as by cultural backlash against feminism and activism, we argue that contradiction or what looks like contradiction if one doesn’t shift one’s point of view-marks the desires and strategies of third wave feminists. (p. 2)

While third wave feminism(s) have opened up new possibilities, such as a more complex discourse on sexuality and power, it has also faulted in inclusion of women of color. “Third wave feminism had stumbled against the limits of possibilities by not taking the viewpoints of women of color seriously and failing to become a movement on behalf of all women” (Gilley, 2005, p.188). Women of color have continued to argue for more inclusiveness and a need for a feminism that is reflective of the multiplicity of identities that comprise all women. Moraga (1984) echoes earlier concerns regarding the inclusion of race, class, and sexual orientation analysis.

Gilley averred (2005):

Having made gains in their political agenda, white feminists had not made the step toward a more thorough understanding of the intersections of race, class and, gender oppression, nor considered what a movement to end all three simultaneously might look like. (p. 188)
As Collins (1990) asserted, while “not all White Western feminists participate in these
diverse patterns of suppression…these concerns linger on” (p. 6). As a result many
Africana women have moved to define their own feminism, womanist and Africana
womanist agendas.

Building on the legacy of Wallace (1978), Lorde (1982) and Smith (1982), and
early Africana women thinkers like Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells, and others, Collins
(2000) articulated a theoretical map for Black feminist though.

Collins suggested Black feminist thought comprised six specific features. These
features recognized Black feminist thought as a critical social theory. According to
Collins (2000) “Black feminist thought aims to empower African-American women
within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions” (p. 22). Black
feminist thought’s specific features are not unique, asserts Collins, “rather it is the
convergence of these distinguishing features that gives U.S. Black feminist thought its
distinctive contours” (p.22). Critical among the distinguishing characteristics of Black
feminist thought is the recognition of a dialectical relationship, linking Africana women’s
oppression with activism and the recognition that differences among Africana women
produce “different patterns of experiential knowledge” (p. 27). These differences in
experience account for the difference in deconstructing the forms of oppression. As long
as intersecting forms of injustice exist it makes the multi-perspective notion of Black
encompasses bodies of knowledge and sets of institutional practices that actively grapple
with the central questions facing U.S Black women as a group” (p 31).
While Collins (2000) argued developing definitions and names as varied as womanist, Afrocentric feminism, Africana womanism, was less useful than “revisiting the reasons why Black feminist thought exists at all” (p. 22), Walker (1983) privileges the term womanist.

Walker (1983) maintains womanist is “referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behavior…a woman who loves other women, sexually and/ or non sexually. Appreciates and prefers women’s culture, women’s emotional flexibility. . . Loves herself regardless” (p. xi). Walker further asserts a womanist embraces a universal humanity while reflecting an autonomous femininity. Reflecting this notion Walker (1983) offers, “Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender. . . committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health” (p. xi-xii). Smith (1983) maintains:

Autonomy and separatism are fundamentally different. . . autonomy comes from a position of strength, separatism comes from a position of fear. When we are truly autonomous we can deal with other kinds of people, a multiplicity of issues, and with difference” (p. xl).

This notion of Womanism is created through the layers of multiple and intersecting identities and oppressions of Africana women (Brown, 1994). Central in the theoretical concept of womanism is a loving ethos. “It cannot be said often enough, a womanist is one who loves, who loves deeply, who loves strongly, who loves a community, a people into being…this is what we who call ourselves womanist must do” (Hayes, 1995, p. 42).
Nnameka (1998) offers insight into how Africana women may not self identify as feminists, yet embody the practices that the term feminist attempts to define. Nnameka (1998) also describes how limited notions of feminism(s) may not articulate the experiences of Africana women globally. “The majority of African women are not hung up on ‘articulating their feminism; they just do it” (Nnameka 1998, p.5). Hudson-Weems (1998) moves the discourse further by moving away from feminism as a descriptor of Africana women’s theorizing and practices. Hudson-Weems acknowledges Africana women who both ‘just do it’, and those who have forged space within feminism such as Africana feminism, however concludes feminism as a useless project for Africana women. Hudson-Weems (1998) articulates:

African feminism, is problematic, as it naturally suggests an alignment with feminism, a concept that has been alien to the plight of Africana women from its inception. This is particularly the case in reference to racism and classism, which are prevailing obstacles in the lives of Africana people. (p. 18-19)

Using the term feminism regardless of the appendage, Black or African, does not account for the pre-feminist works of Africana women such as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, women who committed their lives to the liberation of Africana people in addition to championing the rights of women (Hudson-Weems, 1998). “Therefore when Africana women come along and embrace feminism, appending it to their identity as Black feminists or African feminists, they are in reality duplicating the duplicate” (Hudson-Weems, 1998, p. 22). Hudson-Weems (1998) suggests Africana Womanism as a viable alternative. Africana Womanism is comprised of two parts, first recognizing the
ethnicity of the women, which according to Hudson-Weems is about “establishing her cultural identity, relates directly to her ancestry and land base-Africa” (p. 22). Secondly that this is not an Africana version of feminism. Hudson-Weems (1998) averred:

Africana Womanism is not Black feminism, African feminism, or Walker’s Womanism that some Africana women…embrace. Africana Womanism is an ideology created and designed for all women of African descent. It is grounded in African culture, and therefore, it necessarily focuses on the unique experiences, struggles, needs and desires of Africana women. (p. 24)

Though the perspective and ideological conception of Africana Womanism may appear polemical, it accurately reflects the diversity of thought in regards to the ideological terrain reflecting Africana women’s issues, concerns and experiences.

*Africana Women and Hiphop Feminism(s)*

As Africana women continued to make meaning of cultural experiences, Hiphop culture emerged as a site in which multiple ideological readings of Africana women have been developed and or extended from earlier movements of feminist/womanist perspectives. The notion that the personal is political, a mantra of the second wave, reverberates within Hiphop feminist literature. Collins (2006) suggests of this generation:

Their version of both the ‘personal’ and what constitutes the ‘political’ resembles yet differs dramatically from that expressed by feminists of the 1960s and 1970s. in this sense, these women may be the most visible face of the contemporary U.S feminist movement. (p. 162)
Despite assertions that “Hip-hop sensibilities are not sophisticated enough to understand the complexities of sexual expression or to probe the various connections between sexuality and spirituality, sexual variation, reproduction, and self” (Radford-Hill, 2002, p. 1087) there are numerous texts that explore these concerns as well as others on multiple levels.

Significant among texts dealing with gender as performance include: *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (1994), *Bulletproof Diva: Tales of Race, Sex and Hair* (1995), *Mama’s Girl* (1997), *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: My Life as a Hip-Hop Feminist* (1999), *Check it While I Wreck it, Blackwomanhood, Hip-Hop Culture and the Public Sphere* (2004) and *Prophets of the Hood* (2004). Though many of these texts address a multiplicity of concerns these emerge as importance sites of investigation regarding Hiphop and feminism(s). These texts are able to negotiate a balance of embracing older notions of feminism, while resisting and recreating an ideology befitting their generational concerns. Collins (2006) asserts:

Morgan, Jones, Chambers and other racial/ethnic women in the hip-hop generation who do manage to find feminism increasingly carve out a space that simultaneously accepts and rejects the tenets of feminism and nationalism. Specifically, they may be transforming the core feminist ideology that the personal is political in response to the challenges that confront them. (p. 162)

Rose (1994) articulates that women within Hiphop and rap music:

Interpret and articulate the fears, pleasures, and promises of young black women whose voices have been relegated to the margins of public discourse. They are
integral and resistant voices in rap music and popular music in general who sustain an ongoing dialogue with their audience…about sexual promiscuity, emotional commitment, infidelity, the drug trade, racial politics and black cultural history. (p. 146)

Rose (1994) addresses the genesis of Hiphop culture (discussed in the Hiphop section) and generally how Hiphop and Hiphop related ‘violence’ are reflections of mass media obsession with the spatial policing and or control of Africana people. Rose specifically addresses Black Women rappers and the sexual politics in rap music in the similarly titled chapter Bad Sistas. The text explores Africana women rappers as models for intervention strategies. Rose (1994) asserts “three central themes predominate in the works of black-female rappers: heterosexual courtship, the importance of the female voice, and mastery in women’s rap and black female public displays of physical and sexual freedom” (p. 147). These models and subsequent discussions within the music of Hiphop reveal connection with some concerns of third wave and other ideological perspectives in women’s movements.

Africana women, according to Jones (1995) should be central in outlining fluid definitions of womanhood, and activism. The text suggests the importance of the affirmation of multiple working class identities of Africana womanhood.

*Mamas Girl* (1997) following the approach of Jones (1995) works with a collection of short essays in discussing the complexities of being an Africana woman in a post civil rights landscape. Chambers through reflections of life experiences shares the development of a post civil rights identity. Chambers raised in a single parent home in Brooklyn, charts her tumultuous upbringing. The text explores Chambers hardships to writing and editorship posts at Glamour, The New York Times, Essence and Vogue magazine. During the exploration of these experiences Chambers imparts the course for a revised sense of womanist identity. A child to a Panamanian immigrant Chambers (1997) was often left to her own devices to create and sustain her own space. The text, though sparse on academic theoretical musings offers a lived world experience to facilitate contrasting notions of gender performance from one generation to another. While Chambers mothers worked and lived, mostly unhappily, as she proclaimed all I have is death and taxes (Chambers, 1997) Veronica sought to advance her lot in life through a relentless pursuit of perfection through academic rigor and avoiding the trappings of life in working class neighborhoods.

*When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost My life as a Hip Hop feminist* (1999) offers a mediation on feminist practices in the context of often hostile spaces, in other words Morgan (1999) negotiates Africana women’s empowerment in a male dominated space. Morgan (1999) articulates a political space for Hiphop consciousness that both
appreciates and critically examines the culture of Hiphop. The text while articulating a new Hiphop layer of feminist ideology remains grounded in the collective identity politics popularized by both historic Africana women and second wave Africana feminists. Morgan offers part Hiphop feminist manifesto and part autobiographical reflections aimed at both broadening the texture and possibly regarding Hiphop and feminism. Morgan (1999) asserts of her feminist sensibility:

I discovered that mine was not a feminism that existed comfortably in the black and white of things…I wanted a feminism that would allow me to explore who we are as women-not victims. One that claimed the powerful richness and delicious complexities inherent in being black girls now-sistas of the post-Civil Rights, post feminist, post soul, hip-hop generation. (p. 56)

When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost My life as a Hip Hop feminist (1999) is widely recognized as the first Hiphop feminist text. As a result of being one of the first Hiphop feminist texts Morgan (1999) acknowledges, “the quest for power is not a solo trip. This book only starts the journey” (p. 232). Therefore When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost My life as a Hip Hop feminist (1999) serves as a roadmap highlighting areas to be investigated further for future research and critical reflection.

Combing the insights of a Hiphop head and a rigorous academician, Prophets of the Hood Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop (1999) emerges as an analysis of the transformational agency of Hiphop culture. In Perry’s work, the intersection where profound and problematic meet regarding Hiphop, is the place in which the text provides substantial discourse. Rather than provide the static binary of good and bad that has
become the best adjective for scholarly texts examining Hiphop culture, Perry provides a reading of the politics of discourse within rap lyrics. *Prophets of the Hood* (1999) “concentrates…on the aesthetic, artistic, theoretical, and ideological aspects of the music, working from the premise that it has been undervalued as an art per se, even as its cultural influence has often been noted” (p. 3). From this standpoint the work weaves through aesthetic, artistic and cultural issues, while providing an intellectual barometer for critical use, research and reflection of Hiphop culture.


> This vision of a public sphere necessarily moves beyond what Habermas initially envisioned a public sphere could be…in order to fully understand how intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality further complicate understandings of the public sphere I explore issues of spectacle, representation, and the public/private split in relation to Black public culture. (p. 16)

Pough (2004) uses the Hiphop notion of bringing wreck to theorize the complexities of public space Africana women inhabit and use to construct/reconstruct meaning. The concept of wreck implies:
Fighting, recreation, skill, boasting, or violence... wreck sheds new light on the things Blacks have had to do in order to obtain and maintain a presence in the larger public sphere, namely, fight hard and bring attention to their skill and right to be in the public sphere. (p. 17)

In the concluding chapters Pough (2004) outlines an effective set of strategies for the implementation of rap music as a theoretical bridge for concepts in the classroom and creating the space for imagining social change. Pough (2004) muses out loud about the conflicting spaces occupied by Africana people, “spaces of respect and admiration are juxtaposed with spaces of demonization and blame” (p, 216). The text offers an insightful analysis of the issues facing Africana women in particular and Africana culture in general as it negotiates Hiphop culture and the public sphere.

Hiphop Culture

The growing literature encompassing Hiphop scholarship represents a wide body of study. Rather than provide a wide, unfocused, somewhat relevant review of this material, this section includes literature focusing on the origins of Hiphop as a culture and significant texts framing Hiphop as critical pedagogy.

Citing the origins of Hiphop is an imprecise science. Hiphop represents the confluence of music, art, history, and politics. Hiphop emerges from various spaces on a geographical and ideological map. Hiphop is the sum of its parts. Philosophically the beginnings lie within the continuum of Africana cultural practices that have informed Africana cultural expressions since time immemorial. Specific consideration must be given to the various aspects of Hiphop that have origins in different places.
While observers of the culture would cite Bronx, New York as its physical birthplace (Rose, 1994; Morgan, 1995; Kitwana, 2002; Pough, 2004; Chang, 2005; Ogbar, 2007) it is equally valid to cite West Africa as a cultural genesis, or Jazz and Blues music as a rhythmic precedent. Thus defining a bookend history is an act of imposition of sorts. As Chang observes (2005)

The act of determining a group of people by placing a beginning and ending around them is a way to impose a narrative. They are interesting and necessary fictions because they allow claims to be staked around ideas. But generations are fictions nonetheless. (p.1)

Precursor to Hiphop

The origin of Hiphop includes the antecedent pulse of African tropes used to preserve and express African identities that span the global Africana Diaspora. Cultural practices that Trueba (2000) maintains in Noels Multicultural Education “can be conceived as a dynamic process that is reconstructed in the very activities whose purposes are to transmit survival skills and the rationale for using such skills” (Noel, 2003, p. 89). Hiphop similar to earlier Africana expressive traditions represents a hybrid of past and present forms. Comprehensive studies such as Berlins Slaves without Masters: the Free Negro in the antebellum South (1981) suggests the institution of enslavement did not erase or destroy the cultural legacy of African pasts. In fact the survival of the ‘New World’ rested in the retention of these earlier cultural forms often disguised within the European context many Africana people were forced to enter. As a resistance motif Africana people, “survived an oppressive existence by creating new
expressive forms out of African traditions, and they brought relevance to European-
American customs by reshaping them to conform to African aesthetic ideals” (Hayes,
2000, p. 156). The act and practice of cultural fluidity preserved Africanisms, African
derived cultural practices, in the various ways Africana people express themselves.

