Constructing Adolescent Social Identities in the Context of Globalization and Transnationalism: A Case Study of Five Adolescents in Innsbruck, Austria, and Their Engagement with Hip Hop

Dissertation

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Abstract

This qualitative study addresses the research problem of understanding and theorizing the construction of social identity among adolescents in the current context of globalization and transnationalism. To address the question, the study focused on five young men in Innsbruck, Austria, who were self-described "hip hoppers." Hip hop is more than a musical style; it is a complex, diverse, and sometimes contradictory social and cultural movement and ideology that is both global and local. It lies at the nexus of globalization and transnationalism, playing itself out in diverse ways in local settings globally.

The theoretical perspective of the study emphasized the variability and contextual embeddedness of social identities as part of the performativity of identity (a theory espoused by Butler). This theoretical perspective argues that social identity is multiple and iterative, meaning that participants are continually enacting and modifying their social identities as their contexts change over time and space. Social identity is, according to this study, socially constructed and governed by the relationships and environments in which the participants function. The sociolinguistic principles guiding this study are analyzed derived from microethnographic discourse analysis. The spoken linguistic codes performed by the participants and the literacy practices these codes enable the subject to not only their own social constructions, but those given to their practical cultural environments. Language is viewed as a code through which the participants can communicate their hip hop affinities and an inclusion in a hip hop community.

This study is based on a number of case studies, drawing on qualitative methods. The orientation of inquiry is ethnographic, in that it draws on an epistemological orientation focusing on the relationships between the participants and the researcher, leading to personalized insights developed solely on the depth of these relationships. Most essential to the development of ethnographic research is the tacit

understanding that inquiry is ongoing based exclusively on the revelations of focused interactions and dependent on the relevance of context affecting those interactions. Research questions are anticipated, yet depend exclusively on the unfolding of shared interactions and the data produced thus creating new platforms for future discussions. In this way, I utilize ethnographic methods and principles within the context of a qualitative inquiry. The qualitative methods include the foci on case studies and the ethnographic principles allow for the open-ended methods in seeking insight into the personal motivations in the lives of these participants' enactments of identities. The underpinnings of the methods are ethnographic in that they rely on emic interactions, however, the practices are clearly qualitative as they rely on interviewed research and concomitant lines of research.

The methodologies and research methods employed in this study are compatible with the principles and practices of ethnographic and sociolinguistic research as are the values placed on individual's experience and agency in various contexts and how they are revealed to the researcher. The logic of inquiry for the study was informed overall by ethnographic epistemology that is research sought to identify the individual particularities of individuals deeply embedded in the various contexts of their existence and how those aspects change over time, space, and relationships. As in ethnography, this qualitative study aims to acknowledge a full range of experiences and the ways that they are embedded within variable contexts and as they are interpreted by the ethnographer who is engaged with the participants. Methods involve both emic and etic interpretations.

The study took place over 18 months in the two Innsbruck area high schools where the participants attended. Data collection included participant observation, lexical survey, individual and paired interviews, as well as participant-recorded videos of hip hop activity. Data analysis involved (a) thematic analysis which is consistent with grounded theory; and (b) abductive interpretation (analogic reasoning).

The major findings of the study regarding the construction of social identity were:

- the influence of global and local relationships,
- that identities were idealized and performed iteratively,

- authenticity as a central motivation, and

- the role of tensions between collectivism and individualism as societal ideologies.

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It is with joy in my heart that I recognize those individuals who have been instrumental in my progress to this point. First, I would like to thank my advisor and mentor, David Bloome, for his endless support, guidance, and understanding throughout my doctoral process. His generosity is boundless and I am forever changed for having known him. I would also like to acknowledge the members of my committee: David Bloome, Sarah Gallo, Alan Hirvela, Jan Nespor, and Cynthia Selfe. Their patience and understanding has allowed me to accomplish my goals for this dissertation while their recommendations have helped me to raise my standards of excellence.

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Field of Study

Major Field: Education: Teaching and Learning

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Evolution of This Study

It started in 1979, when I was seven. My uncle, still in high school, had a bedroom in the far back of my grandparent's house. I used to sneak back there and listen to records with him during our Sunday dinner visits, trying to understand the chaos that teenagers brought. I didn't really like the music he played, it was too menacing, it didn't sound like the Beach Boys my dad played which I liked so much. He used to play this kind of music when he played Dungeons and Dragons with his acne scarred friends. I didn't like the shroud of darkness the music brought, but it felt like some sort of honor to hang out with him back there.

One afternoon, I was heading down the hall to his room and I felt something pulsing behind the closed door. I knocked and entered and was overcome with a kind of electricity that pushed me in the chest. I saw him on the floor in front of the record player with a bright blue album cover in his hands. There was a beat that sounded like my mom's Motown, but not at all. I was listening for singing, but it was definitely different from singing, it was more of a lyrical chanting with voices overlapping and competing for the microphone. I asked him, "Who is this?" He handed me the album cover and it looked like a candy store. I was able to read the big print that said, Sugar Hill Gang and stared at it for some sort of explanation. "It's rap music," he said through a mischievous smile. I was transfixed. But needed to move my body. I sat directly in front of a speaker, cross legged, realizing that the chanting was taking off with me. I could

understand the lyrics and they were funny, really. Humorous and playful. But, I was scared, in a way. What did it mean? How was this music? I didn't get any answers, but I knew I needed to find out.

This sensation stuck with me the whole evening. The whole week, actually, until we went back the next Sunday for dinner. My uncle wasn't there, so I found a reason to go back to the hall to the bedrooms. I knocked gently on my uncle's door and there was no reply. I knew he would destroy me for invading his hyper-guarded teenage privacy, but I needed to get in that room. I risked it and went in. I went to the cabinet where his records were organized and flipped through until I found the color-cartoon-covered album cover. I just felt it in my hands, read as much of it as I could and looked at it entranced. I knew something special was happening. The birth of an electric new genre that was unlike anything I had ever heard. It felt like the future. And it was.

By the time I was in high school, it was a "thing", no longer the up and comer, it had a strong hold on youth culture nationwide. By that point, it was all anyone in my urban high school listened to.

I remember my first Hip Hop concert in snapshots; it was the Bestie Boys. The crowd assembling in the auditorium, trying to look at everyone in the huge room in my nervous curiosity. The frenetic energy when the first beats were played, lights flashing, and three jumpsuited, gold chained men running from the wings with microphones in their hands. The dizzying pace of their music for far longer than I could actually take it. And the curtain coming down while everyone went wild screaming for an encore. Blasted looks on faces as we filed out buzzing and laughing. There was a tangible feeling of unity among the fans. We were breathless and silent in the back seat on the way home. It was more than either of us had anticipated. I felt like I was in love for the first time in my life. Hip hop.