Following this trajectory of cultural practice Hiphop continues to produce these
concepts. Hiphop is a hybrid mixture of cultural predecessors while maintaining a level
of unique authenticity situated in Africana experience. Hiphop, similar to how Levine
(2007) describes Africana culture is:

The product of interaction between the past and present. Its toughness and
resiliency are determined not by a culture’s ability to withstand change, which
indeed may be a sign of stagnation not life, but by its ability to react creatively
and responsively to the realities of a new situation (Levine, 2007, p. 5).

Keyes (2008) writes of this process as “cultural reversioning: the foregrounding
(consciously and unconsciously) of African centered concepts” (p. 7). The cultural,
social, musical as well as the philosophical foundation of Hiphop can be traced to
specific Africana practices, particularly immediately following the Maafa or what is
commonly referred to as the Middle Passage.

The continuum of an African consciousness in America manifests itself in the
evolution of an African-American culture. The music, dance, folklore, religion,
language, and other expressive forms associated with the culture of the slaves
were transmitted orally to subsequent generations of American blacks. (Hayes,
2000, p. 156)
These specific practices include what Maultsby (2000) has suggested are:

defined as a core of conceptual approaches. Fundamental to these approaches is
the axiom that music making is conceived as a communal/ participatory group
activity. Black people create, interpret, and experience music out of an African
frame of reference-one that shapes musical sound, interpretation, and behavior
and makes Black music traditions through the world a unified whole. (p. 172)

This conceptual framework is not to suggest other communities of color have not been
involved in the emergent cultural expression known as Hiphop. “Puerto Ricans from the
South Bronx and El Barrio have been involved in breakdancing, graffiti writing and rap
music since the beginnings of Hip hop back in the 1970s” (Flores, 2000, p. 115).

However it is to situate the historic centrality of African derived practices within Hiphop.
This foregrounding of experience helps shape the various musical traditions prior to
Hiphop from Blues, Jazz, Rock, and Funk among various other derivative sub-genres.
This context provides an identity, which as suggested earlier is both historic and
contemporary. As Krims (2001) illustrates:

Cultural identity is not a tie with some pure and distant past, so much as it is a
matter of continual appropriation, revision, and creation in the present, with an
eye toward the future. This creation in turn, is necessarily imbricated in the
intersections among what used to be considered ‘cultures’. (p. 94)

Just as Africans had done in prior centuries when first encountering European culture,
Hiphop creates out of the environments in which it exists, and combines various elements
to present a new form. Gomez (1998) wrote:
It is the synthesis that best characterizes the activity within the volitive realm of acculturation. In music, art, folklore, language and even social structure, there is sufficient evidence to conclude people of African descent were carefully selecting elements of various cultures, both African and European, issuing into combinations of creativity and innovation. Such a process is consistent with the nature of viable cultures; that is, they have the capacity to change and adapt when exposed to external stimuli. (p. 10)

Embedded within the performative texts of Hiphop are the seeds of resistance. The African response to oppression manifests with the body being the site of resistance. As a result music, dance, and oral performance figure prominently in opposition patterns. Therefore music and the resulting culture are not solely intended to be pleasing but rather to reflect the realities of a given moment in time. As Bebey (1992) reports:

> The objective of African music is not necessarily to produce sounds agreeable to the ear, but to translate everyday experiences into living sound. In a musical environment whose constant purpose is to depict life, nature, or the supernatural, the musician wisely avoids using beauty as [her/]his criterion because no criterion could be more arbitrary. (p. 115)

These influences reverberate throughout the expressions of Hiphop culture. Perhaps most notably are the influences stemming from the precursor of Hiphop, Jazz music. Jazz musicians have been noted for their highly rhythmic complexity and their ability to reflect the themes of Africana life. Within Jazz culture the call and response technique is used to “establish a base for musical change and rhythmic tension” (Hayes, 2000, p. 163).
Charters and Kunstadt (1981) in the text, *Jazz: a History of the New York Scene*, remarking on this rhythmic tension suggest that Count “Basie’s men played short, fierce riffs. Their riff patterns were not even melodic elements, they were just repetitive rhythmic figures set against each other in the sections of the band” (p. 288). This element makes up what Floyd (1990) would refer to as musical signifyin(g). Ramsey (2003) referencing Floyd asserts:

Musical signifyin(g), according to Floyd, reflects Gates’s literary usage but expands it to include the use of key ‘figures’ and gestures within a musical work. These gestures include calls, cries, hollers, call-and-response devices, additive rhythms, polyrhythms, heterophony, pendular thirds, blue notes, bent notes, elisions, hums, moans, grunts, vocables, oral declamations, interjections, off-beat phrases, parallel intervals, constant repetition, metronomic pulse, timbral distortions, musical individuality within collectivity, game rivalry, melisma, and musical forms such as 12 bar blues. Floyd subsumes the rhetorical use of these tropes under the rubric ‘Call and Response’. (p. 21)

These call and response tropes represent a range of expression, performance and identity within Hiphop culture. Thusly, Africana cultural practices inform, influence and provide a framework for Hiphop culture.

Prior to beginning with the Hiphop narrative that it is a subculture with origins in the Bronx, New York circa the mid 1960s, it is essential to reference factors inclusive of its historical evolvement. Though Hiphop’s recognized first DJ, Kool Herc, asserts the origins of Hiphop are more strongly associated with the work of the Last Poets, James
Brown and the funk music of the late 1960s and 1970s, it is important to note the influence, albeit diminutive in comparison to United States Africana forces. Although Hiphop as a culture starts in the state of New York, Hiphop culture encompasses four core elements with histories in various sites (Kelly, 1994; Rose, 1994; Chang, 2005; Strode & Wood, 2008).

Kingston, Jamaica provides detail into some of the social and political origins of Hiphop. Despite United States influences on Jamaican culture it is important to note that there are uniquely Jamaican influences within Hiphop culture.

In 1962 when Jamaica gained independence from Great Britain there was a moment of hope that the island nation could be self-governed and shake off the shackles of colonization. However Jamaica would find out, as most African nations eventually do, ‘independence’ is fraught with irony.

During the period following Jamaican independence the economy relied on former colonizers for vitality. This left the island nation in the precarious position of being free, without being free to determine a self-sufficient economy destiny. The lack of economic freedom in a highly capitalistic global economy is much of what tangible freedom means (White, 2006).

After a visit in April of 1966 by Halie Selassie (H.I.M) King of Ethiopia, and a song contest, the annual Jamaican Festival Song Competition, the importance of music began to take on new meanings (Nettleford, 1978; Stolzoff, 2000; Katz, 2000; Chang, 2005; White, 2006; Moskowitz, 2007). Given the importance of musical culture, and iconic figures like Bob Marley, it would not be long before music began to play a role in
politics. The Roots generation, those coming of age in Jamaican society immediately following independence, “reacted to Jamaica’s national crisis, global restructuring and imperialist posturing and intensified street violence” (Chang, 2005, p. 23) with a musical and cultural response.

Culturally relevant music and the activities associated with it, such as style of dress, became known as dancehall culture. With the sparse availability of live band talent, due to high demand for the tourism trade, the space for DJs and sound systems emerged. Live jazz was a popular form, however Jazz appealed to and was primarily enjoyed by more affluent populations in Jamaica (Katz, 2000; White, 2006).

Dancehall culture and the sound system emerged as the dominant form for both working and middle class Jamaicans. The sound systems gained popularity in the 1940s (Stolzoff, 2000) and served as link to politics and culture by the 1960s. The sound systems were:

Custom-built in Jamaica or brought back from the USA, the huge portable systems used hefty amplifiers and public address systems to blast music through the rows of massive speaker boxes. . . the sound systems selector would spin the hottest American rhythm-and-blues. . . egged on by the over the top microphone commentary from deejays that reveled in comic exhortations of verbal wit. (p.11)

These sound systems produced competition among the DJs, massive sound clashes, in which selectors would vive for the affection of the audiences (Light, 1999; Katz, 2000; White, 2006). Armed with the skill of well-timed record play selection and massive
sound systems, selectors both electrified crowds and provided an impetus for cultural exchange through music.

The beginnings of the Jamaican sound system, although not an unbroken line, serve as a precursor to understanding Hip hop culture. While creating viable alternative space for agency is a political act, the sound system and dancehall had a more direct stimulation in the Jamaican political context.

Chang (2005) suggests:

> Every Jamaican politician knew what every Jamaican musician knew-the sound systems were crucial to their success. . . . The fight for political dominance between the conservative Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and leftist People’s National Party (PNP) seemed inevitably to turn on the mood of the people in the dance. All any prime minister had to do to gauge the winds was to listen closely to the week’s 45 rpm single releases; they were like political polls set to melody and riddim. (30-31)

In addition to tensions caused by the fractures between political parties the pressures of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) caused Jamaica to mortgage their future on impossible structural adjustment policies which forced Jamaica into perpetual poverty and subservience to IMF and WB foreign interests (Black, 2001). As the 1960s gave way to the 1970s Jamaican hopes for true independence were dashed with both internal and external challenges (Manley, 1982, Nettleford, 1989). Jamaican Prime Minster Michael Manley without alternative measures was essentially handcuffed when he signed Jamaica’s first loan agreement with the IMF in 1977.
(Manley, 1982). As a result of economic challenges gangs began to proliferate and enforce the rule of political parties that supported them. “In 1973 gun violence broke out between rival gangs in the Kingston yards” (Chang, 2005, p. 32) intensifying the already electric atmosphere.

The tense events of the political landscape were captured and preserved in the musical culture of the period (Nettleford, 1989; Lloyd, 2000; Katz, 2000, 2003). As Stolzoff (2000) suggests:

While neither party was especially successful in winning over the masses to their ideological visions, their respective political philosophies and policies toward developing a ‘national’ culture influenced the nature of the relationship between the political apparatus and dancehall culture. (p. 73)

Though the sound system and dancehall culture had a large influence on the political landscape, political parties “harbored a belief in the inferiority of black lower class culture” (Nettleford as cited in Stolzoff, 2000, p. 75). Despite misgivings about the sound system and dancehall culture, these spaces created the groundings for marginality as source of resistance that Hiphop culture would take up in the United States.

The intensity of the sound system and dancehall culture helped foster two major developments in Hiphop. The dub plate and music related culture focused on social change. Dub plates were acetate pressings, or records, featuring local artists. These dub plates were only available to DJ’s providing sound at radio stations and yard parties. Stolzoff (2000) averred:
The dub plate was cut directly from a tape to a lathe that carves the grooves into the disc. Hence, these records were one of a kind. . . No one expected that a market would develop—let alone a gigantic international market—for these records.

(p.58)

The dub plate exclusive was the precursor to the concept of rap music exclusives and 12-inch singles. Exclusives were what made a DJ’s identity and the 12-inch single would help to spread the popularity of rap music.

In addition to the dub plate, the sound system music and dancehall culture was a site of social change and intergenerational as well as cross-racial and class dialogue. Jamaican sound system pioneer Bunny Goodison (as cited in Stolzoff, 2000) remarked “I think the sound system did something about educating and sensitizing people uptown, you know some good happen down there [downtown] sic too” (p.70). Reflecting on the impact of the sound system culture Stolzoff (2000) affirmed:

Recognizing that something significant was happening in the downtown dancehalls was not trivial. The slightest fissures in the cultural hegemony of the middle and upper classes was all that was needed for the practitioners of dancehall culture to gain a sense of symbolic and ideological momentum, capturing the imagination not only of the lower classes but of the nation as a whole. (p. 70)

These events were not lost on a young Jamaican who would later migrate to the Bronx, New York. Clive Campbell, Kool DJ Herc, is recognized as the father of HipHop (Rose, 1994; Perkins, 1996; Ogg and Upshal, 1997; Frickle and Ahearn, 2002; Foreman and

Since many of the impoverished conditions in the Kingston slums existed in the Bronx, Herc’s sound system experiences, with uniquely African American culture made a fitting transition.

Hiphop Beginnings

Although author and former editor of, *The Source*, Bikari Kitwana suggests Hiphop could have begun anywhere (personal interview, May 27, 2005) because the same oppressive conditions described the lives of most people of color in any state, I would argue to the contrary. Hiphop begins in New York State because of the size of New York, the attraction to diverse immigrant communities, and major media market potential. New York as a birth site of Hiphop is central because of the cross fertilization of African identities informed by Caribbean, African, Puerto-Rican, and African-American experiences. Also the economic instability of Bronx, New York circa the late 1960s created fertile ground for a subculture of the oppressed. “The streets of the South Bronx, was a model for postindustrial urban blight: it was plagued by poverty, unemployment, and underemployment, limited affordable/substandard housing, declining social services, and an increase in violent crime” (Cheney, 2005, p. 9). Statistically Bronx youth unemployment rates led the national average, in addition to a large loss of the industrial sector of the Bronx (Rose, 1994; Chang, 2005; Kugelberg, 2007). With the
building of the Cross Bronx Expressway, 60,000 residents homes were eliminated. “The middle-class population of the Bronx left pretty much overnight, an exodus which led to the impoverished portion of the population spreading further and further north from their enclave in the South Bronx” (Kugelberg, 2007, p. 38).

While these conditions existed across the nation, the Bronx, given its multicultural make-up and location served as significant. As Marrero suggested, “I think we could say that the Bronx, more than any part of the city and the nation represents the total pathology of what has been happening to major cities-except that it has suffered from it on a grander scale” (Marrero, as cited in, Severo, New York Times, 1977). In addition to economic challenges and the hybridity of cultures, the proximity to major media outlets situated in New York provided publicity and access needed for the growth of Hiphop culture.

Hiphop culture represents a wide array of concepts and is constantly in flux. KRS (2002) suggests Hiphop is:

A term that describes the independent collective consciousness of a specific group of inner-city people. Ever growing…Hiphop is not just music and dance, nor is Hiphop a product to be bought and sold…Hiphop is an independent and unique community, an empowering and international culture. (p.179-180)

Noted historian and long time observer of Hiphop culture Davey D (2002) suggests that Hiphop is:

An art form that includes deejaying [cutttin & scratchin’] sic emceeing/rappin’. Breakdancing and grafitti art. These art forms as we know them today originated
In The South Bronx section of New York City...Hip Hop has been one of the main contributing factors that helped curtail gang violence due to the fact many adults found it preferable to channel their anger and aggressions into these art forms which eventually became the ultimate expression of one’s self.

(http://www.daveyd.com/whatishipdav.html)

The three men responsible and given credit with originating critical aspects of Hiphop culture were, Clive Campbell (Kool Herc), Grand Master Flash (Joseph Saddler), Kevin Donavan (Afrika Bambaataa) suggest Hiphop is a cultural movement encompassing arts, a worldview, and a desire to better oneself through progressive means (Davey D, 2002; Fricke & Ahearn, 2002; Foreman and Neal, 2004; Cheney, 2005; Strode and Wood, 2008).

Discussing Hiphop and rap music, a component of Hiphop culture, Rose (1994) offers the following observation that:

Rap music brings together a tangle of some of the most complex social, cultural and political issues in contemporary American society. Raps contradictory articulations are not signs of absent intellectual clarity; they are a common feature of community and popular cultural dialogues that always offer more than one cultural, social or political viewpoint...[Hiphop is], an African-American and Afro-Caribbean youth culture. (p. 2)

Hiphop is a means of empowerment and the expression of oppressed creative intelligence. Hiphop practitioners, Hipphoppas or Hip Hop heads refer to Hiphop as a
culture and way of life (Wimsatt, 1994; Foreman, 2002; Foreman & Neal, 2004; Coleman, 2005). Rose (1994) offers that Hiphop:

Is a cultural form that attempts to negotiate the experiences of marginalization, brutally truncated opportunity, and oppression within the cultural imperatives of African-American and Caribbean history, identity, and community…the tension between the cultural fractures produced by postindustrial oppression and the binding ties of black cultural expressivity that sets the critical frame for the development of [Hiphop] (p. 21).

Hiphop Ideology

Though the first Hiphop event did not happen until 1973 (Sedgwick & Cedar, 2007), I suggest 1965 as an important year in the evolution of a Hiphop ideology. A Hiphop ideology, are fluid shared beliefs, ideas and values, both formal and informal that ground the experiences, practices, activities associated with the development of Hiphop. Mapping this ideology begins with those born during this period. The Hiphop generation begins with the year 1965. Kitwana (2002) writes, “young Blacks born between 1965-1984 are the first to have grown up in a post-segregation [United States]” (Kitwana, 2002, p. xiii). Secondly 1965 marks the physical transition of Malcolm X (Al Hajj Malik Al Shabazz) a central influence in Hiphop ideology spanning the realms of education, transformational leadership and culture. I locate a Hiphop ideology as the site from which Hiphop philosophy would grow. A Hiphop philosophy is a consciousness informed by the generational concerns and experiences of those coming of age in the post-Civil Rights
era. Those coming of age during this period have been referred to as the Hiphop
generation (Kitwana, 2002).

With Malcolm’s physical transition many young people began to look at his body of
intellectual work as a foundational source and guide for a worldview and ideological
perspective.

Malcolm X alone has become a genuine cultural icon to millions of young
African Americans since the early 1990s. Dozens of prominent performance
artists within contemporary, urban ‘[Hiphop] culture’ began to draw upon the
words and image of Malcolm X in their works. (The Malcolm X project at
Columbia University: Overview, 2007)

Malcolm represented to many within the Hiphop generation the best example of
expressions of prophetic imagination, creative aptitude, and a profound understanding of
prevailing forms of injustice. Malcolm X not only forecasted coming events in the United
States, with regard to a racial and class analysis; his oratory would influence the ideology
of consciousness in the founders of Hiphop and some of the cultures most profound
thinkers. In chapter 19 entitled 1965, in the Autobiography of Malcolm X as told to Alex
Haley, Malcolm X referencing the significance of 1965 asserts:

In this year, 1965, I am certain that more- and worse-riots are going to erupt, in
yet more cities, in spite of the conscience-salving Civil Rights Bill. The reason is
that the cause of these riots, the racist malignancy in America, has been too long
unattended. (Haley, 1993, p. 387)
Malcolm’s words would echo in the voice of Chuck D, front man of the group Public Enemy when Chuck D (1997) remarked that:

In America as well as Africa and every place on the planet where Black people exist, we must realize that we have to save ourselves and stop relying on other people to come up with great answers for us…Here in America they’re asking Charles Barkley. He can’t be serious about thinking he can be governor of Alabama. Its fun to say, its fun to be joking, but do you think those crackers love him because of his mind? (p. 177)

Expanding on this notion of a Hiphop philosophy, KRS One suggests in the film Letter to the President (2005), the old Civil Rights guard wanted inclusion into America we said (expletive) America. These readings of the sociopolitical environment were informed by lived experiences of youth during the post-Civil Rights period. Equally valid as a site for ideological grounding, was the Black Arts Movement. Larry Neal suggests of this movement that it

is radically opposed to any concept of the artist that alienates [her/]him from [her/] his community. Black Art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept. As such, it envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America (Hayes, 2000, p. 236).

As an outgrowth of these influences a Hiphop philosophy developed. As Kitwana (2002) asserted this philosophy represented:

Those young African Americans born between 1965 and 1984 who came of age in the eighties and nineties and who share a specific set of values and attitudes. At
the core are our thoughts about family, relationships, child rearing, career, racial identity, race relations, and politics. Collectively, these views make up a complex worldview that has not been concretely defined. (p. 4)

While Hiphop ideology and philosophy are fluid they emanate from the expression and participation in Hiphop culture at a particular historical moment.

Hiphop culture is constitutive of nine expressive elements; the DJ, Emcee (rappers), B-girl/B-boy (popularly known as break dancing), writers (also known as graffiti artists), knowledge, fashion, language, beatboxing, and entrepreneurs. These elements represented a youth culture working class response to the end of the initiatives outlined by President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society agenda and de-facto discrimination primarily based on race and class (Baker, 1993; Perkins, 1996). The cornerstone of Hiphop is referred to as the elements. The elements, which include, Graffiti, DJ’ing, B-girl/boying, Emceeing/rap, served as the core for the creation of Hiphop culture.

Graffiti

Graffiti is widely recognized as the first element of Hiphop culture, although scholars and writers often disagree on exact dates (Chalfant & Cooper, 1984; Stewart, 1989; IGTimes, 1998). Graffiti was and is a means of political expression and street gangs territorial markers. As Witten & White (2001) stated:

For each kid who became involved in writing, the time spent in the train yards is a unique learning experience. In the darkness of a subway tunnel, simple
concepts like scale, composition, and execution take on different meanings and relevance. (p. 1)

While graffiti movements outside of New York predate the 1960s, writing during this period defines the Hiphop style (Israel, 2002; @149th St, 2007).

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during the 1960s began the tradition of bombing, a term for getting ones name up and noticed on walls. The writers who are credited with beginning bombing are CORNBREAD and COOL EARL. There is no consensus about this art form making a purposeful transition to New York (@149th St, 2007).

The origins of this DIY impressionism or ‘guerrilla art’ are variously credited to Greek teenager TAKI 183 and Jean-Michel Basquiat, aka Samo, though territorial wall markings were a fixture of New York’s urban environment in the previous decade…its growth sprang from a quest for identity and recognition common to all [Hiphop]’s constituent forms. (Ogg & Upshal, 1999, p. 19-20)

Demetrius, known by his nickname, TAKI 183, was not the first writer or even the first king, a title bestowed upon skilled writers of notoriety, but the first to be recognized outside the newly formed subculture. Other writers such as JULIO 204, TRACEY 168, FRANK 207 and JOE 136 are also recognized as some of the pioneering writers.

The underground culture of writing migrated to all five boroughs. Writing became more detailed, intricate and moved from streets to subways and eventually to art galleries around the world. The writing environment was highly competitive and this spirited atmosphere led to the development of actual styles. Broadway style was introduced by Philadelphia's TOPCAT 126. PHASE 2 later developed Softie letters, more
commonly referred to as Bubble letters. Bubble letters and Broadway style were the earliest forms of actual pieces, artwork beyond a personalized signature, and the basis for further developments. These developments led to unique lettering styles, characters, and completing an entire subway car from top to bottom, known as Wild style (Cooper & Chalfant, 1984).

The period of 1975-77 is generally regarded as the end of the first phase of graffiti writing. Many styles had been developed providing a space for new writers to add new perspectives and further advance technique (Hagar, 1984; Toop, 1984, 1991; Israel, 2002; @ 149th St, 2007). Post 1985 the writing culture had changed dramatically with many writers opting exclusively for gallery and international art shows instead of train yards. In addition New York began to crack down on graffiti writing with anti-graffiti legislation, graffiti proof trains and tighter Mass Transit security (Chalfant, 1982). The impact of crack cocaine was also a factor in the decline of subway writing (Israel, 2002). Writing remains an integral part of Hiphop culture as it provided an alternative to schools that lacked art programs. Many contemporary writers opt for walls instead of trains and as part of Hiphop shows performing live pieces during musical sets.

The DJ

The first Hiphop DJ started in a Bronx apartment building recreation room. Bronx resident Cindy Campbell decided to throw a back to school party (Perkins, 1996). Following in the tradition of rent parties popular at the time, Cindy held a party in the small recreation room at 1520 Segwick Avenue in the Bronx on August 11th 1973 (Sedgwick & Cedar, 2007). What made this party unique was Cindy’s big brother, Clive
Campbell. Campbell, the Father of Hip hop culture, was born in West Kingston Jamaica and immigrated to the Bronx in 1967 at 12 years old. Clive is known to the Hip hop community as DJ Kool Herc. As Herc played music he noticed dancers getting especially excited during certain parts of a song where most of the music dropped out and there was nothing but the beat and the drums, or the break (Flores, 2000; Israel, 2002; Chang, 2005).

Relying on his knowledge of dub toasting and chants from reggae and ska music, Herc decided he would extend the break beats by playing two copies of the same record to make the break last longer, often selecting James Brown and The Jimmy Castor Bunch as choices (Light, 1999). Kool Herc, as cited on Davey D’s Hip hop Corner, remarked:

> The whole chemistry of that came from Jamaica. . . I was born in Jamaica and I was listening to American music in Jamaica. . . My favorite artist was James Brown. That's who inspired me. . . A lot of the records I played was by James Brown. When I came over here I just put it in the American style and a perspective for them to dance to it. In Jamaica all you needed was a drum and bass. So what I did here was go right to the 'yoke'. I cut off all anticipation and played the beats. I'd find out where the break in the record was at and prolong it and people would love it. So I was giving them their own taste and beat percussion (D., 2000).

The people waiting for the break introduced a new style of dance doing moves called up-rocking or hitting the ground to go off (Frickle & Ahearn, 2002). Herc named these young dancers “b-boys” and “b-girls”. B-boy and B-girl was short for Break boys/girls, it
also was slang for doing something beyond the norm and described out of control behavior (Silver & Chalfant, 1982; Israel, 2002). The parties grew Herc had to move to the South Bronx in Cedar Park where electricity from the street lights would power his massive sound system dubbed the Herculord and accompanying larger speakers (Rose, 1994; Light, 1999; Sedgwick & Cedar, 2007). DJ Kool Herc is recognized as the Father of Hiphop although there were other notable DJs such as DJ Hollywood and Eddie Cheba around at the time (Foreman & Neal, 2002). Herc is cited as the originator for the unique sound which would become the Hiphop sound. In addition to his use of break beats Herc performed what he dubbed the Merry-Go-Round, which consisted of using two turntables at one time.

It is important to note that while there are significant names in Hiphop history, that there are many individuals who contributed to the culture of Hiphop whose names may not be known to history books. As an example of the unnamed, there are the people who attended the first jams in the park, or the people who helped to spread mix tapes from borough to borough both legally and illegally. As with any culture, Hiphop was created by community.

Afrika Bambaataa is considered to be the God Father of Hiphop Culture his presence serves as a spiritual force within the culture (Perkins, 1996; Chang, 2005). Bam, as he is affectionately referred to, grew up in the South Bronx in the late 60s and early 70s, once called Little Vietnam for its rough streets. Bam lived in the Bronx River Projects and rose to divisional gang leader of the Black Spades. After winning an essay contest Bambaataa
took a life-changing trip to South Africa. During his trip he was inspired by the story of Shaka Zulu (Light, 1999; Ogbar, 2007; Strode & Wood, 2007).

Shaka Zulu, a leader of the South African Zulu Nation, was known for his role in the Dingiswayo army where he became its highest commander. Though Shaka Zulu’s history is one marked by his fierceness in battle and take no prisoners approach to expanding Zulu territory, Bam was most impressed by his resistance to the British in their attempts to colonize the Zulu Nation as represented in the film Zulu (1964) starring Michael Cain. Bam, inspired by the film, decided to revolutionize The Black Spades (Light, 1999; Foreman & Neal, 2004; Chang, 2005). Bam transformed the Spades into the Universal Zulu Nation, after a brief stint being known as the Organization, a group of socially conscious people of various ethnicities interested in the development of Hiphop Culture.

Bam’s work continues to be focused on the spread of Hiphop Culture and challenging the one-dimensional notion that Hiphop is just rap and exclusive to one racial group and negative subject matter. His name Bambaataa, translates to ‘affectionate leader’ (Chang, 2005; Ogbar, 2007). In addition to his cultural contributions Bam is also known as the ‘Master of Records’ a title given to him for his ability to find obscure albums of any and all genres and make them palatable to Hiphop sensibilities.

By 1977, Bambaataa had begun organizing block parties all around the South Bronx. His genre bending appreciation for music introduced electro-funk in rap records. In 1982, he released Planet Rock on Tommy Boy records with Soul Sonic Force. The
song is the foundation for drum and bass, electro-hop, and a host of other sub genres within rap music.

Early journalists documenting the rise of Hiphop suggest Bam showed the world Hiphop culture, as he was responsible for organizing the first Hiphop tour (Cepeda, 2004; Chang, 2005). Although *Rappers Delight* (1979) was the first single that caught mainstream attention, Bam represented the core of Hiphop culture. Through Afrika Bambatta’s efforts the possibility of Hiphop providing an alternative space for education, anti sexism, and critical pedagogy began to surface.

The third of the trinity of Hiphop pioneers includes Joseph Saddler. Saddler, better known as Grandmaster Flash, was raised in the Bronx, New York. Flash began studying top DJs of the day, particularly DJ Kool Herc. Flash, by developing a series of innovations, pioneered the use of the record turntable as an instrument. Flash developed, the Quick Mix Theory, which included the technique of ‘cutting’, manually moving a record back and forth, that laid the foundation for DJ Grandwizard Theodore to create ‘scratching’. Cutting and scratching include the manual manipulation of a record to produce unique sound effects. Both techniques are now staples in turntablism, a term coined by DJs to describe the skills associated with the art of DJ’ing.

Flash also created the first beat machine, a modified home made audio mixer that could produce sound effects. In addition to his other innovations, Flash created a “Peeka-Boo” switch, which allowed the DJ to hear the mix before audiences (GrandMaster Flash, 2006). 1981’s *The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel* was the first record to feature complex cuts and scratches, creating a collage of different songs
to make a new composition. This song displayed the creative innovation of one of Hiphops’ early DJs. Despite his popularity as a solo DJ, his collaboration with a group of emcees, the *Furious Five*, (Melle Mel, Kid Creole, Cowboy, Mr Ness, and Rahiem) is more widely known.

**Emceeing/Rap**

Although often mistaken as synonymous with Hiphop, rap music is an element within Hiphop culture. “The exact origins of rap music are difficult to determine. According to . . . Afrika Bambaataa, Grandmaster Flash, and Kool Herc, rap music appeared around 1974 in the streets of the South Bronx” (Cheney, 2005, p. 9). Emceeing or rapping consists of spoken words rhythmically set to music or acapella. Black Arts Movement poets, including, The Last Poets, particularly the album *Hustler’s Corner*, The Watts Prophets, and Gil Scott Herron, are considered forerunners of contemporary rap music. Afrika Bambatta suggests:

Rap in general dates all the way back to the motherland, where tribes would use call-and-response chants. In the 1930s and 1940s, you had Cab Calloway pioneering his style of Jazz rhyming, The sixties you had the love style of rapping, with Issac Hayes, Barry White and the poetry style of rapping with the Last Poets, the Watts Prophets and the militant style of rapping with brothers like Malcolm X and Minister Farrakhan. In the 60s you also had ‘the Name Game’, a funny rap by Shirley Ellis, and radio djs who would rhyme and rap before a song came on. (Perkins, 1996, p. 2)
The first emcees (rapper) were Coke La Rock and Clark Kent who provided the framework and early stages of contemporary rap (Light, 1999). Providing an alternative space for women and girls, Sha-rock emerged as an early female emcee (Strode & Wood, 2008). In 1977 Sha-rock joined the formerly all male group, The Funky Four (plus one). With emceeing being a heavily male space, her participation shattered the all male paradigm. Sha-rock was not the “good for a female emcee”, the space that sexism grants in a male dominated arena, she was talented-period. Sha-rock battled head to head with Melle Mel and The Furious Five, considered one of the best of the early rap groups, and earned respect and credibility. Sha-rock was also a part of the historic episode of Saturday Night Live, February 14th, 1981 when Hiphop appeared on national television for the first time (Jenkins, Wilson, M, C., Alvarez, Rollins, 1999).