College was my first taste of gangsta rap. It was Ice Cube's solo album, *The Predator*. Then there were the Digable Planets, Freestyle Fellowship, Busta Rhymes, De La Soul, Tribe Called Quest, Cypress Hill, Slick Rick's imitator a young Snoop Dogg, Biggie Smalls.

Something somewhere had shifted. There was a sharp divide between east coast and west coast rap and we were all compelled to take a side. I was "east coast" with a certain amount of insistence in my tone.

People were getting shot. Pimping and dealing meant status and rap was mean. These were not the days of unity I had grown up with. Rap was divisive. Even the second album by my beloved Digable Planets found Islam and rapped angrily about the White Devil.

I went underground and found solace. There were hip hoppers who felt the same despair as I had over the turn rap had taken. They went back to the days of my youth when rap was a call for solidarity and peace. Not found in a shot gun barrel or a body count. Black Star says, "One, two, three, Mos Def and Talib Kwali, we came to rock it on to the tip top, best alliance in hip hop. One two three, it's kind of dangerous to be an emcee, they shot Tupac and Biggie, too much violence in hip hop."

The underground is alive and thriving, well, to the extent that anything "underground" does. For a while between then and 1999, I was starting to think I was the only person left listening to that school of hip hop. I graduated with my master's degree from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island and got on a plane – with a one-way ticket I might add, I was optimistic – to Zurich, Switzerland and took a train ride to the Principality of Liechtenstein where I met up with my boyfriend who had taken a job there. I found a great way into teaching and life in the Alps suited me better than anything I had experienced. Rhode Island had been the smallest place I had ever lived but Liechtenstein was several scales smaller. And far more cows. After some time to adjust, I made a friend from Denmark who actually loved the same school of hip hop as I did. He was also a successful competitive beat boxer. With some connections, I got a gig to deejay at a tiny, but popular club in the valley. It was Thursdays and it was the first underground hip hop night in the history of the small country. I felt an imperative to educate the club-goers in the real soul of hip hop, according to me, of course. And it was a huge success. The thrill of telling my own story behind the table was overwhelming. The sounds I loved pulsing at top volume, sharing a piece of my own history, and a hungry crowd.

Being there, at that time, at that place is what brought me to this point, researching hip hop adolescents in Austria. Liechtenstein was the spark, on a bus. I was sitting near the back and two young teens got on sporting baggy pants and t-shirts with a cd player with two sets of headphones connected to their ears. They were talking and rapping (and cursing) very loudly, and English hip hop language spoken

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through a German accent caught me off guard. I was overwhelmed by this notion of how hip hop had landed in this tiny country nestled in a narrow valley in the Swiss and Austrian alps. I watched and listened very carefully both out of bewilderment and amusement. I loved these boys, though I'm sure I was the only one on the bus who felt this way. There is an understanding between hip hoppers. As Bonus, one of the participants in this study, commented, "es ist egal ob er des macht oder das" (it doesn't matter if he does this or that), if it's hip hop, you have respect.

Research Problem

The primary concern of this ethnographic study is understanding the context for the social construction of young peoples' social identities, and how that context has changed from just a few decades ago. This change can be attributed to developing technologies and other social, economic, cultural, political, and technological dynamics that have made globalization and transnationalism more prominent in the daily lives of most adolescents and young adults. The question on which I focus is: how might we understand and theorize the construction of social identity in the current context of globalization and transnationalism? Great significance lies in the compulsion for the participants to authenticate their and others' global and local cultural practices as they relate to hip hop. To begin addressing this question, in this study, I look at five male adolescents who self-identify as "hip hop" and participate in various and distinct hip hop practices in Innsbruck, Austria. This participation has influenced their social identities as they seek to understand their worlds.

While this study involves a review of the aspects of social identity construction and the influence of performativity among adolescents who took part in this research, there is relatively limited research done in the areas of how globalization and transnationalism play a part in these constructions. Concerning the transnational model, there is particular relevance to performativity and the relationships between global and local forces. In the case of the adolescents involved in this study, the global influences of the Hip Hop Nation affect how they experience and transform their local lives and the positioning of themselves in the

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dialectic tensions between their own personal understandings of themselves and those of broader popular culture. How these messages get internalized and reimagined is a matter of the relationships of the existing schemata of these individuals and how they develop transformative syntheses of local and global forces. These forces are brought to bear on the identities of these young men, shaping and reshaping the ways that they are made aware of themselves in the multiple and shifting contexts in which they function. This study brings to light how the participants recursively develop evolving iterations of their ideal visions of themselves in this process, while questioning those contexts and the effects the varying processes exert on those identities.

Research Questions

Research questions serve a different purpose in an ethnographic study than in a traditional study: they guide the inquiry, rather than presenting questions to be answered empirically. An ethnographic study does not seek to prove or disprove a hypothesis. Accordingly, the questions guide the study in ways designed to generate theoretical constructs that can be part of a larger effort, in this case to theorize the construction of social identity in the context of current matters of globalization and transnationalism. The questions guiding this inquiry are:

1) How do the participants in this study respond to globalization and transnationalism (as represented by the global and transnational promulgation of hip hop) in the construction of their social identities?

2) How do the participants engage hip hop ideologies to demonstrate social authenticity as they construct social identities?

3) How do the participants use language and literacy to construct social identities within the context of their engagement with hip hop?

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This ethnographic study addresses how five adolescent males in Innsbruck, Austria, deploy complex strategies to create hip hop identities. Given their location, participation in hip hop is more complicated due to their remote positioning from the United States, "where it all happens with hip hop" (Sohne Interview, 3.7.12). I look at how these participants situate themselves amid contradictory ideologies found in the Hip Hop Nation, a concept that captures the hip hop trajectory over time and includes all hip hop practices that take place on a global scale. The students employ many resources to access hip hop ideologies, aesthetic sensibilities, and cultural products—typically through the internet—and in doing so, they challenge the stability of national borders and notions of insularism.

The key tenets comprising this dissertation contribute to a number of academic fields of inquiry implicating the audiences for whom this work may be beneficial. First, I find the main thrust of this dissertation as concerning the development and construction of social identities among adolescents who identify with a particular cultural or social group. Of the audiences for whom this dissertation was written, perhaps the most significant may be adults who impact the lives of adolescents, such as teachers and high school administrators. This study looks at the complex and sometimes contradictory ways that identities are pursued among adolescents, bringing to light some of the nuances of these constructions. I take into consideration the performative nature of identity and the essential interplay of multiple selves across these performances. Further, this notion of performativity highlights the relationships between local lives and global influences and the ways that they come to contact and necessarily transform local realizations of the self or selves. These activities in adolescent lives allow individuals to attain new, or reinforce existing, status as in-groupers or other desired social identities.