Rap, once dismissed as a passing fad, began to develop to include a variety of significant factors. Dyson (2004) notes, “As it evolved, rap began to describe and analyze the social, economic, and political factors that led to its emergence and development: drug addiction, police brutality, teen pregnancy, and various forms of material deprivation” (p. 61).

Rap music was the space in which many young people of color could express their discontent with social alienation and marginality through spoken word. Rap music provided an audio reflection of the conditions that created Hiphop culture and rap music. Dyson (1996) states that Hiphop:

Was born in these bleak conditions. Hip-hoppers joined pleasure and rage while Turning the details of their difficult lives into craft and capital. . . At their best,
rappers shape the tortuous twists of urban fate into lyrical elegies. They represent lives swallowed by too little love or opportunity. They represent themselves and their peers with aggrandizing anthems that boast their ingenuity and luck in surviving. The art of ‘representing’ that is much ballyhooed in hip-hop is the witness of those left to tell the afflicted’s story. (p.177)

In addition to these areas of focus since the inception of rap music from emcees like Grandmaster Caz, Kool Moe Dee, Busy Bee, and others, rap music has developed into various styles and patterns. These patterns reflect geographic similarities, style of narrative and subject matter as well as the style of the accompanying musical production. Some of the classification of rap includes; old school, true school, west coast, southern rap, chopped and screwed in addition to categories such as Christian rap and conscious rap.

**B-Boy/Girl**

B-Boy/B-girls, popularized in mass media as break-dancing or breakers, represent the dance aspect of Hip hop culture. B-girl/boying began when Kool Herc noticed groups of dancers who would dance at the break section of albums he played during parities (Light, 1999; Israel, 2002). Recreating a call and response dynamic the break in the music consisted of heavy instrumentation which provided space for improvisation for both the DJ and dancer with each relying on the other for energy in the total performance. These dancers began to be known as ‘break girls/boys’.
This form of dance consists of moves such as top-rock, power moves, freezes or suicides. These moves vary from standing positions to the use of hands and various forms of gymnastic styled kicks, sweeps and back spins (Israel, 2002). Though no formal ties have been established scholars and students of the dance cite Capoeira Angola as an artistic influence. The organized form of dancing within a circle that is typically associated with B-girls/boys developed as a strategy for rivals to settle disputes. These battles are based on routines both planned and improvised. The winning crews, members of a dancing group, are determined by factors such as overall showcase of skill, mastery of style, depth of artistry and crowd response—all resulting in the successful ability to outperform the opponent.

Though mainstream fascination with B-girl/boy culture declined in the late 1980s, the Rock Steady Crew, led by B-boy Richie ‘Crazy Legs’ Colon, remains as one of the oldest and most recognized crews (Foreman & Neal, 2004). The Rock Steady Crew was formed in 1977 by Bronx b-boys Jimmy D and Jojo (www.RockSteadyCrew.com). Both east and west coasts styles influence the art form of B-girl/boying. The dance in Hiphop culture “is a tale of three cities…breakdancing and the [Hiphop] sound emerged in the Bronx, electric-boogaloo poppin’ and tickin moves arouse in Fresno and Los Angeles (Watts, Long Beach, Crenshaw Heights)” (Thompson, as cited in, Perkins, 1996, p. 213). During the 1980s with rise in commercial rap music the element of B-girling/boying began to decline in significance (Israel, 2002). Ironically through DVDS, music videos, and corporate sponsorship, B-girling/boying remains an active element within Hiphop culture though not as visible as commercial rap music.
Afrika Bambaataa added the fifth element, knowledge as a way to center the positive aspects of Hiphop culture (Chang, 2005). KRS and the Temple of Hiphop, a loose collective of pioneers and Hiphop activists, recognized other themes within Hiphop and the other elements began to be recognized as part of Hiphop’s expressive tradition (KRS, 2001). Scholars have also begun to critique the split of Hiphop and the rap industry suggesting a demarcation between the culture of Hiphop and the commercial industry of rap music (Perry, 2004; Chang, 2005; Strode and Wood; 2008). Though all core expressive elements are still viable parts of Hiphop rap is the most visible and often substituted for Hiphop, however rap is an element within Hiphop and Hiphop constitutes the entire culture.

Summary Conclusions

The above review of literature reveals a long-standing divide that is gendered, generational, class and race based. To address this multidimensional challenge, as reviewed, numerous movements, strategies and mechanisms have been constructed. Africana women throughout history have created the space to redefine and reshape constructs of womanhood. The intersecting oppressions of race and gender have been limitations throughout history in efforts to redress problematic readings of gender and gender performance. The literature suggests that creating alternative space is advantageous to developing a critical epistemology. A broader, more complex epistemology expands the range of how gender is understood.

Hiphop feminism/womanist will build on the foundation set by Africana women of previous generations. It will follow in the footsteps of Maria W. Stewart the “first
American woman to lecture in public on political issues and to leave copies of her texts” (Collins, 2000, p.1) in asking critical questions and challenging accepted norms. This brand of feminism/womanist will not content itself with merely tracing the steps of generations before but reexamine, reevaluate and provide a feminism that is relevant to women and men in this day and time. Pough (2004) suggests “New Black feminist criticism reenvisions Black history in the United States and notes Black women’s contributions to not only the Black public sphere but also the larger United States public sphere” (p. 68). This ideology and practice will challenge notions of respectability and acceptability, which serve as means to police and control the space of women. Carby (1999) asserted that the emergence of 19th century Black women writers challenged the cult of true womanhood. Hiphop feminist can offer something similar in challenging the limited range of Black female expressivity. This challenge must confront the negativity surrounding feminism. It must be about “rejecting the wildly popular notion that embracing the ‘f’ word entails nothing more than articulating victimization” (Morgan, 2004, p. 280). Morgan (2004) further suggests:

More than any other generation before us, we need a feminism committed to ‘keeping it real’. We need a voice like our music-one that samples and layers many voices, injects its sensibilities into the old and flips it into something new, provocative, and powerful. And one whose occasional hypocrisy, contradictions, and triteness guarantee us at least a few trips to the terrordome forcing us to finally confront what we’d all rather hide from. We need a feminism that possesses the fundamental understanding held by any true student of [Hiphop].
Truth can’t be found in the voice of any one rapper but in the juxtaposition of many. (p. 281)

The literature suggests this agenda must encompass the voices and work of male allies. Smith (1995) offers that while Africana women are the principle force of Black feminist theory they should not be the sole laborers in the field. Thus allied behavior is a necessary part in shaping this critical terrain. Although allied behavior is central it cannot continue in dominating behavior under the guise of assistance. Allied behavior implies:

Taking personal responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and so often ignore or leave others to deal with. Allied behavior is intentional, overt, consistent activity that challenges prevailing patterns of oppression, makes privileges that are so often invisible visible, and facilitates the empowerment of persons targeted by oppression. (Agvazian, 2007, p. 234)

The literature by men in regards to sexism and misogyny suggest more work and practical maps are needed (Byrd & Guy-Sheftall, 2001; Powell, 2003; Neal, 2005; Tarrant, 2008). With the exception of work like, Dyson (1996), Powell (2003), Neal, (2005), and the recent film Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes (2006), relatively few works by men critically interrogating masculinity and Hiphop culture are available. More critical work examining Hiphop as source for anti sexist practice are needed.

An investigation of performativity reveals gender; sexuality, race and class are mutually constitutive. That is to suggest that people experience life as Black and a woman or Black and a man and a homosexual as an example. Therefore strategies should
be multiperspective and fluid. The review of literature suggests Hiphop culture has the potential to provide such a practice.

Though Hiphop has often been maligned regarding its treatment, representation and exploitation of women, to wholly dismiss it ignores its redemptive potential. While some of these criticisms are valid, many do not come with context, merit or consideration of the complex, polyvocal, terrain that is Hiphop, as the literature suggests. Nor do they consider the complexity of how gender and sexuality are projected on the Africana woman’s body. Africana women within Hiphop read, interpret, and create ontology of Black feminist/womanist thought within a subculture seemingly teeming with misogyny. This relationship suggests a complex reading and understanding of Hiphop will inform the practice of theorizing a Hiphop feminism.

Any feminism dealing with Hiphop must be connected to a social theory that includes all voices from all spaces of life (Morgan, 1995; Pough, 2004; Brock, 2005; Armstead, 2007). In using the term feminism here it will follow the trajectory laid out by Black Feminism as suggested by Collins (2000), in that it seeks to move beyond naming oppressions and moving to empower through dialogue, action and practice. In addition “and on another level…womanist and Afriwomanist.” (Brock, 2005, p.21) must be used as grounding for work specifically examining the lives of Africana women. Also significant in this work is the multilayered approach to musical signifying. While taking cue from Perry (2004) in analysis of literary signifying in Hiphop, I seek to emphasize the musical as well as the literary. By extending this concept it challenges the notion that audiences are passive, rather there is an engaged community of co-creators. This engaged, interactive, community is a central site for the production of critical Hiphop pedagogy.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter details the research methodology for this study. I will discuss the research design, sources, data collection, and analysis and interpretation process. In addition, the researchers’ role in the process of this study will be examined.

The Research Design

Significant in the methodological approach is the grounding of investigation within an African centered/Afrocentric paradigm. Asante (1990) defines this paradigm as “a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person. . . This means that we examine every aspect of the dislocation of African people; culture, economics, psychology, health, and religion” (p. 172). As a result the African centered/Afrocentric paradigm “locates research from an African viewpoint and creates Africa’s own intellectual perspective” (Mkabela, 2005, p. 180). In keeping with the core tenets of this model, that the term African encompasses all people of primarily African origin regardless of their location in the Diaspora, my methodological grounding includes a polygonal awareness of gender, race and class. As Turner (1984) asserts:

The intellectual task is not then simply to pick or choose among the conceptual and methodological toys of traditional disciplines but to reconceptualize the social fabric and rename the world in a way the obliterates the voids that have inevitably occurred as a result of artificial disciplinary demarcations (p. x).

Moreover, an African centered methodological approach demystifies traditional Eurocentric research methodology as the single edifice of the production of knowledge.
Approaching the study of Hiphop culture from this model allows the voices and experiences of Hiphop heads to be central in the production of knowledge relevant to this study. Grounding the methodological model in this manner is useful in research examining the lives of Africana people. As Reviere (2001) averred:

Eurocentric research criteria of objectivity, reliability, and validity are inadequate and incorrect, especially for research involving human experiences. . . Afrocentric research methodologies will push the inquiry into a higher realm where the methodology and the process of knowledge construction cease to take precedence over the well-being of the people being researched. (p. 709)

Hiphop pedagogy is informed by a collective of Africana experiences, histories, and identities, therefore a research approach that centralizes the stories of these experiences is necessary to highlight and understand a context of meaning, the how, why, and what of Hiphop pedagogy.

In tandem with an African centered framing is the use of a variety of qualitative research methods in conducting this study. Both contexts were used to create a synthesis of knowledge production. As Mkabela (2005) offered:

The proposal of an Afrocentric method, however is not to denigrate Western methodology, but to re-examine and complement any thinking that attributes undue Western superiority at the expense of neglecting African thought. The Afrocentric method can be used as a complement to qualitative research methods. It shares the same characteristics of qualitative research methods in that both Afrocentric and qualitative methods assume that people employ interpretive
schemes which must be understood and that the character of the local context must be articulated. (p. 188)

Qualitative research is “a distinct field of inquiry that encompasses both micro and macroanalyses drawing on historical, comparative, structural, observational, and interactional ways of knowing” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p. 1). As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p.3). This situated activity is a process that is an effort “to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them” (Denzin, 1989, p. 3).

This work is principally an interview study. While the use of the interview is a primary methodological tool, autoethnography and cultural memory also inform this study. Seidman (1998) writes that, “the root of . . . interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p.3). “The interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. It is not a neutral tool, for at least two people create the reality of the interview situation” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 48). Khan and Cannel (1957) assert that these types of interviews are, “a conversation with a purpose” (p. 149). Interviewing has long been associated with both qualitative and quantitative research design (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). “Interviewing may be the overall strategy or one of several methods employed in the study” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 80). Cottrell & McKenzie (2005) suggest, “The best time to use . . . interviews is when the topic is complex, the respondents are knowledgeable, and understanding of individual experience is needed.
Interviewing, consisting of various forms including, unstructured interviewing, is a type of research method researchers uses to gain a holistic perspective of the respondents’ commentary (Patton, 1987; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Patton (1990) places interviews into three general contexts: the informal conversational, the general guide, and the standardized open-ended interview. This study utilized both the informal conversational and the standardized open-ended interview method for conducting interviews.

The informal interview is similar to a conversation where a respondent may forget they are being interviewed; this process is useful for gaining information in a comfortable setting and allows for free flowing ideas related to the subject of the study. The use of “unstructured interviewing can provide a greater breadth of data than other types, given its qualitative nature” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.652).

The standardized open-ended interview involves the use of pre-determined questions. These questions are based on a careful study of the review of literature and based on information needed to address gaps between a researcher’s interest and the body of existing literature. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) assert that:

In structured interviewing, the interviewer asks all respondents the same series of preestablished questions with a limited set of response categories. There is generally little room for variation in responses except where open-ended questions (which are infrequent) may be used. . . Thus all respondents receive the same set of questions asked in the same order or sequence by an interviewer. (p. 649)
Combining a variation of these two approaches provided some control in research design and management while privileging the voices of the respondents in this study. Centralizing the voices of the respondents is essential in avoiding the reproduction of authoritative researcher centered knowledge. Kridel (1998) offers “authoritative knowledge is becoming antiquated with the emergence of multifaceted research methodologies” (p. 10). Interview studies provide a cooperative space between respondent and researcher necessary for understanding complex phenomena such as Hiphop as critical pedagogy and space for anti sexist practice. Silverman (2000) notes that the narrative approach is a format that provides for a data rich dialogue “in which researcher and researched offer mutual understanding and support” (p. 823). Silverman (2000) further writes of the narrative approach that, “by abandoning the attempt to treat respondents’ accounts as potentially ‘true’ pictures of ‘reality’, we open up for analysis the culturally rich methods through which interviewers and interviewees, in concert, generate plausible accounts of the world” (p. 823).