What proves a significant element in the global/local transaction is its relevance to other chief influences on adolescent social identity construction being those related to either globalization or

transnationalism. These influences may draw significant attention from the social sciences and anthropology. Both globalization and transnationalism operate differently for and within individuals. Globalization allows for adolescents to engage as more passive participants in their development, accepting the unilateral flow of information from one hegemonic state to a less dominant state. Alternately, transnational influences tend to allow for the reciprocation of ideas from cultures that exchange along a network of equals. The transnational model allows individuals to contribute to the discourse they desire as well as accepting ideas and ideologies that they may want to incorporate into their developing identities. This model also informs the understandings that individuals have of the dynamics of their own cultures and those that may impact them.

The sociolinguistic features of this piece may be of interest to those studying the effects of globalized language on local groups. This study deals directly with they ways that various hip hop languages (i.e. graffiti, dance, deejaying) may affect participants in Innsbruck, Austria. This study shows the incorporation of English hip hop language into their German speech, thus indicating that there are certain linguistic features that cannot be replicated in multiple languages and must be imported in the original language. This is particularly salient in alternative cultures where use of the original language takes the fore out of a need to create an insular group of speakers in order to protect deviant behaviors, such as graffiti, from their dominant language group within local communities.

A Perspective on Constructing Social Identities

The theoretical frame I use to explore social identity involves concepts of authenticity, discourse, and performativity. Social identity is multiple and transactional, and therefore contingent upon the global and local contexts of the individual. To begin, I call on Heidegger's (1962) notion of *Dasein* as a departure from the prevailing attitudes in philosophy of his time. Dasein is often regarded as the English translation

of "the self" and the very localized, nearly internalized, meanings therein. As the self, Dasein appears to function in isolation, free from social context. However, upon closer consideration, Dasein's true meaning is literally "to be" and "here" – the self is suddenly interacting with its context. As Pedersen and Altman (2015) describe, "the self is not a 'what' but a way of being" (p. 13), to which I would add *in the world*. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) further this understanding, noting that "identity is a discursive construct that emerges in interaction" (p. 587).

This notion of Dasein's "self" as a socially embedded interaction is supported by Hatab (2015), who writes:

> So, Dasein's "self" is not a discrete entity but a temporal movement toward a future informed by an inherited (thrown) past; nor is Dasein simply a "mind," but rather an engaged agent in a practical environment; nor is Dasein simply an individual self, since being-with other Daseins is an essential feature of the lived environment (p. 14).

It is within this "practical environment" that the participants in this study do the identity work of being hip hop. Identity work requires an ongoing negotiation of favorable and authentic aspects of new discourses one wishes to add to or replace. In the case of hip hoppers—and other members of groups (or spaces)—they actively seek what they deem to be authentic based on criteria they have adapted from other hip hoppers, who themselves index cultural ideologies and productions of cultural goods. Lee (2010) cites Chang (2007) in stating that "'hip hop is a lingua franca that binds young people all around the world, all while giving them the chance to alter it with their own national flavor'" (p. 139). This localization involves rejection or identification of new ideas and practices; therefore, identity work is performed at these sites of contact.

By accessing online resources, the participants are entering a discourse that portrays multiple images of what it means to be hip hop. Here I use Gee's (2001) definition of *discourse*:

Discourses are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positioning, and clothes. A discourse is a sort of 'identity kit' which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize. (p. 526)

Gee (2005) refers to these affiliations with a particular discourse as "affinity spaces" which can come together within a given place, or in the case of these participants, a virtual space through internet network connections. In these spaces, they are able to create conditions whereby they perform aspects of their visions of hip hop authenticity. To frame these phenomena, I borrow a Butlerian perspective on *performativity* (Butler, 1990), as the participants behave in ways congruent with their ideas of hip hop including elements of dress, attitude, and language. The concept of *citationality* (Butler, 1990) refers to this iterative series of events that emblemize an authentic hip hop discourse. Participants experiment with a variety of possibilities (or identity kits), gauging which ones are most effective and lead to their desired outcomes. Considering how integral the hip hop "spaces" are to the participants' evolving identities, I look to theories that best articulate how these identities are in flux. Deaux (2000) also emphasizes the many forces working in social identity theory, stemming from psychology and sociology. She states:

[T]he self is constructed in and dependent upon the social context, and…assume[s] a multiplicity of self-definitions. Sociological models, particularly that of Stryker, pay more attention to structural issues, attending both to features of the system in which the self is embedded. (p. 2)

This embeddedness is also illustrated in Heidegger's notion of Dasein, in which the self takes shape depending on social, cultural, and political contexts, and that it necessarily shifts along with its interactions.

In brief, this study tries to locate the participants' varied and various ways of integrating the outside world into a particular self-concept. These participants acknowledge their multiple selves and that they "perform" various identities depending on the situations they navigate. To illustrate this construct, consider Bonus, one of the participants in the study. Bonus articulated two disparate and distinct identities

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that he often found himself navigating. Early in an interview, he had talked about his different identities as a kind of "schizophrenia," which is the same term in German and English. Later, he offered this example:

B: Yes, you think, when, when, I go out, and see my paints and my spray paintings, and nobody sees, also they see my painting, but they don't see me, and that's, how can I explain that? That's a good feeling. And, hip hop.

J: Mysterious…

B: Mysterious, yes. You have two identities, one identity with your crew at two o'clock in the night, and one identity you go to school and talk with the teachers, and they don't know what is going up. But, that's better so.

(Bonus Interview,10.8.12)

Bonus recognized that these overlaps that were sometimes in sharp contrast to one another, such as late night graffiti rendezvous and talking with adults in authority positions in open daylight, and were dangerously juxtaposed. Hip hop was—based on music choice, style, and language—their most fundamental identification, and is how they wished to be viewed. Some of them were given to physicalizing these traits with cultural goods to project those identifications more superficially, while others simply lived out their affiliations through music and art. This issue of performing a hip hop identity was most evident when we met for discussions, perhaps due to the focal subject we were discussing and their attempts to appear authentic.

In this study I look at the hip hop identities of the participants and how they use their resources to live out the ideals they value. Assuming the multiple and overlapping nature of social identities, these performed identities are played out in any number of changing contexts, and demonstrate the participants' idealized self-images within them.

The Role of Globalization in the Construction of Social Identity

To help me identify the influence that globalization had over the participants' social identities, I must first define what I mean by globalization. To begin this discussion, a point of departure may help to establish the terms which will be negotiated. This departure requires looking to the concept of a *nation-state*. Vertovic (2009) points out,

> As with the conventional model of the nation-state, some sense of identity is presumed to characterize a people; this identity/people is believed to be contiguous with a territory, demarcated by a border; within the border, laws underpin a specific social and political order or system; this social order – which is conceived to be different from orders outside the border – both draws upon and reinforces the sense of collective. (p. 87)

For those entities and peoples who hold fast to borders and the social and political norms that are sustained within them, Lam (2006) describes globalization as having "often been characterized as an objective reality of global market forces and new communication technologies that are changing the face of the earth" (p. 222). This globalizing of these technologies tend to start with the innovations of a more powerful nation, and is then distributed broadly with a movement resembling a ripple effect, so it is often conflated with *Americanization* (Suarez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004).

Silver (2003) likens this idea of globalization as a central force radiating outward, unidirectionally, to the nations it deems peripheral, to a "steamroller." In this model there is very little credence given to how receiving nations respond to this flow of power. Rather, they become subjugated and lose the right to independence. In this way, globalization is a postmodern analog to colonialism. While goods and ideologies do flow back to the centralized nation, upon closer examination there is a colonialist tendency to *import*. In other words, the more powerful nation decides what to exploit from less powerful nations rather than those nations deciding what to *export*. This approach reifies the construct of the nation-state whereby cultures, economies, and ideologies are contained within the political borders that encompass them.

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The Role of Transnationalism in the Construction of Social Identity

In contrast, within the concept of transnationalism power doesn't radiate from the center to the periphery. Instead, this model functions more like a dense matrix of networks through which cultural information and goods get exchanged in all directions. The key word is "exchanged" because instead of simply receiving, less powerful nations are suddenly more significant as they are reciprocating with their own ideologies and cultural products. This has shifted public conceptions of participation in world activities. Kearney (1995) attests that there is an increase in

> anthropological literature concerned with migration and other forms of population movement, and with the movement of information, symbols, capital, and commodities in global and transnational spaces. Special attention is given to the significance of contemporary increases in the volume and velocity of such flows for the dynamics of communities and for the identity of their members. (p. 547)

A transnationalist stance is a drastic departure from the theories underpinning globalization. Transnational theory is concerned with the connections created among people, societies, and economies, for example. Globalization tends to reify borders between nation-states, and sequester individuals and groups to their places of origin and ascribe the perceived traits they are considered to "contain." Transnationalism is the proliferation of relationships that tend to blur boundaries and ease communication and trade. Basch, Glick, Schiller, and Blanc (1994) define transnationalism as:

> The process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. [They] call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders…Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states. (p.7)

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Access to transnational individuals, groups, and institutions has deeply affected the social identities that the participants in this study have developed over time. Their identities are influenced by the ideal images and sounds that are communicated on a global scale through blog posts, video sites, and online stores (Field notes, 9-28-12). In this way, these Austrian youths are weakening the borders that once surrounded this information in order to join a global hip hop discourse.

The transnational model likewise presents influences on social identities in a vastly different way than globalization. It troubles those boundaries that insulate the nation-state, in order to encourage network-building by individuals and groups. Shared understandings, meanings, attractions, and behaviors connect individuals into communities not bound by physical and cultural spaces, as in Gee's (2005) notion of *affinity spaces*. On a larger scale, this can be rephrased to reflect the greater issue of global/local relationships. In the moment of contact, the global introduces novel ideologies to, or reinforces, pre-existing local cultural practices, creating a zone in which negotiations between the two forces or entities take place. As discussed throughout this dissertation, hybridization occurs during the merging of two or more ideologies as they challenge, accommodate, and transform one another. What is constructed in this hybridizing space is what the individual hopes is a more favorable social identity that he or she "tries on" in the form of enactment or performance. Butler (1990) describes this process as *performativity*, whereby she denies the viability of a singular, core or fixed identity. Rather, she promotes a series of identities that a person enacts while attempting to perform a successful social identity. These identities are contingent on the context in which the individual performs and are created through social transactions. Thus they are flexible and overlapping, and are subject to change based on the needs of the individual over time. This will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

In the case of the participants in this study, they make decisions regarding social identity in light of what is identified as the "Hip Hop Nation." The Hip Hop Nation is a complex and encompassing set of aesthetic, social, cultural, economic, and political worldviews and practices that are sometimes discrepant. Therefore, hip hoppers must decide which influences they will accept and which they will eschew as they develop hip hop identities. However, this contact of global hip hop with local identities can yield

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discomfort and unpleasant feelings that can inhibit one's experience. In this way, hybridization is not

necessarily positive, but it does nonetheless shape the identities of the participants. Some of the participants

hold very strong opinions about their views of negative aspects of the hip hop community and, in doing so,

they fortify their own visions of what "counts" as hip hop.

The Role of Language and Literacy in the Construction of Social Identity

Due to the vast social networks of global hip hop, the participants access, try on, and perform hip

hop images and ideologies mainly through online participation. However, they may also experience various

local enactments of hip hop that are lived out and produced in Innsbruck, reflective of other local cultures

throughout the world. One participant, in fact, enacts hip hop locally as a deejay, then posts the beats he

creates to a transnational site called "SoundCloud" which is accessed publicly on the internet. In this way,

he is contributing to the growing body of work known as the Hip Hop Nation, and he is using transnational

media to project an idealized image of himself as a deejay to a worldwide audience. He is using his

knowledge of and proficiency within a specific hip hop literacy in order to open up and reinforce his place

in hip hop discourse.

One of the most valuable tools for entering a hip hop discourse is language. Hip hop has a dense

and highly creative lexicon that covers all aspects of its practices and worldviews. The language is

specialized for all domains that comprise hip hop—graffiti, emceeing, deejaying, and breakdancing—and

demonstrating mastery of this language is leverage toward an authentic hip hop identity. In discussing real

hip hop, authentic hip hop identities and how they relate to language, the participant Turtle reveals his

beliefs about valid hip hop participation. He describes his own projected identity that he tacitly juxtaposes

against his true practiced identity as authentic, but he makes a clear statement about how to identify a real

hip hopper:

T: For example, I don't look like a hip hopper

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J: So, it's not by looks. So how do you know if someone is hip hop?

T: Language, he *is* how he talks.