By use of this narrative direction, based in an African centered/Afrocentric paradigm, it provided a context for analysis that focused on questions central to this study. Autoethnography, cultural memory, document, audiovisual analysis, and peer mentoring comprise the other methods used to examine Hiphop culture in this study. These methods were informed by critical pedagogy and critical theory.
Critical Pedagogy

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is an outgrowth of a desire to provide shape and substance to the theoretical terrain of emancipatory ideas for education (Gibson, 1986; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998; Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2003). Critical pedagogy comprises practices derived from the reactions of progressive educators seeking to challenge institutionalized teaching methods (Giroux, 1988; McLaren, 1989; Freire, 1998; Giroux & McLaren, 1994). Critical pedagogy seeks to examine social constructs considered normal or fixed with the goal of revealing knowledge construction, power relationships, and other negations within human interactions. As McLaren (2003) offers:

Critical pedagogy asks how and why knowledge gets constructed the way it does, and how and why some constructions of reality are legitimated and celebrated by the dominant culture while others clearly are not. Critical pedagogy asks how our everyday commonsense understandings—our social constructions or ‘subjectivities’—get produced and lived out... What are the social functions of knowledge? (p. 72)

Critical pedagogy recognizes that “men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege” (McLaren, 2003, p. 69). Critical pedagogy not only examines knowledge construction, by employing multiple ways of looking, at a given cultural artifact or phenomenon, it offers insight into the self by critical interrogations of culture and what is constructed as cultural norms.

By using the multiple perspectives of critical pedagogy, it reveals ways in which Hip hop pedagogy is possible and suggests ways it can be effectively used. Since critical
pedagogues examine social constructs, particularly the how and why of a given phenomena, applying this method is useful in the exploration of Hiphop culture as it seeks complexity and encourages dialogue. This method provides the space for members of an oppressed group to come to consciousness, or what Freire (2000) refers to as consciencization. This consciousness is an evolutionary process in which questioning ones taken for granted activities becomes the impetus for social change.

Critical Theory

Critical theory is a blanket term therefore, “it is vital to grasp at the outset that there is no such thing as unified critical theory. Rather, there are critical theories” (Gibson, 1986, p. 3). Critical theory, which informs critical pedagogical practices, represents a specific historical moment, typically associated with the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, founded in 1923 in Frankfurt Germany. Horkheimer, who coined the phrase, critical theory, was the schools first director (Gibson, 1986; Darder, et al., 2003). Members of the Frankfort school from Adorno, Lowenthal, Marcuse, Fromm, and Benjamin were interested, through a Marxist analysis of different degrees and focus, about how some constructions of reality were legitimated while others were not. As written earlier, Marxist analysis considers class struggle to be at the heart of conflict between the proletariat or working class and the bourgeois ruling class in economic systems of exploitation (Marx, 1976). Marx further understood economic forces were central in the understanding of culture and behavior. Williams (2003) asserted that Marx:

Argued that economic systems do not develop out of people’s beliefs and values but rather cultural values are determined by the nature of economic structures. . .
Education, the political and legal systems, family structure, art and literature, religious beliefs as well as the media in any society are a product of their economic base. (p. 37)

As a result of the echoes of Marxist thought critical theorists criticized materialism, and the suppression of critical thought instructive of challenging the dominant status quo. Thus critical theory represents a combination of school of thought as well as a process of critique (Darder, et al., 2003). A grounding factor in critical theory is that for change to be effective it must begin and be with the people themselves. Giroux (2003) asserts “original critical theory... provides for developing a critical foundation for a theory of radical pedagogy” (p. 27). Resultantly critical theory seeks to undermine hegemonic relationships. Gramsci (1971) noted that hegemony is the dominance that one social group wields over others. Hegemony is also more than power but a means for gaining and maintaining power (Lull, 2005). Hegemonic relationships reach interactions among gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and essentially all areas related to human activity.

A critical Hiphop pedagogy that challenges gender constructs provides the space for such a radical pedagogy. Further by expanding the notion of the margins creates a greater range of possibility. Hudak (1993) maintained:

The margin however, cannot be viewed solely as a site of exclusion and repression, as a to which one is ‘marginalized’. . . To be sure marginalization is a practice of oppression. Yet as bell hooks writes, this is not the only dimension to marginality. . . By locating oneself within the margins, one refuses to forget the past, and instead keeps it alive in memory: When memory is politicized, the
margins come to represent a social location that is on the hand a place of ‘deprivation’ and on the other hand a ‘particular way of seeing reality’ whose intent is survival and resistance. (p.174-175)

Since critical theory begins with the assumption “that the societies of the West are not unproblematically democratic and free” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.160), this critical theory embraces the relationship of power, desire, media, and culture. Taken together with this elements critical theory is resistance theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Autoethnography

Modern research methods have called into question the traditional orthodoxy of qualitative research approaches (Agger, 1990; Holt, 2003). No longer is one method considered paramount in providing the authoritative knowledge, but rather methods are used to provide the most fitting for a given study. “The movement toward personalized research reflects calls to place greater emphasis on the ways in which the [researcher] interacts with the culture being researched” (Holt, 2003, p. 2). While equally debated, Autoethnography locates the active voice of the researcher in the process, rather than works of silent authorship. Ellis and Bochner (2000) assert that autoethnography is a form of writing that “make[s] the researcher’s own experience a topic of investigation in its own right” (p.733). This method of research is:

An autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth auto ethnographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they
look inward, exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract and resist cultural interpretations. (p. 739)

Autoethnography “has become the term of choice in describing studies and procedures that connect the personal to the cultural” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.740). Porter (2004) writes that, “some criticize this form of writing as sentimental, unscientific, and the product of excesses of postmodernism. However. . . this genre of writing may have something to contribute” (p.1). As a researcher who is immersed in the cultural space of Hiphop, this approach is necessary to extract knowledge relevant to providing information on Hiphop as critical pedagogy and anti sexist practice. Consistent with African centered epistemology (Asante, 1990), autoethnography invites the experiences of the researcher to bear as a meaningful contribution to research, particularly when the researcher is intimately familiar with the research subject and community. As Holt (2003) asserts, “whatever the specific focus, authors use their own experiences in a culture reflexively to look more deeply at self-other interactions” (p. 2). The successful effort provides less a personal narrative and more a means to draw on experience to explicate the research. Autoethnography provides the space to examine the self within the context of Hiphop culture. The use of autoethnography highlights gender privilege. As a man using methodological tools that will focus on the self enhances the overall research outcomes despite being outside the boundaries of what is considered traditional research methods.
Cultural Memory

Cultural memory is a subjective recollection of experiences that foregrounds the experiences and culture of those being studied. Stanfield II (1994) recognizes the process as ‘ethnic modeling’. Ramsey (2003) refers to cultural memory as sites where:

The communal rituals. . . and the undocumented house party culture, the intergenerational exchange of musical habits. . . the importance of dance and the centrality of the celebratory black body. . . the same intensive, inventive, and joyful engagement with both mass-mediated texts. . . the memories and ritualized spaces of what old folks called drylongso, or everyday blackness—all these combine to form living photographs, rich pools of experiences, and a cultural poetics upon which theoretical and analytical principles can be based. (p. 4)

According to Gross (2000) memory serves not only as a recollection of events in ones or others lives but to call “to mind the highest goals and values of the culture, not simply as a feat of skill, but in order to take them to heart and incorporate them into the fabrics of their lives” (p. 25).

Hiphop culture is informed by moments of drylongso text. As a DJ much of how I have experienced, understood, felt, and began to think about Hiphop culture, and the broader context beyond Hiphop, were through these moments cultural memory attempts to recall. While music is not the only space that cultural memory takes place, it is a crucial part of cultural memory. Ramsey (2003) asserts, “music is a dynamic social text, a meaningful cultural practice, a cultural transaction, and a politically charged, gendered,
signifying discourse” (p. 19). Imbuing this study with cultural memory provides a useful supplement to other methodological approaches in this study.

Document and Audiovisual Analysis

In addition to the primary data sources/respondents, I examined documents and audio visual sources. Marshall & Rossman (1995) assert that, “researchers supplement participant observation, interviewing, and observation with the gathering and analyzing of documents produced in the course of everyday events” (p. 85). Given the large amount of narrative and documentary film footage on Hip hop culture, studying these audiovisual documents was a rich source of data. These data that were collected served to provide addition support for the data collected from the primary sources/respondents.

Peer Mentoring

Mentoring is a concept that has long been associated with educational research and professional development (Level & Mach, 2004). Bolton (1980) writes that, “the mentor. . . demonstrates how an activity is to be performed and can enhance the learning experience. . . the mentor acts as a guide, a tutor, or coach, and a confidant” (p.198). Gibb (1999) asserts that the value of this relationship is the emphasis on community. Peer mentoring is a shift from the leader/subordinate model, to a more equitable relationship of a community of scholars. “While skeptics may view peer mentoring as ‘the blind leading the blind’, researchers have uncovered a number of benefits in this model” (Level & March, 2004, p. 305). The use of this research strategy was consistent with the aims of an African centered concept of communal research practice (Normant, 2007).
Research Subjects/Sources

In addition to the literature on Hip hop culture, which includes books, journals, films, and speeches, data sources for this study included in-depth interviews from the following primary research subjects/sources:

a) Ms. Joan Morgan- award winning journalist and author. A pioneering Hip hop journalist. Morgan’s first article, *The Pro-Rape Culture*, examined issues of race and gender in the Central Park jogger case of the mid 1990s. Morgan coined the term *Hip hop feminism* with the publication of her 1999 text, *When Chickenheads come home to Roost: My life as a Hip Hop Feminist*. Morgan has provided critical commentary on Hip hop culture and gender both in print and television media ranging from the Village Voice, MTV, BET, VH-1, Like it Is, and CNN. Morgan also traveled with other Hip hop scholars on the *Does Hip Hop Hate Women* conversational tour (redroom.com, 2008, personal communication, 2008).

c) Ms. Marcella Runnel- Hiphop feminist, educator, activist. Runnel has been a Hiphop head for over 20 years, co-editor of the first Hip Hop Education Guidebook and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Runnel also works with the H2Ed program (Hip Hop Education program) (Runell & Diaz, 2007, personal communication, 2008).

d) Mr. Jeff Chang-author, producer and Hiphop head. Chang’s first book, *Can’t Stop Won’t Stop a History of the Hip Hop Generation* (2005), won many honors, among them the Asian American Literary Award. Chang was founding editor of *Colorlines* magazine and senior editor/director of Russell Simmons 360hiphop.com. Chang has also written for other magazines dealing with Hiphop music and culture such as, *URB, Rap Pages, Spin*, and *Vibe*. As a producer Chang help establish the well-regarded independent label, *SoleSides*, now known as *Quannum Projects*. This label began the careers of Blackalicious, Lyrics Born, DJ Shadow. Also to his production credit is the release, *Godfathers of Gangsta Rap*, by the Watts Prophets, a group considered to be a forerunner to West Coast rap. Chang was also involved in organizing the first National Hip Hop Political Convention in 2004 (Chang, 2005, 2006, personal communication, 2008).

All of the respondents have been involved within Hiphop culture in a number of capacities ranging from consumers of rap music, critics of Hiphop culture, participants
and scholars. The respondents were selected based on their familiarity and understanding of Hiphop culture and their own work examining related aspects of Hiphop culture. Other factors such as, availability and scheduling was also a consideration when selecting potential respondents.

Procedures/ Data Collection

The interview portion of the research took place over a two-month period. Prior to interviewing the original research instrument consisted of six questions. These six questions were modified. As a result of the respondents expertise and conformability the content of the six questions were addressed without prompt. The respondents were asked a series of four questions, however the order varied. The research instrument was developed as a result of the review of literature and suggestions from the dissertation committee. The designs of instrument questions were similar to provide possibility for consistencies among the data collected from the different respondents. Each interview consisted of 25 to 30 minutes. In addition to the actual interview, emails, face to face contact and phone calls were used to establish rapport with the respondents. Each respondent, in accordance with IRB regulations, was given the opportunity to provide informed consent. Once informed consent was given each respondent was given the opportunity to receive a CD copy of the recorded interview.

Analysis and Interpretation Process

I defined this study as an interview study grounded within and African centered/Afrocentric paradigm. In addition to the African centered/Afrocentric paradigm, a variety of qualitative methodological approaches were used. Specific among the
qualitative methods used were, autoethnography, cultural memory, critical pedagogy and critical theory. In addition to these primary methods, document, audiovisual analysis, and peer mentoring were also used. These methods informed the approach to interviewing in an effort to seek detailed description of how Hiphop culture provides a space for critical pedagogy and what practices suggest this is possible. Also by using the selected methods I was interested in exploring alternative readings of gender constructions within Hiphop, as this would illuminate anti sexist practice possibilities in inform educational efforts using Hiphop culture.

Role of the Researcher

Doing research on a subject in which the researcher is an insider and participant is risky and poses both advantages and limitations. Richardson (1990) notes that, “participation in a culture includes participation in the narratives of that culture, a general understanding of the stock of meanings and their relationship to each other” (p. 24). As an insider within the culture of Hiphop access to both primary and secondary sources were obtained without challenges an outsider researcher may encounter. These challenges might include access to and interpretation of sources, and an understanding of the literature of Hiphop culture, which includes music, documentary films, and significant landmarks. In addition to these potential challenges, the respondents in this study were experts, so the researcher would have to have some familiarity with the subject for interpretation and meaningful questions to arrive at detailed research data. My position in Hiphop culture and role as researcher provided the space for these activities to take place.
Given my position within Hiphop, it was a balance between at least two considerations. Kemmis & Taggart (2000) describe this as a process where:

Participants move between two thought positions: on the one side, seeing themselves, their understandings, their practices, and the settings in which they practice from the perspectives of insiders who see these things in an intimate, even ‘natural’ way that may be subject to the partiality of view characteristic of the insider perspective: and, on the other side seeing themselves, their understandings, their practices, and the setting from the perspective of the outsider. (p. 590)

Being aware of this privilege and responsibility in the research process was useful in examining how a researcher, myself, makes meaning of the subject under study. Also as a result of my positionality I found that respondents were more likely to share insights and offer additional support. Because of this standing there was a level of comfort and respect. However while this proved to be an invaluable asset during this study, it also had limitations.

As an insider researcher, I had to be particularly vigilant to follow what the research suggests rather than relying solely on personal experience. Perhaps one of the most significant tasks was conducting research regarding issues of sexism, and gender inquity, when as Sally Kempton noted, the enemy has outposts in your own head. As a male researcher I was constantly challenging and being challenged in how socialized notions or assumed default settings of gender and sexual orientation frame understandings of cultural phenomena. To address these concerns I chose a mixed
method approach that encouraged multiple sites of looking. This approach consisted of a complex array of methodological and theoretical approaches, such as cultural studies, critical studies, critical pedagogy, Africana womanism, feminism(s) and an African centered/ Afrocentric paradigm. Through the use of these theoretical and methodological threads I was able to chart a path of critical inquiry that both acknowledged my privilege and oppression, advantages and limitations. This recognition was significant to advance the concept of Hiphop as critical pedagogy and anti sexist practice. As Ayvazian (2005) suggests:

When we consider the different manifestations of systematic oppression and find ourselves in any categories where we are dominant-and therefore receive the unearned advantages that accrue to that position of advantage-we have the potential to be remarkably powerful agents of change as allies. Allies are. . . men who work to dismantle sexism. . . Allied behavior is clear action aimed at dismantling the oppression of others where you yourself benefit-it is proactive, intentional, and often involves taking a risk. (p. 158)

Thus as an insider researcher there were risks, however the benefit of the data collected and possible outcomes, such as a critical Hiphop pedagogy that addresses sexism, out weights the risks associated with the insider perspective.

Summary of Methodology

This chapter discussed the research methodology for this study. Topics explored included the research design, sources, data collection, and analysis and interpretation process. The role of the researcher in the process of this study was also examined.
CHAPTER FOUR: Hiphop Pedagogy/ Results of the Study

Introduction

This chapter consists of the results of this qualitative study and a summary of analysis regarding Hiphop culture as critical pedagogy and anti sexist practice. After modifying the research instrument from six questions, the key research questions that guided this study consisted of the following:

- How can Hiphop truly serve as critical pedagogy?
- How can Hiphop respond to violence against women?
- What about Hiphop can offer wider ranges of understanding gender as performance?
- What insights would a critical Hiphop pedagogy offer anti-sexist activists?

The method for collection of primary data for this study consisted of interviews. As a result, the interviews collected were recorded on CD, then transcribed and coded. Silverman (2000) notes that, “although talk is sometimes seen as trivial (‘mere’ talk), it has increasingly become recognized as the primary medium through which social interaction takes place” (p. 821). Transcription involves turning audible data into written form. This activity is “an interpretive process which involves making judgments and is therefore the first step in analyzing data” (Bailey, 2008, p.132). The choices in determining this process were guided by the methodological assumptions of this dissertation study.

After compiling, transcribing, coding, and analyzing the data several themes emerged around the initial research questions. The themes that surfaced were; Hiphop
is an unstable term, a critical Hiphop pedagogy is not only possible, it is happening.
Lastly, Hiphop as anti sexist practice may be the best use of Hiphop as a meaningful educational project.

During the data collection portion of this research respondents complicated the use of the term Hiphop. In addition to the respondents’ commentary, I have also added a more specific meaning and use of the term Hiphop. Throughout this study I have intentionally spelled Hiphop as one word. Though publications, scholarly internet sources and organizations use a variation of spellings from hip-hop, Hip-hop, to Hip-Hop, I have found the use and spelling of Hiphop to be most useful to framing Hiphop within a combination of community teaching practice, lived experience, emotion, and a meaningful commitment to transformation of lives on the margins what I have referred to as a critical Hiphop pedagogy. By spelling it this way I seek to differentiate meaning, to imply when Hiphop is discussed, that it conjures up more complex understandings than what popular culture may offer. Houston (2004) wrote:

KRS One, Temple of Hiphop founder suggests the spelling of Hiphop vs. Hip-Hop in much the same way scholars like Haki Madhubuti suggests spelling Afrika with a ‘k’ instead of a ‘c’ pointing out that the Africa previously written, imagined and positioned is completely different and word-views away from the Afrika he writes about. The spelling of Afrika with a ‘k’ instead of ‘c’ represents reclamation. Reclaiming. . . is less about inventing new words, and more about remembering. (p. 44-45)
The literature suggests, as well as the findings from this study that, Hiphop is much more complex than popular readings that regard it as a musical genre or an easily assigned fixed concept. Morgan (2008) provided a layered response to the question of a critical Hiphop pedagogy, questioning the concept in addition to illustrating what one may look like. While there are a variety of critical works framing Hiphop in the context outlined above, I posit that, by situating these kinds of treatments with the intentional choice of the heading *Hiphop*, it suggests an alternative project from the start. This assertion was informed by findings in this study. All of the respondents, at various points of the interview, prefaced discussing Hiphop by the disclaimer that what they spoke of was not to be confused with the mass marketed representation.

Moving beyond a framing construct, the respondents further expanded the notion of Hiphop by their definitions and understandings of Hiphop culture. Runell-Hall (2008) stated in terms of Hiphop:

For sure as a culture, but I never really heard it quantified that way until I was in college. It made sense to me when I started to learn about the history. . . from a more concise point of view i.e Zulu Nation. . . but for a long time I just participated as did most of the people I knew without really claiming it as a culture. But to be honest, I didn’t really know the definition of culture, because I hadn’t been really asked to think about it. (personal communication)

Morgan (2008) stated regarding the notion of Hiphop pedagogy that:

I always saw Hiphop and associated Hiphop as something very clearly associated with being young. . . We used to have this joke. . . Kevin Powell and Scott Bryant
and myself. . . We don’t want to be the thirty-five year old at the club and low and behold how many years later we are in our forties still talking about this, so obviously it has some sort of usefulness. . . When you say Hiphop I think the culture is maturing and aging because chronologically people are getting older but they are using the benefit of what they had in this experience. . . to go on and think about other things. . . while Kevin Powell. . . is not turning on to your local Hiphop station everyday and playing the top ten songs in rotation. . . I think Hiphop. . . forms a real element about how he thinks about his campaign and how he connects to his future constituents and his overall ideology. . . I can’t outgrow being black I can’t really outgrow being a woman in many respects I’m not going to completely outgrow Hiphop culture I definitely will outgrow certain kinds of music. . . so I think if you’re looking at Hiphop as where it exists right now in 2008 with no other connection to it, that you are connecting to it solely as a consumer and not as someone who grew up and is part of that culture, for better or worse I would say yeah it doesn’t have a usefulness but I just don’t look at the music in that way. (personal communication)

Morgan revealed the layers in which Hiphop generation community members often considered the different dynamics at work in their lives and the role that Hiphop culture played as a way of negotiating these spaces. Contextualizing Hiphop as a fluid broader space of agency makes these readings possible. While these broader spaces are essential, they are not essentialist. Chang (2008) noted that:
People get Hiphop mixed up. . . they want to evaluate Hiphop as if its sort of some unified ideology that is comparable. . . to nationalism or socialism or something like that but its not its more a site where a lot of these different types of things get to be worked out and its always being fought over and always been contested. (personal communication)

With regard to understanding Hiphop beyond music and an observation that Hiphop may have something more to offer Raimist (2008) said the following:

I have been asked by many to articulate a [Hiphop] aesthetic. I reply wondering how does one describe guidelines of what is Hiphop? How can a checklist or grid of evaluation be standardized to get an aesthetic of a culture, my culture? Maybe this is an effective methodology for other genres or disciplines for those who live outside, trying to peer in and grasp an understanding of what goes on. For us on the inside, you just know it, it either is authentic or it’s fakin’ the funk. Still there are some marked qualities of the genre that create a semblance of a [Hiphop] aesthetic. . . including but not limited to the following codes/concepts/ constructs: naming, respect, coding, oppositional to American hegemonic culture, reflective of an urban experience. . . blackness, hard, has a conflicted nature. . . misogynist, homophobic, and dichotomies of wealth and poverty. (personal communication)

Both the respondents and literature reveal definitions of Hiphop have always been in flux, yet authenticity, is a salient feature easily detectable by one immersed within the community. While this authentic measure is difficult to name for those outside of Hiphop culture, situating Hiphop as a culture may make it more accessible to novices of the
culture. To work toward some kind of harmonizing strategy, or strategies a method of interpretation is necessary. This method can be rooted in social justice practices that call for groups to making meaning of their own lived experiences or codes and concepts Raimist (2008) identifies.

Beyond Rap Music

All respondents spoke of Hiphop beyond rap music, although many acknowledged that how they came in contact with Hiphop was through rap music. Runnell-Hall (2008) stated:

I always loved music... I moved around a lot, up and down the Northeast-from Washington D.C. to NYC and back to [New Jersey]-outside of Philly and Atlantic City...always moving to urban or semi-urban areas. New music, memorizing lyrics, or learning the latest dance provided me with some type of cultural capital as I entered and re-entered different circles. I always loved music, probably made my first mix tape around 6 years old. (personal communication)

Locating space outside of rap music during the interviews was a running theme. This particular theme, Hiphop beyond music, lead to some observations about what Hiphop culture may and already provides outside of rap. By contextualizing rap music as synonymous with Hiphop, or the central method of analysis in discourse regarding Hiphop, restricts potential for a broader context, or worse assumptions about the successes or failures of a critical Hiphop pedagogy. This is particularly problematic when skilled observers of the culture base investigations of the whole of Hiphop on a commodity such as commercial rap.
Hiphop Pedagogy

The always in flux cultural phenomena, Hiphop, provides the basis for a critical pedagogy. A critical Hiphop pedagogy is a combination of community teaching practice, lived experience, emotion, and a meaningful commitment to transformation of lives on the margins. Chang (2008) says of Hiphop, that:

Its rich as a teaching tool because of the way it slams up all these different type things together so the best teachers that I see are folks that are able to juxtapose different types of things they are able to contextualize. . . what’s going on, its not just about reading texts or deconstructing the music. . . its about understanding about how all those things fit in. . . to what’s happening sociologically economically and politically. (personal communication)

Runell-Hall (2008) stated “I believe most of Hip-Hop culture is counter narrative, critical of social conditions and by its very nature-always serving as critical pedagogy. If critical pedagogy is about questioning the norm, doesn’t that make Jadakiss a student of Freire?” (personal communication, 2008) Observations and queries like this put forward that a critical Hiphop pedagogy is already taking place within the music and in classroom practice as teachers make practical application of theoretical concepts by infusing it with a Hiphop sensibility, enabling students to use their life experience in the knowledge production space of the classroom. This approach is an extension of Freire (1970), Shor (1980), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Weems (2003), who advance that educators co-create practice with students that makes their lives, concerns, and challenges central in classroom praxis.
Beyond the borders of the classroom a critical Hiphop pedagogy operates at the intersection of imagination and intellect. Weems (2003) articulates imagination-intellectual practice as being:

Like the human heart and its arteries, the imagination and intellect are inextricably linked; they develop simultaneously and, I suggest one is not possible without the other. . . It is a mistake to separate imagination, intellect, will and emotion. We learn with our whole mind. . . [This] philosophical approach to teaching as an art centered around creating a loving, culturally relevant community where language, customs and historical backgrounds, of all students are respected, welcomed and viewed as a valuable aspect of each students knowledge base. (p. 1-2)

Though this concept is linked to classrooms the approach is grounded on the experiences outside and invites them in. Hiphop culture is a site in which many people are already engaged on the outside of the classroom, a critical Hiphop pedagogy invites this engagement into the classroom. In addition to this kind of pedagogical practice Hiphop does have something to offer with regard to discussions of gender equality.

*Hiphop Culture as Anti-Sexist Practice*

Initially when beginning this project I was very optimistic that Hiphop culture could do something with regard to the concern of gender inequality. Perhaps Hiphop cultures’ greatest contribution is also the cultures tragic flaw. Hiphop has been a unique space for men of color, particularly Black men, to assert their manhood, express emotion, and economically revolutionize their lives. However, as has been noted earlier in the
literature review, this notion of success has come at a high cost to both femininity and masculinity. Further while grounded in the understanding that Hiphop is a microcosm of the larger culture that helped create it, meaning, if the larger United States culture were one of sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, Hiphop as a culture would not be different, there are still spaces for counter hegemonic practices.

As many critics of Hiphop culture have accurately observed representations, language about and in reference to women are problematic and reflect, at its worst, the degenerative patriarchal values of mainstream society. Yet given these parallels Hiphop culture still retains the capacity for significant transformation. The many lives of people around the globe who attest to Hiphop as a transformational source, from young people in South African townships, to United States youth in rural communities using rap lyrics as a form of literacy and social critique, affirm Hiphop as a transformational space. However specific questions dealing with how Hiphop can respond to conditions facing women need to be addressed. As Morgan (2008) noted Hiphop is not the panacea to all social ills, it is not absolved and does have a space and place in the discourse. When posed with the question of what Hiphop can do Runell-Hall (2008) stated:

Hiphop is not neutral. And sometimes, as in all movements, the struggle for racial equality in this case, but the hierarchy of oppression argument is present in many communities overshadows the struggle for gender equality. There are some moments in Hip-Hop that I have felt more empowered as a woman...reading Sister Souljah’s autobiography, or Joan Morgans’, When the Chickenheads Come Home to Roost, or even recently Faith Evans autobiography...or listening to
Queen Latifah, or as a 7th grader, writing down every Salt-n-Pepa lyric and memorizing it like it was my job...those were some empowering moments...but then I think of how many times I was at a club and heard Akineles, *Put it in your mouth*, or that addictive Laffy Taffy song where he says, ‘Come on Trick, come on Trick’ and just tried to sing... and act like there was not some crazy stuff being said in that moment...so I guess taking a position... [Hiphop’s] relationship to women (mama's excluded for the most part unless you are Eminem) is void of any kind of underlying belief against violence and women, or even just addressing some of the issues. (personal communication)

In addressing the question of gender inequality Morgan (2008) responded with these insights:

If you think about some of the most poignant moments in Hiphop... some of the most poignant songs are when artists allow themselves to speak from the heart about... things that are very painful to them... not... the bravado and machismo... but really like this is where I am feeling pain... I think Hiphop lends itself to that but its very uncommon for artists to take that task... the work that has to be done to do that is not just about the artists I think we have to really start to look back at artists and scholars and professors... politicians... critical thinkers about what has the span of history meant in terms of gender... in male/female relationships specifically between Black and Latino people who’ve grown up in Hiphop culture... you have to start to look at the effect that the crack trade would have on gender relationships now between young people...
when you look the rate of AIDS among African-American women and how that has literally wiped out . . . generations of Black women. . . the impact that that would have. . . you have to start to look at that in some sort of historical critical perspective before you can just expect. . . Hiphop artists will be able to just. . . do that kind of soul searching in the heart. . . it has to happen in the culture and once it happens in the culture you are more likely to hear it in the music.

Chang (2008) suggests that these gendered visions are part of what is taking place within Hiphop culture currently. Chang (2008) asserts the critical work of addressing violence against women must occur on multiple levels simultaneously. While artists are limited by their imagination, Chang (2008) maintained that out-reach programs and organizations such as Reach Hip Hop, Detroit Summer, and scholars such as Perry, Pough, and Neal are part of the layered approach that is being done and needs to continue to happen. Raimist (2008) supported widening the scope of how the problem is contextualized, as she stated “The problem is. . . many get stuck in the same arguments and the same debates, which I believe issues like that of Hiphop’s misogyny is endemic of society and that larger patriarchal structures that construct our lives” (personal communication).