"Language, he *is* how he talks." This is a profound statement for identity as a general subject of inquiry: that language determines the verity of one's being, or at least one's performed being. "He is how he talks" speaks of the ways individuals use learned language to enter desired discourses.

Definitions of Key Terms

In this section I clarify several terms and their meanings as they are used in this study. These are brief explanations, as many of these terms are discussed in greater detail throughout the dissertation.

Authentic: Authenticity, as I view it in this study, reflects the shared and agreed upon beliefs about hip hop as expressed through the Hip Hop Nation. Authenticity is the standard of legitimate hip hop practices and attitudes to which the vast majority of hip hoppers ascribe and which they wish to enact. Credibility is highly valued in the hip hop community, and is a result of some comparing the standards put forth by the authority placed in the Hip Hop Nation to its followers. In this way, authenticity and its authority are only as plausible as the willingness of the followers to believe in it.

Globalization: Globalization is a system that distributes political and economic ideologies and goods from a centralized nation to "peripheral" nations. It emphasizes the essentializing of cultures according to their geographical bounds. Globalization functions similarly to a postmodern instantiation of colonialism (Suarez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004).

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Hip Hop Nation: The Hip Hop Nation is an ideology that represents all aspects of hip

hop throughout its history and across all cultural spaces. Therefore, many believe it to be a source

of authority dictating authentic hip hop beliefs and practices.

Literacy Event: A literacy event is any occurrence whereby activity is centered

around text. These activities often include discussion or talk about text. A literacy event is enacted

and is therefore observable behavior.

Literacy Practice: Literacy practices are the theoretical underpinnings behind events that define what

counts as literacy, how it is used, what it looks like, and which people or groups are allowed to

participate. A literacy practice is an accumulation of events over time and space, and because it is

ideological, cannot be observed directly.

Social Identity: A social identity differs from identity as it is dependent upon social

context and interaction to constitute what it is and is not. One's social identity is a semblance of

multiple and overlapping concepts, and is performed as an iterative function contingent upon the

ideal self that one imagines.

Transnationalism: Transnationalism represents the theoretical and technological

disassembling of national borders, therefore facilitating the creation of networks that ease the flow

of ideas, culture, and cultural products among people, groups, and institutions. Of particular

importance is that these flows are reciprocal and weaken the authority of hegemonic political and economic systems, as well as the essentializing of cultures or nationalities.

Limitations of the Study and Researcher Positionality

There are three main limitations involved in this study. First, it is not clear that the theoretical constructs generated in this study are applicable to other geographical contexts and communities or otherwise generalizable. I attribute these phenomena to the particular time and space occupied by the participants, realizing the significance that their contexts exercise over their experiences.

Second, the participants were speaking English during our discussions, which is a foreign language that they had only studied for a small number of years. I am, however, fluent in German and it became necessary at some points to translate words and phrases in order to proceed with the interviews/discussions. Therefore, I must account for any difficulties in communication that impeded our understandings of one another.

Third, in any ethnographic study, part of the interpretive process depends on the ethnographer and what he or she brings to the study. Therefore, my own positionality is of significant concern in the validity of my interpretations. I must take into account my own identities as an Anglo-American woman in my thirties. Being white placed me in a secure position within Austrian majority norms. However, being white may also signal the position of "outsider," considering that hip hop is dominated by people of African descent. It is also a significant barrier that I am a woman as hip hop is a male-dominated genre. I may have appeared to know and understand less about hip hop due to gender expectations. In addition, hip hop is typically ascribed to youth culture. My age may have served as an initial barrier in earning the trust of my participants.

What this Study is Trying to Do, and What it is Not Trying to Do

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The purpose of this study is to generate theoretical constructs related to the construction of social identities within the context of globalization and transnationalism. I am particularly interested in the interplay between these concerns and the contributions of literacy and language as taken up by the participants in this study. I am not attempting to generate a theory or theoretical model of social identity, a task beyond the scope of any one study. Rather, I attempt to convey the significance of the particular ways these issues are experienced by the participants. I am also not attempting to develop any generalizations about youth culture in Austria. In sum, I am seeking to provide a component to answer the larger question posed earlier in the Research Problem. I hope to participate in a dialogue that is concerned with social identity and a youth culture that is faced with the increasingly imposing structures of globalization and transnationalism.

Chapter 2: Hip Hop and Relevant Models of Globalization and Transnationalism

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides a perspective on hip hop as a particular case of globalization and transnationalism. The purpose of this section is to define hip hop as a cultural framework that is ideological at both a global and local level, and that can be viewed as structured by a tension between collectivism and individualism. The second section provides a broader discussion of globalization and transnationalism. The purpose of the second section is to contextualize the social structures that are enacted on a global scale, and therefore affect the behaviors and beliefs of the participants in terms of constructing social identities.

The Purpose of Section One

As the pace at which hip hop is becoming a world phenomenon has increased, so has the proliferation of literature reporting its cultural and commercial impact. Alim (2006) recognizes the responsibility of research to "represent a theoretical shift from viewing Hip Hop (sic) as a product to viewing Hip Hop as a process, as lived experience, and cultural practice in a hood, or hemisphere, near you" (p. 970). The hastened spread of hip hop throughout the world is due very much to the accessibility of technology in developed and developing nations. Alim highlights an epistemological reframing whereby hip hop is more often recognized as a set of worldviews and beliefs rather than the mere purchasing of cultural products as a source of identification. This has become more visible as the study of hip hop enters the mainstream. He fashions a term to describe this research as "hiphopography," and highlights the urgency for "[h]iphopographers [to] have the chance to document the lives, narratives, and practices of Hip

Hop's culture creators while they are actually living and engaging in Hip Hop cultural practices—It's a living history, a history in motion" (p. 972-973).

Bearing in mind this broadening of research, in this literature review I took care to reflect only on the issues represented in the scope of my study. First, I look carefully at the effects of globalization and transnationalism on the development of hip hop as a world phenomenon. I then introduce the idea that hip hop is a medium through which we may view the broader social constructs of collectivism and individualism, and address the processes by which global hip hop is taken up by local followers and consumer audiences more generally. As the media demonstrates, "hip hop's influence goes beyond music and has an impact particularly on youth" (Lee, 2010, p. 139). This impact is demonstrated through highly localized iterations and is played out through strong social identifications sought out by the adolescents researched in this study. These influences can be seen as reworking their linguistic, artistic, and other communicative styles, providing them with novel ways to understand and be understood. Pennycook (2007b) cites Mitchell's (2001) argument that "hip hop and rap cannot be viewed simply as an expression of African-American culture; it has become a vehicle for global youth affiliations and a tool for reworking local identity all over the world" (p. 102). Or as simplified by Watkins (2007), "all hip hop is local" (as cited in Lee, 2010, p. 139). These local identities successfully adapt and shape various aspects of global hip hop to create new and pertinent meanings. To discuss these meanings, I must first introduce a brief history of the genre, to show how it began and how it is evolving in contemporary times.

Hip Hop and its History

Hip hop as a global phenomenon began as a product of a historic burgeoning social movement that questioned the sustainability of living conditions found in impoverished urban communities, particularly the Bronx, New York. While similar social movements have persisted throughout world history, what sets the hip hop social movement apart is that it mobilized its message primarily through the visual and

performing arts. Hip hop's artistic voice was meant to rally local citizens behind the movement through creative participation, yet was also meant as a vehicle for channeling the movement to a broader audience with greater social traction. Fueled in part by the shift toward information industries, the decay of the long-standing labor industries in New York's underserved neighborhoods faced a fatal blow, thus contributing to the decline of local economies. In retaliation, the hip hop movement stood in stark contrast to this economic oppression by transforming distress into art and art into industry (Rose, 2008). Accordingly, "hip-hop as a new Black popular culture is the public space where Black youth give voice and speak for themselves about the communities, conditions, and neighborhoods in which they live" (Prier & Beachum, 2008, p. 524).

As Watkins (2005) describes, "in the midst of the volatile surge of social and economic change an exuberant youth culture started to take shape. What began in basements, on street corners, in public parks, and throughout the still of the night would furnish young people fertile spaces for crafting new identities, explosive art forms, and later, whole industries" (p. 9). These developments were reinforced by innovations rising from the Bronx—also called the Boogie Down Bronx—and unified all of New York's boroughs under the name of hip hop. Major innovations included an unprecedented form of dance, the electronic craft of sampling beats and riffs in the world of deejaying, the crafty artfulness of rap freestyle, and the explosive vision of graffiti. Along with these activities came linguistic stylings and concomitant fashions that defied the status quo. As Watkins (2005) attests, "No year reflects that more than 1979, the year that hip hop emerged from the underground world that nourished its soul and sparked its creative fire" (p. 10). 1979 was the year that the Sugar Hill Gang released "Rappers' Delight" and hip hop was born into the open arena of popular culture. The commercial success of the album opened roads for record producers to seek out powerful young deejays and rap artists to capitalize on this musical trend.

As is clearly demonstrated by its foundations in soul, rhythm and blues, and reggae, hip hop is the culmination of a number of forms of black popular music. Mitchell (2001) plants her research further into the genesis of rhythmic speech, with predecessors ranging from "griots of African storytelling chants, to the more contemporary, Muhammed Ali, jump-rope rhymes and hand games, even chain gang and military songs across the decades" (p. 4). However, what mobilized hip hop was the advantage of innovative new

technology, allowing its artists to literally borrow—or rather, repurpose—the most provocative sounds of their predecessors and construct innovative songs with the tools bequeathed to them.

The "Hip Hop Nation" (Heath, 2006, p. 849), to which the broader movement is often referred, gained momentum in what took shape as a multi-media demonstration of resistance through creativity. Richardson (2006) cites KRS-One to explain that "Hiphop is '[t]he transformation of subjects and objects in an attempt to describe [a] consciousness,' a consciousness that the English language is not fully capable of expressing; hence, Hiphoppas exploit all available means to their own purposes to foreground their experiences" (p. 42). The Hip Hop Nation is comprised in its broadest sense of the people who inhabit and cross between the four main domains of artistry of hip hop: (1) breakdancing, also called b-boying or b-girling; (2) graffitiing, including compositions such as murals and stylistic markings known as tagging; (3) deejaying, also known as DJing or those who practice "turntablism"; and (4) the most prolific and visible of the four, rapping, also called emceeing, as in Master of Ceremonies (Watkins, 2005). While the hip hop movement has built on these four domains since its inception, its artistic expressions have proliferated to include beat boxing, fashion, poetry, many new styles of dance, and a plethora of other practices. The aesthetic sensibilities of images and sound are recognizable across time and space, and are governed by this unifying force. The Hip Hop Nation subsumes all hip hop activities and the ideologies that develop from them. It includes the practices and beliefs about the world across all nations and their cultures, and is representative of these activities over time. Therefore, the Hip Hop Nation is often invoked to provide a sense of "authenticity" in people's behaviors and as a way to gauge how reliable one's worldview is (Basu & Lemelle, 2006).

However, hip hop heteroglossia has not abated. There are persistent rifts among its participants that have resulted in a fragmenting of the Hip Hop Nation stemming from competing epistemologies. The interpretations and uses of hip hop vary dramatically depending upon what the artists feel are its fundamental messages. What began as an economic, political, and social movement took a sharp turn with commercial success. It became a mouthpiece of the "I got mines" attitude of the urban streets (Mukherjee, 2006). The heights to which the lucrative successes of rap have risen is out of step with a strong resistance

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movement that still speaks for the poverty and oppression of the mostly unchanged conditions of the American ghetto. Many of the conflicts surround exorbitant luxuries, particularly clothing, jewelry, and cars. Such items may be meant to empower black youth, but may instead be deluding them with false expectations and fueling the urgency of making excessive amounts of cash, even by illegal means. Unlawful activity brings both loathing and admiration among teens. Often seen as a rite of passage (Rose, 2008), many of the youth buy expensive clothing that is designed to mimic prison styles, with the intent of appearing to have street credibility and the earned reputation of a thug - the overlords of ghetto activity, often participating in many of the criminal activities of the streets (Baxter & Marina, 2008). It is indeed the commercialization and commodifying of harmful ideals that makes "consciousness-raising" rap distinct in its urging of youth away from criminality and the degradation of ill-gotten materialism (Corrigan, 2009, p. 6). Examining these conflicts brings to the fore questions of racial, economic, political, and social oppression and the conditions that facilitate these issues.

These clashes of ideologies reflect the friction between social collectivism and individualism. Conscious or collectivist rap urges hip hoppers to champion the social movement that would release their communities from the shackles of poverty and oppression. The success of hip hop and rap appealed to the purses of the music industry, allowing rappers and groups to earn exceptional amounts of profit and nurturing an attitude of dog-eat-dog competition. I liken this tendency to the social model of individualism where the success of the individual is prized above all. Communities and groups fell to the wayside, leaving people of color to continue a struggle that could have been abetted by solidarity of voice in the mobilization of the community's *counterstory*.