A crucial piece in addressing violence against women is beginning to consider how gender constructs limit the participation, voice and agency of women within not just Hiphop culture but society as a whole. The respondents in this study were virtually in agreement with regard to the limited space available for women in Hiphop. Runell-Hall (2008) recalled:
Its a tough call, because the roles for women in Hiphop are fairly limited. Female Mcs who emulate male MCs fare the best, especially when they are the lone female in an all male crew, and women who are dancers always have place...and of course the R&B singers that can be encapsulated under the Hip-Hop umbrella...but the Jean Grae’s of the industry are still... marginalized. My friend Kamilah Forbes, artistic director for the Hip-Hop Theater Festival, talks about any club being a Hip-Hop theater performance, so if you broaden the definition of gender as performance to think of all the roles men and women play on any given night-anywhere around the world, then perhaps you would see something very different. (personal communication)

Morgan (2008) also regarded this process as a challenge as she surmised:

That’s hard and honestly the answer to that changes depending on who I’m talking to what mood I’m in. . . am I in my living room with my friends or am I on a panel. . . a lot of weight has been put on Hiphop to. . . provide an answer for everything. . . they don’t all lie in Hiphop. . . we have to rethink feminism we have to rethink civil rights we have to rethink gay rights we have to rethink sexism and gender but you that you don’t just get to do that and stick Hiphop in front and think the job is done. (personal communication)

Runell-Hall (2008) made a striking observation that challenged the original framing of one my research questions that yielded new insights when she observed that:

I do not think being anti-anything is really helping anyone anymore. Rather, focusing on what we want more of-pro liberation (for everyone) is more of the
framework I would like to focus on. Focusing on what we don’t want, seems to create more negative energy; for example focusing on the men who are not helping, rather if we were more pro-liberation, maybe the men who are trying would get more shine in all of our eyes. (personal communication)

This observation affirmed the notion that any gender equity project should be informed by input from both genders, particularly women, since men have long been in the position to determine much of the Hip hop agenda. However, as has been noted by other respondents, Hip hop culture is not the only site in which this should take place.

The theorizing by Africana women is an important site in the widening of Hip hop as a space for greater gender equity practices. The focus as evidenced by data collected suggested a process of re-visioning and re-creation. Re-visioning gender equity projects of the past, including current life experiences and seeing the whole process as a fluid evolution is a key strategy.

Morgan (2008) stated of feminism of the past, that:

its not supposed to work forever and ever. . . part of what I talk about in my book is I think each generation of young women is obligated, obligated is the word. . . too redefine and restructure. . . feminism is really a bulk of cloth . . . and each generation is lucky enough to inherit a bulk of cloth that’s. . . more beautiful more embellished. . . richer than the generation before was able to hand out but its up to you fashion what you need out of that cloth its not up to the prior generation to hand you a feminism that you find completely functional and I t
hink that part of what happens is that expectation amongst young women and its actually quite ludicrous when you think about it. (personal communication)

By refashioning equity projects and practices it provides the space for creativity and using methods that have been successful.

Another critical insight that would develop throughout the coding process was the impact of crack cocaine on relationships between women and men, particularly Africana women and men. During the 1980s unemployment levels reached highs not equaled since the Great Depression, with the Africana unemployment rate at 22%, by 1983 more than 30% of the Africana population were living below the poverty line (National Urban League, 1992). In addition to unemployment rates were changes in national incarceration policies, which disproportionately affected communities of color. The Rockefeller drug laws of the 1970s served as a symbol of these policies, which may researchers argued, were discriminatory and race based. The Rockefeller drug laws are the laws enacted in 1973 under New York State Governor Nelson Rockefeller. These laws sought strident mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenders. According to the Drug Policy Alliance Network the Rockefeller Drug Laws (2008):

Mandate extremely harsh mandatory minimum prison terms for the possession or sale of relatively small amounts of drugs. Supposedly intended to target major dealers (kingpins), most of the people incarcerated under these laws are convicted of low-level, nonviolent offenses, and many of them have no prior criminal records. As of 2008, approximately 14,000 people are locked up for drug offenses
in New York State prisons, representing nearly 38% of the prison population and costing New Yorkers hundreds of millions of dollars every year.

While these laws highlight the policies in New York State many communities of color across the nation experienced similar situations. In areas with large concentrations of Africana people, Chicago, Illinois, Los Angeles, California, and Washington D.C, more than half of the male population between 18-26 were incarcerated on similar charges. These statistics and experiences have resulted in many in Hiphop to term the 1980s as the era of crack.

The results of poverty and incarceration had a direct impact on relationships of family, love, and community, and as a result must be considered when examining how to think, act, and create strategies of creating gender equity practices. Morgan (2008) reflected on the impact of crack and its implications of children coming of age with these experiences. Morgan (2008) stated:

…They were finding early on [about children born to crack addicted parents] that they were [at the age]. . . that most children. . . need to be held. . . they were finding. . . that these kids couldn’t stand to be held they couldn’t stand to be held for long periods of time they had really violent responses to small perceived flight. . . [a child]. . . who is battling a crack addiction at birth basically might hit you over the head with a brick it was like all these physiologically things that changed the structure of these young kids and . . . well guess what they are twenty now that’s what I mean by really needing to go back and sometimes when the
history is that recent its harder to connect the dots but I think we have to start to connect those dots and you know in terms of gender what really happens when you realize . . . you have a mother who . . . has either completely abandoned you or emotionally abandoned you because she is addicted to crack cocaine if you have a mother that’s tricking to sustain a habit what does that do to your concept and your ability to trust women . . . its so easy to talk about what Hiphop does and doesn’t do but I also think that just as a culture if we are going to come up with answers for very difficult questions that we have to be willing to do the work.

(personal communication)

Part of the work in creating viable alternatives is inclusive of a multilayered approach. The findings of this study suggest that for those who may have outgrown Hiphop as a youth culture may find Hiphop activism as a site for their participation in Hiphop beyond a consumer of rap music. Though none of the respondents specifically stated Hiphop activism as the activity for those who may have outgrown the youth culture aspect, all of their activity as authors, critics, and commentators suggest this as an alternative. In addition to the activity of the respondents, all of the interviews revealed that how they frame Hiphop connects with larger projects of social justice and that Hiphop provides a lens through which to interpret phenomena and is a unique cultural framework for those coming of age in the post civil rights era.
Summary of Analysis

This chapter consisted of the results of this qualitative study. Among the major themes and findings were:

- Hiphop is a fluid term, encompassing a wide array of concepts, codes, constructs and meanings.
- Defining Hiphop as a musical genre is misleading and limiting
- A critical Hiphop pedagogy is not only possible, it is taking place currently
- Hiphop as an anti sexist practice may have more viability as a pro-liberation strategy or strategies. This practice requires participation from both women and men with women being more central in the decision making process.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the conclusions reached and recommendations based on this qualitative study. The conclusions are a result of the literature review, sources and analysis and interpretation process conducted. The conclusions represent the outcomes observed from the collection of data, and the recommendations outline three specific aims. The recommendation aims consist of: practice and implementation, improvements of the research and potential future study.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study a critical Hiphop pedagogy is a viable teaching and learning site, greater inclusion of Africana women is needed to advance strategies of gender equity and both of these efforts can produce a wider range of gender performance.

Hiphop as a mode and articulation of oppressed creativity offers an updated version of Africana cultural practices that were inscribed on the bodies of enslaved Africans as they navigated the ‘New World’. As the four core elements of Hiphop suggest, Hiphop is not static and builds on what Muller (2006) refers to as the spirit. Muller offers:

Spirit within you embodies a complex set of ideas about the uses to which the past is put in...engagement...“Diaspora” is an important location because the diasporic defined here speaks to a way of being in the world that inhabits two or more places simultaneously the first is the physical environment you currently live in, the other references vivid memories of places you have been to previously, which are imaginatively invoked through musical iteration. The ‘new African’ description pertains to streams of...diasporic narratives that diverge
significantly from those of the older, more familiar histories of the African diaspora that brought African slaves from the west and central parts of the continent into the ‘New World’. In contrast to older notions, ‘the new’ African diaspora articulates a more recent, often modern, urbanized, cosmopolitan African past that is continually animated in the present. (p. 64)

These narratives offer insight into what I suggest is a critical Hiphop pedagogy. A critical Hiphop pedagogy is a combination of community teaching practice, lived experience, emotion, and a meaningful commitment to transformation of lives on the margins. By combining the notion of spirit within a critical Hiphop pedagogy, room for liberatory possibility exists. However it must be acknowledged that Hiphop functions in a space that is dominated by commercial rap in a highly concentrated center of limited media ownership. As West (2006) maintains:

One of the most effective strategies of corporate marketers has been to target the youth market with distractive amusement an saturate them with pleasurable sedatives that steer them away from engagement with issues of peace and justice. The incessant media bombardment of images (of salacious bodies and mindless violence) on TV and in movies and music convinces many young people that the culture of gratification—a quest for insatiable pleasure, endless titillation, and sexual stimulation—is the only way of being human (p. 175).

A critical Hiphop pedagogy provides an alternative to the magnetic pull of mass mediated images which legitimize contracted examples of Hiphop culture. Runnell & Diaz (2007) offer that this kind of pedagogy in educational practice is:
A layered approach founded on social justice education, embedded in Hip-hop culture relying on critical pedagogy and community activism to teach Hip-hop as a subject, Hip-hop as pedagogy to teach another subject, and or/ Hip-hop as the warm-up hook Or bridge to draw students into the class. (p. 15)

This study revealed that Hip-hop on multiple levels is already in classrooms and that pedagogical practice is beginning to take shape outside of classroom contexts. The question therefore is, will educators embrace this kind of critical pedagogy and use it in a constructive manner? This kind of critical practice has the potential to serve as an educational construct in addition to intervention to counter over saturated media images which privilege profit over substance. For this to occur, following the work of educators such as Freire and Greene, the culture of Hip-hop must be explored and understood in greater complexity. Freire (1970) reasoned that liberation began with the recognition of a system of oppression and ones place in that system. Though, as noted previously, commercial rap dominates notions of Hip-hop culture, a critical pedagogy provides spaces for critiquing and challenging this hidden curriculum. The notion of a hidden curriculum in the context of schools refers to the set of attitudes, values, and principles that are implicitly expressed to students (Scott, 1990). Extending this concept further, the hidden curriculum, with regard to the limiting notion of Hip-hop being solely commercial rap music, promotes the idea Hip-hop culture is not a viable space for teaching much less learning.

However there are spaces through a critical Hip-hop pedagogy where counter narratives offer a basis of liberation and emancipatory potential. Hip-hop organizations
such as the Hip Hop Congress, Temple of Hiphop, and Raptivism serve as examples for grassroots organization. These organizations model counter narratives, challenging what mainstream discourse has to offer. Hiphop as a cultural force has already altered the lives of young people across the globe transforming their lives and providing possibilities where there were smingly none. The implications of Hiphop as educational practice are varied. More than any other dynamic possible is the ability to think and create for self, this has been one of the common themes throughout the various manifestations of resistance, whether it’s called Jazz, Hiphop or what may come on the horizon.

Inclusion of Africana Women

Anna J. Cooper stated over 100 years ago that, “. . . when and where I enter, in the quiet undisputed dignity of my womanhood . . . then and there the whole . . . race enters with me” (Cooper, 1990, p. 31). Since her proclamation, Africana women have been opening up spaces, not only for themselves but other marginalized people as well. These openings throughout history have forged a space for generating alternative epistemologies.

Cooper’s statement relates to Hiphop culture. Major moments of development or entry in Hiphop culture have been preceded by the pioneering work of women. The person to organize the space for Hiphop’s’ first event was a woman, Cindy Campbell (Sedgwick & Cedar, 2007), the first person to market rap music with success, Sylvia Robinson (Light, 1999) was a woman, the first work acknowledged to critically explore
Hiphop as a culture and a dynamic social text, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (1994), was written by Tricia Rose, a woman.

Beyond Hiphop, history has consistently shown that the voices of Africana women have contributed to the texture and richness of any project of social justice. The work, mentorship, and commitment to challenge gender constructions, among other progressive efforts, were a hallmark of Ella Jo. Baker (Ransby, 2005) who helped shaped the leadership of the modern Civil Rights period. Bakers’ work was a consistent feature among many Africana women of this period and not an anomaly as their absence in scholarly material may suggest. Predating the contemporary period Africana women such as Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth also impacted projects of social justice in their era. However as history has shown the impact of Africana women’s participation, it has also revealed men’s inability or unwillingness for the most part to fully support these efforts. In order for Hiphop to implement greater agency as critical pedagogy, Africana women participating within Hiphop culture must be central in the articulation of a pro gender equity agenda. While Africana women are central, men will need to confront and challenge patriarchy. This contention does not preclude that the overall endeavor is a collaborative effort; it recognizes that over privilege requires more investment into an alternative from the dominant group who have benefited from patriarchy. As Johnson (2004) noted, “A society is patriarchal to the degree that it is male-dominated, male-identified, and male centered . . . one of its key aspects [is] *sic* the oppression of women” (p.165). Further as a result of this societal arrangement Johnson (2004) also writes that:
Because patriarchy is male-identified and male centered, women and the work that they do tends to be devalued, if not made invisible. In their industrialist capitalist form, for example . . . if women do something, it tends to be valued less than when men do it. As women’s numbers in male dominated occupations increase, the prestige and income that go with them tend to decline, a pattern found in a variety of occupations . . . women are routinely repressed in their development as human beings. . . (p.169)

Challenging and resisting patriarchy should be considered a process. This challenge is a daunting task as men; heterosexual men in particular, will have to defy the enemy within. This means betraying a certain kind of cultural performance of masculinity. Cultural performance refers to “expected norms of behavior for the purposes of social agency” (Turner, 1988, p. 24) that reinforce narrow spaces for the participation of Africana women. Lorde (1979) stated:

What woman here is so enamored of her own oppression that she cannot see her heelprint upon another woman's face? What woman's terms of oppression have become precious and necessary to her as a ticket into the fold of the righteous, away from the cold winds of self-scrutiny? . . . We welcome all women who can meet us, face to face, beyond objectification and beyond guilt.

Though Lorde’s context relates to White women and privilege, this can be extended to speak to men of color who have found race worthy of challenging, but have not considered the same space with regard to gender oppression. In this study I found that possibilities for emancipation and liberation through a critical pedagogy are most viable
when they engage all forms of oppression. Gender inequality is one of the specific pieces that can be worked out within the space of a critical Hiphop pedagogy.

By challenging gender inequality a broader context of gender as performance is created. As Runell-Hall stated (2008) “if you broaden the definition of gender as performance to think of all the roles men and women play on any given night-anywhere around the world, then perhaps you would see something very different” (personal communication). If the spaces in which we understand what it means to be a woman, the value of women, is broaden, it can result in a greater range of performance for all. Particularly within a Hiphop context, this widen space allows access and a re-envisioning of efforts to redress oppression. Morgan (2004) says Hiphop:

Made me a better feminist because it didn’t allow me to rest. It challenged me to go into very uncomfortable places without being able to have a moral pedestal to stand and insulate myself from, in terms of difficult questions. But it also, I think, liberated feminism from the old guard and allowed my generation to define feminism on our own terms. Because if there hadn’t been this music—which the older generation was so absolutely unwilling to engage, especially engage any of the greys in it- we would never have been allowed to construct-and really struggle through constructing-this feminism that allowed our voices and our youth culture to be injected. (p.237-238)

A critical Hiphop pedagogy, which I define as a combination of community teaching practice, lived experience, emotion, and a meaningful commitment to transformation of lives on the margins, offers a site for these social justice efforts to take place.
Centralizing the role of Africana women and men challenging their sexism and patriarchy provides the most viable space for a critical Hiphop.

Recommendations

This section details the recommendations that developed as a result of this study. The recommendation aims consist of: practice and implementation, improvements of the research and potential future study.