There is a connection between the platform of the Hip Hop Nation and Critical Race Theory's counterstory agenda (Alim, 2006, p. 2) that is pertinent to this dissertation study. Critical Race Theory (CRT) has developed as a method for problematizing the hegemony that continues to dominate and control people of color in the United States. Solórzono and Yosso (2002) describe CRT as "a framework that can be used to theorize and examine the ways race and racism impact on structures, processes, and discourses" (p. 156). CRT exposes the untold stories of minorities living in the margins and pushes against a skewed

perception people of color learn about themselves and their prospects. Zamudio et al. (2011) seek to refute the commonplace expectations of historically mitigated roles and responsibilities of the oppressed in supporting the "[c]ritical race theorists [who] engage in the practice of retelling history from a minority perspective. In doing so, CRT exposes the contradictions inherent in the dominant storyline that, among other things, blames people of color for their own condition of inequality" (p. 5). As stated by Prier & Beachum (2008), "Critical race theory suggests that the nature of race and racism is organized through the social structure of society and agrees on the following major points: race is a social construction (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 259);...the experience of racism is historical, political, social and contextual;...CRT centers a counter-narrative to the dominant discourse as a central feature of epistemological construction" (Beachum et al., 2008; Lopez & Parker, 2003). A collective urban arts movement materialized as a site for exposing the inequalities of a racialized social binary. In the context of a black artistic movement, Dixon & Rousseau (2005), Ladson-Billings (2003), and Morris (2001) describe counterstories as "perspectives that challenge, expand and decenter national narratives as the exclusive domain of dominant cultural forces" (as cited in Dingus, 2006, p. 213). Hip hop has, through its own dynamic and stylized fashion of storytelling, repositioned the narrative of the black voice historically and synchronically.

Solórzono and Yosso assert that "racism is systemic; it is an ideology, fueled by white privilege" (2002, p. 163). If this is the case, it seems that rectifying ideological conflicts would be an arduous task. In order for dominant groups to prioritize equality and make advancements in those social policies and attitudes which would serve the advancement of minority groups, it is the insistence of critical race theorists that such gains must be incurred concomitantly by dominant groups--this is referred to by Critical Race theorists as "interest convergence" (Bell, 1980, p. 528). Radical and highly visible racial theorist Malcolm X (1964) brought extremist doctrine to the Civil Rights Movement in defiance of the altruism of white society as related to interest convergence, proclaiming that "'they [dominant/whites] don't try to eliminate an evil because it's evil, or because it's illegal, or because it's immoral; they eliminate an evil only when it threatens their existence' (p. 40)" (as cited in Zamudio et al., 2011, p. 35). Interest convergence, as defined by Bell (1980), guarantees that the interests of whites are fully considered before

the needs of the minorities will be appeased. The stop-start movement of anti-discrimination advancement is largely due to the infrequency of conditions conducive to the self-interests of both whites and people of color.

Opportunities for musicians of color have often preceded many of the standards that whites have produced, and have contributed greatly to the body of music included in Americana. A convergence of interests appeared to have taken place during the early 1830s and 1840s when Minstrel shows were introduced to white audiences, not just to mock humorists' dramatizations of distortions widely held as black pathologies, but to appreciate the musical talents of the era (Ogbar, 2007, p. 13). Minstrel buffoonery, steeped in racist imagery, may no longer take the surface appearance of entertainment of decades past, as Ogbar (2007) describes. However, contemporary critics contend that while consumers are aware of the inherent racism in Minstrelsy, its transformation into the current iteration of hip hop does not escape its degrading undertones: "Aware of this cultural heritage, hip-hop artists have demarcated their own contours of expression that engage the polemics of racial performance, making the minstrel an essential reference point. Indeed, the legacy of minstrelsy looms large in hip-hop as artists and others engage in a dynamic contest for the direction of its multibillion-dollar industry" (Ogbar, 2007, p. 34).

Despite the mass success of hip hop as a multibillion-dollar industry, an aspect of the conditions from which many of its artists have risen requires the artist to display his or her affiliations with urban black culture that are shared as a statement of solidarity. This sentiment is known as "keepin' it real." It has come to represent the impossibility of leaving behind the ways of the streets despite any physical, intellectual, emotional, or material distance one may have traveled away from the ghetto (Ogbar, 2007). Even musical fame and widespread popularity requires that an artist keep up a certain level of street credibility in order to stay in favor with his or her audience. While "keepin' it real" indexes a lifestyle that respects all aspects of life in an urban setting – including positive connotations - it may inadvertently reify racist stereotypes in the eyes of outsiders, and may simultaneously encourage a mentality whereby it is implied that little can be done to defy the deleterious influences of "ghetto life". Rather, one may defy a

relationship to these attitudes, but he or she will be seen as disrespecting his or her cultural ties and therefore lose credibility in the eyes of certain consumers.

From the beginning of rap's popularity, its lyrics have had mainly to do with the conditions and circumstances affecting a marginalized black America. For example, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five produced one of the first commercially successful rap songs in rap's burgeoning career. In the song, this refrain was sung across many vignettes portraying crime, prostitution, and the drug culture: "don't push me 'cause I'm close to the edge, I'm trying not to lose my head. It's like a jungle sometimes, it makes me wonder how I keep from going under" (The Message, 1979).

> The idea that hip-hop [sic] can—and even should be—a political force has compelled many in the movement to begin thinking more seriously about how best to realize such a vision...This sense of urgency, the idea that hip hop is ready to make a bigger mark on the world, sets the stage for the movement's most important struggle—a struggle within its ranks to define its political calling. (Watkins, 2005, p. 151)

As Watkins (2005) comments in the same article, "[e]fforts to mobilize a political base in hip hop typically start with the false premise that the movement is essentially black" (p. 150). The misconception that hip hop hails from a singularly black community base is propagated by marketing that focused squarely on the black artists who most prominently appeared in label-sponsored events. In fact, Puerto Ricans from the same ghettos are considered to be equally responsible for the vitality of early hip hop and made great contributions to the media of breaking, graffitiing, and deejaying. From the beginning, hip hop took shape as multifaceted movement springing from urban neighborhoods where one was a part of the multiplicity of races and ethnicities indelibly marking the composition of the hip hop community. This community and sense of solidarity is the target of the work of "consciousness-raising" hip hop, where artists attempt to "regain a sense of responsibility and commitment to its overwhelmingly, though admittedly diverse, youth-based constituency" (Watkins, 2005, p. 151).