Practice and Implementation

Among the recommendation findings of this dissertation study infusing Hiphop into the curriculum emerges as significant. Hiphop pedagogy can be useful as an alternative or inclusion in the curriculum to center the experiences of marginalized groups. However there are some considerations given the trajectory and history of both curriculum and people of marginalized groups, particularly Africana people. Second pro liberation gender strategies are needed to advance greater gender balance within Hiphop culture. By providing a snapshot of the history of curriculum and the experiences of Africana people I recommend the infusion of Hiphop centered curriculum, however with some understanding that it may in fact encounter opposition and worse co-optation. To understand these challenges a succinct snapshot of the history of curriculum is important to situate the proposal of a Hiphop curriculum.

Curriculum is the sum total of knowledge to be acquired through the educational process” (Jackson, 2001, p. 61). Curricula are always situated within a political context (Kohl, 1994; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman, 2000; Jackson, 2001; Spring, 2005,)
with regard to what is taught, how what is taught, and who will teach what. In addition to the particulars about who and what, it is also significant to note that who and what is *not* taught, are not neutral, value-free decisions. Educational curricula in the United States have always been linked to cultural domination (Woodson, 1933; Karenga, 1993; Spring, 2005).

Research suggests (hooks, 1994; Jackson, 2001; Spring, 2005) “violence and racism are a basic part of American history and of the school” (Spring, 2005, p. 5). The role of curriculum serves a social function as well as a practical one. Education has historically been used to justify and maintain the authority of the state. The battle over inclusion of traditionally oppressed groups in curriculum has been hotly contested. Spring (2005) identifies this struggle as part of the on going culture wars. Afrocentric and multicultural curriculum have become major points of division among scholars. These ideological struggles represent the issue of control and thusly “no serious curriculum scholar would advance the argument that schools in general and curriculum in particular are politically neutral” (Pinar et al., p 244).

Afrocentric and multicultural educational models are examples of curricula models created to include Africana people specifically, and people of color in general, in the formal educational process (Karenga, 1993; Noel, 2000; Jackson, 2001; Karenga, 2002; Asante & Karenga, 2006).

The Afrocentric model developed as a viable and distinct perspective of the emergent Black Studies movement of the late 1960s (Asante, 1980; Karenga, 1993; Clark, 1996; Ani, 1994). Inspired and influenced by the Black Power movement and corresponding

An ideology and practice of domination and exclusion based on the fundamental assumption that all relevance and value are centered in European culture and peoples and that all other cultures and peoples are at best marginal and at worst irrelevant. (p. 46-47)

Curriculum in the United States prior to these developments has been squarely centered in Eurocentric thought (Williams, 1987; Asante, 1980, 1998; Welsing, 1991; Browder, 1992; Ani, 1994; Simpson, 2003; West, 2004; Ginwright, 2004). Jackson (2001) maintains:

For African Americans, the education system has in many ways done what Carter G. Woodson said in his 1933 classic study, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*. Education in America has taught African Americans to understand the ideals: The values and the norms of white society. It has taught African Americans what white society expects as appropriate normative behavior. It has not taught African Americans anything about themselves or their experience as a people in this
particular society…young black people in the education system are in some ways almost intuitively critical of the system. Their experiences are invisible in the curriculum. (p. 34)

Historically Blacks in an effort to remedy the invisibility and xenophobia inherent in Eurocentric curriculum have had to devise curriculum and a means of education on their own (Anderson, 1988; Jackson, 2001). The Afrocentric idea has not been fully supported or encouraged (Wilson, 1998; Asante, 1998; Ginwright, 2004).

As a further development of the civil rights movement multicultural education sought to address the bias inherent in Eurocentric educational thought. Gant (1996) observes that multicultural curriculum:

Begins with the academic needs and interests of the students. It highlights the history and contributions of all Americans…Students are taught about oppression and social equality based on race, class, gender and disability. Some curriculum concepts are organized around current social issues, including racism, classism, and sexism, and offer discussions about how these and other oppressive dynamics operate in school to produce knowledge and self identity...the curriculum includes discussions about the relationship between knowledge and power. (p. 719)

“Multiculturalism was viewed as a social resource that could forge greater educational opportunities and was closely tied to the struggle for jobs, economic power and community vitality” (Ginwright, 2004, p.3). One of the goals of multicultural education is to gain control of the power to prescribe education for children of oppressed groups (Ginwright, 2004; Sleeter & McLaren, 1995; Sleeter, 1996,). Giroux (2000) asserts “Multiculturalism…is multiaccentual” (p.178) and therefore has different meanings.
depending upon orthodoxy. For some liberals multiculturalism suggests pluralism without historical contextualization of relations structured by power (Blackwell, 1994, Noel, 2000). For some conservatives the multicultural project “has come to signify a disruptive, unsettling and dangerous force in American society” (Noel, 2000, p. 178). This confluence of thought regarding multiculturalism is a result of educators’ efforts to respond to the push for educational reform in the 1980s (Clark & Astuto, 1994, Jackson, 2001). Since the 1990s multiculturalism has suffered from a legacy of assimilationist approaches and attempts to water down its efforts to challenge Eurocentrism (hooks, 1994, 2003; Simpson, 2003) as a result it has seemingly created more problems than solutions. Simpson (2003) argues that assimilationist approaches:

Assimilationist approaches has resulted in a near inability to address racial injustice thoroughly across the curriculum. Most white people prefer to manage diversity rather than confront the ways in which the values and frameworks of people of color call for us to change our own (p. 7).

A viable alternative to multiculturalism is a focus on multicentric curriculum. Robinson as quoted in Crawford (2000) offers:

Multiculturalism or multicultural by definition simple means multiple cultures are represented and makes no specification as to whose perspectives these multiple cultures are viewed from, consequently a textbook curriculum could technically be multicultural . . . and still be Eurocentric in its interpretation of information . . . Multicentric by definition means the representation of multiple cultures from multiple ‘centers’ or perspectives . . . implicit in the
word multicentric is the representation of multiple worldviews (p.11)

Though this history reveals shifting and challenging to alternative modes of learning, using a critical Hiphop pedagogy is still a viable option and therefore a recommendation of this study. By harnessing the multicentric potential of Hiphop culture, through critical Hiphop pedagogy a context for learning, teaching and classroom practice that connects with the cultural context of students is plausible. While a critical Hiphop pedagogy would yield potentially productive alternatives, this study recognizes it is fraught with ambiguity. On the one hand, Hiphop curriculum invites marginalized voices into the academic space and provides a meaningful connection to students, while on the other it also runs the risk of being co-opted, and worse being so completely diluted that the original potency and transgressive quality disappears.

Among the recommendation findings of this dissertation study infusing Hiphop into the curriculum emerged as significant. Hiphop pedagogy can be useful as an alternative practice or included in the curriculum to center the experiences of marginalized groups. However there are some considerations given the trajectory and history of both curriculum and people of marginalized groups, particularly Africana people. This study recommends use of this space with consideration of how, and who will implement this practice. The how and what of this type of practice will be addressed in the improvements of the research section of the recommendations.

In addition to the above recommendations there are specific strategies of implementation.
• **A Loving self-critique of masculinity.** It is intellectually dishonest to suggest Hiphop has outlived its usefulness when there has not been a sustained critique and challenge to patriarchy. One of the benefits of male privilege is to bemoan the negative imagery, lyrics, and implications of both without ever challenging your own complicity. By taking a critical look at how one defines, understands, and performs masculinity, the possibility to understand how these constructions limit the participation of women becomes open. Powell (2003) in his work, *Who’s Gonna Take the Weight? Manhood, Race and Power in American* provides a blueprint for how men can start with themselves as a site for the production of gender equity projects. By providing community programs for boys and young men on masculinity, Hiphop can teach that a broader range of masculinity is possible. Films such as Byron Hurt’s *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes* are part of this process.

• **Purposeful inclusion of women within the discourse.** This should be done with integrity and in an effort to provide a balance in material, rather than an affirmative action for Hiphop quota. Women have co-created, supported, and nurtured Hiphop along with their male counterparts. When using Hiphop culture the texts of women should be central in the implementation of a Hiphop pedagogy. These texts include books, plays, poetry, films, and musical recordings. By bringing the voices and experiences of women in the discussion provides the possibility, within the learning of Hiphop, of a wider notion of gender. This wider notion encourages a re-thinking of not just Hiphop but feminism, social justice, and human rights.
• **Model the successes of grassroots Hiphop organizations.** In recent literature some scholars and laypersons alike have called for a post-Hiphop aesthetic. While this seemingly is on the cusp of something new and exciting, such a proposition suggests defining Hiphop solely within the limitations of the dominant status quo and not enough critical attention to the grassroots of Hiphop. Hiphop organizing is taking place within grassroots organizations. The Hip Hop Congress as an example uses the energy and interest of Hiphop to generate social activism in local communities (Hiphopcongress.com). Organizations like the Hip Hop Congress can be replicated to fit community needs and interests.

**Improvements of the Research**

This dissertation study utilized an interview based study design situated in a cultural studies theoretical framework, grounded in an African centered paradigm. This study interviewed four primary source/respondents who were knowledgeable about Hiphop culture. While this design produced detailed, rich description of Hiphop culture, and feasibility of a critical Hiphop pedagogy, it did not produce data measurable over an extended period of time. In addition by nature of this study, there was only one primary researcher. Given the subject of study a co-investigator would have added a layer of triangulation. Denzin (2000) identifies the use of many investigators as a means for examining data from various viewpoints and perspectives. Janesick (2000) refers to an evolving process extending the triangle; this is referred to as crystallization. According to Janesick (2000):
Crystallization recognizes the many facets of any given approach to the social world as a fact of life. The image of the crystal replaces that of the land surveyor and the triangle. We move from plane geometry to the new physics. (p. 392)

These added layers would have added to the complexity of the data collected as well as implementation recommendations.

Suggestions for Future Study

As a result of the findings, conclusions, recommendations of this study, the following are offered as suggestions for future study:

- Examinations on the impact of sexism on Hiphop and specific strategies used to cope, handle, and challenge these instances. Such a study would be useful in developing practical solutions. These examinations could comprise case studies of non rappers to offset the abundance of studies on lyrical analysis or rap music content. How can current practices shape future work, what solutions can women and men use?

- Examinations on results of the implementation of a critical Hiphop pedagogy to assess community reactions. Has the critical pedagogy achieved its aims, produced a desirable outcome, allowed for participation, what needs to be improved, discarded?

- Examinations of qualifications necessary to implement Hiphop into curriculum. How would this be done in various regions, how would this fit within
standardized testing, how would training be done for educators implementing a critical Hiphop pedagogy?

- Examinations of maintaining cultural autonomy. Can classroom practice replicate the energy of Hiphop culture if institutionalized? What does a Hiphop curriculum look like in K-12 schools, colleges, adult literacy programs and is this legitimate Hiphop?

- Examination of results. What are the educational outcomes of a critical Hiphop pedagogy for students, what will this student look like, what skills should this student have, how will the school environment influence and or impact this outcome?
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APPENDIX A: OHIO UNIVERSITY CONSENT FORM

Ohio University Consent Form

Title of Research: A DJ SPEAKS WITH HANDS: Gender, Education & Hiphop Culture

Researcher: D. Akil Houston

You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to sign it. This will allow your participation in this study. You should receive a copy of this document to take with you.

EXPLANATION OF STUDY

This dissertation seeks to examine Hiphop culture as educational pedagogy and anti-sexist practice. This study plans to investigate and potentially illustrate the educational value in using Hiphop as an educational tool. Through the use of Hiphop as education it is suggested Hiphop can also provide insights to gender equality and broader ways of understanding gender. This dissertation seeks to address the lack of complexity in discourse regarding Hiphop as an educational project and anti-sexist practice.

The interviewee/participant is requested to provide 30 minutes of their time to be asked a series of questions related to the topic and, if necessary, one follow up interview, (again with the interviewee/participant consent). You as the interviewee/participant will receive a copy of all recorded interview materials and a copy of all applicable written transcriptions.

Risks and Discomforts
The recorded interview process by its nature can be uncomfortable and there can be some awkwardness with this process. Furthermore, there can be a certain discomfort around sharing personal information. In an effort to reduce stress and discomfort the following measures will be taken:

- Interviewees will choose the site and time where the interview is conducted in order to ensure it is a place where the interviewee feels most comfortable.

- Interviewee’s will be asked to sign the informed consent document prior to the start of the interview so they will have time to consider participation and make a truly informed decision.

- Interviewee’s will have the opportunity to look over both the recordings and/or transcripts from their interview(s) and make decisions as to final content.

**Benefits**

By examining Hip hop culture with an aim toward education and gender equity, this research will provide educators, community activists, and policymakers with information about how to better use and understand Hip hop culture as a teaching tool and anti sexist practice. Through the use of Hip hop culture as an educational tool it is anticipated that connections between generations, genders, and various academic subjects will be strengthened by research conducted from an insider perspective.

**Confidentiality and Records**

The information obtained in this project will be treated with honesty, sincerity, and without malicious intent. The data collected will be used for the sole purpose of professional publications and presentations related to this dissertation study. Names of participants will not be used without authorization, indicated by the signature below.

Please indicate whether or not you, the interviewee/participant can be identified in any follow-up presentations or publications related to this research. YES_______ NO__________

Additionally, while every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there may be circumstances where this information must be shared with:
* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research;
* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU;

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Akil Houston 740 593-1310 ak@hiphopscholar.org or dissertation advisor Dr. Najee E. Muhammad 740 593-9825 najee_muhammad@hotmail.com
If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664.

By signing below, you are agreeing that:
- you have read this consent form (or it has been read to you) and have been given the opportunity to ask questions
- known risks to you have been explained to your satisfaction.
- you understand Ohio University has no policy or plan to pay for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this research protocol
- you are 18 years of age or older
- your participation in this research is given voluntarily
- you may change your mind and stop participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled.

Signature________________________________________ Date__________

Printed Name________________________________________
Greetings,

I hope this email finds you in the best of health and spirits. I am writing to request your participation in my dissertation research; my topic is entitled A DJ Speaks with Hands Gender, Education & Hiphop Culture. I am interested in the value of Hiphop culture as an educational tool, particularly with regard to gender understandings. I would like to add your intellectual and lived experiences with Hiphop to this study. Toward accomplishing this, with your permission, I would welcome the opportunity to interview you specifically for this work. If you agree to participate, please let me know of a date and time that would be best suited for you. Many thanks in advance.

Sincerely,

D. Akil Houston
Greetings,

How are you? This is Akil Houston and I am contacting you to request your participation in my dissertation research entitled *A DJ Speaks With Hands: Gender, Education & Hiphop Culture*. I am interested in the value of Hiphop culture as an educational tool, particularly with regard to gender understandings. I would like to add your intellectual and lived experiences with Hiphop to this study. Toward accomplishing this, with your permission, I would like the opportunity to interview you specifically for this work. If you agree to participate, please let me know of a date and time that would be best suited for you.
Appendix D: General Instrument

1. Please share with me how you came to be involved with Hip hop culture?

2. How can Hip hop truly serve as critical pedagogy?

3. If possible, how do you think Hip hop can be used as an educational tool?

4. How can Hip hop broaden our understanding of gender as performance?

5. What insights would a critical Hip hop pedagogy offer anti sexist activists and educators?

6. Why would Hip hop be a viable resource for teaching and learning?

7. What would you consider examples of the use of Hip hop culture beyond entertainment?