Whereas consciousness-raising rap speaks to solidarity, education, and pride, mainstream rap (also called bling or commercial rap) addresses the spoils of accumulation of material assets. For rappers, the message is blatantly demonstrative of a rapid rise to the top via corporate entertainment. Bling is now common nomenclature for jewelry, or other reflective objects of great worth, such as expensive cars. It is a status marker that one has achieved a certain amount of prestige among his or her peers and is making a steady and excessive income, where the money spent on expensive items is easily regenerated and a certain lifestyle is maintained. As one critic points out,

> Answering capitalism with über-capitalistic excess, bling performs specifically racial work, positing blackness as social asset and the ghetto as reservoir of rebellious creativity and stylish daring...Likewise, the bling aesthetic makes specifically racial claims on commodity markers of white cultural capital...Thus, assigning resistant meanings to abiding signifiers of white affluence, it disrupts the racial exclusivity of white access to luxury, wealth, and consumerist excess. (Mukherjee, 2006, p. 600, 612)

Flashing bling, cash, and other previously unattainable items is an affront to the dominant (white) society that has for so long had exclusive control over the flow of such items within the U.S. It is wistfully displayed with a sentiment of "I got mines," often done in mockery of the dominant class. As much as these displays of overcoming struggle are valid expressions of what hip hop means in America, so too are the calls to question the systemic ills of social stratification of the status quo. Hip hop has taken this to task since its inception. What can be called "consciousness-raising" rap is also referred to as "Old School" by the participants. This vantage imposes a different sort of values onto the hip hop collective. There is a distinctly social and egalitarian attitude creating an alternative worldview that has colored the genre. Since the inception of hip hop, rap's underground intelligentsia has mobilized artists of a variety of sounds and styles to resist the status quo and raise a movement for social justice.

KRS-One, one of the original rap artists, pushed awareness of "some of the major issues of the period--poverty, violence, racism, the ravages of drugs, corrupt law enforcement, the shake-down ways of the music industry, and the commercial takeover of hip hop" (Watkins, 2005, p. 240). He asserted that "hip

hop is beyond entertainment—it's a behavior, a consciousness, a way to view the world" (Watkins, 2005, p. 241). In sharp contrast to the consumption of commercial mainstream rap artists steeped in luxuries, Dyson illustrates, "[c]ontemporary conscious rappers are lauded as much for what they don't say as for what they spit on record. They don't brag about exorbitant jewelry, excessive women, or expensive automobiles. Conscious rappers do talk about racial injustice, police brutality, over-incarceration, political prisoners, rampant poverty, radical education inequality and more" (2007, p. 67). Casting an intellectual shadow across the blaring light of commercialism, KRS-One and his cohort established an inner voice to the rap game, asking the unpopular questions and demanding that those in the rap spotlight value the opportunities they are given to influence mass change. His philosophy was that "hip hop was a way of life to be cultivated, and not a lifestyle brand to be consumed" (Watkins, 2005, p. 243). This language is pure urban folk rhetoric, intent on freeing rap music of moral degradation and corporate nihilism.

The language of hip hop can be related to any number of its key artistic elements, and indicate a measure of authenticity which may parlay individuals into hip hop discourses. The use of hip hop language indexes cultural worldviews that at least temporarily place the speaker within a desired "affinity space" (Gee, 2005) which provides a place where individuals may undergo some language shift. Richardson (2011) states that "the social actor wishes to be aligned with some quality, some things, some places, or some ideas, thus using words known to be associated with them" (p. 232). Therefore, certain styles take shape, as Bell (2001) points out: "individual speakers use style--and other aspects of their language repertoire--to represent their identity or to lay claim to other identities" (p. 141). To cultivate these social identities, "global hip-hoppas [sic] use these language ideologies, are involved in some aspect of the hip-hop elements, participate in hip-hop events on- or offline, such as purchasing recordings, or learning and discussing rhymes, to name a few" (Richardson, 2011, p. 236). Often, participants will join together to form what is known as a crew--or community--with whom they practice hip hop communication forms during related activities. Richardson states that within this "system hip-hoppas [sic] share resources and have allegiance to one another as extended family members in whatever aspects of the hip-hop they practice" (p. 243). In a study of online German hip hoppers, Richardson (2011) presents a collection of

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words and phrases both adopted and adapted from terms of American origin. In doing so, she makes apparent that German participants are significantly knowledgeable of hip hop culture. They use hip hop words and phrases to communicate more nuanced meanings than could otherwise be stated in their native tongue. I discuss the sociolinguistic relevance of this study in greater detail later in this chapter.

This knowledge has been shared widely as a transnational phenomenon. The networks of communication have proliferated across space and time as a result of increased technological access. Hip hoppers are able to view the whole history of hip hop in an instant and are able to stay connected to the most current trends in the genre, thus bringing more dimensions that shape their social identities. Using transnational networks, participants are encouraged to reach out to resources across the globe, therefore dissolving national borders online.

The Purpose of Section Two

The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the stark contrast between how world cultures experience and pursue global interactions, given the distinctions between globalization and transnationalism. The models of flow and trajectories of power differ significantly between globalization and transnationalism, thus affecting the ways that people experience the world in their local contexts and while moving abroad. To that end, the thrust of this section is to delineate the departure by which transnationalism as a concept challenges and resists the traditional discussions of globalization, as a means of defining the model of how information and industries take shape in a contemporary international context. I discuss the stark contrast between globalized distributions of power and the reciprocal model found in transnationalism, leading to extensive networks of information, goods, and services representing nations that were heretofore considered to be peripheral rather than agentive. I also look briefly at transnationalism as a pattern of transmigration and the movement of peoples across traditional national borders, and how they maintain lives in multiple locations without loss of integrity of connection.

Transnationalist theories of migration exist, but their scholarly tenets remain loose and unincorporated. Portes et al. (1999) note that "transnational migration studies for a highly fragmented, emergent field which still lacks both a well-defined migration studies theoretical framework and analytic rigor" (p. 218). Given these limitations, I attempt to create an integrated argument that represents the ways that I approach transnationalism in this study. The study of transnationalism examines global configurations of networks that allow relationships of individuals, ideas, and the flow of formal and informal interdisciplinary media to proliferate in increasingly rapid and transformative ways. Determining the meaning of transnational activity demands locating critical points of connectivity among intersecting trajectories, easing and extending mobility. Further examination reveals an epistemological rift over the fundamental questions raised in this discussion. The rift divides globalization, which is itself a postmodern model of colonialism, from transnationalism, which shares certain surface features but on closer examination departs ideologically and structurally. They both increase access to information and transportation, which, in turn, allows participation in physical and virtual locations, in social and cultural practices, and in proliferating ideologies that may modify how one experiences the world. Pollock (2002) observes that "the discriminatory perspectives of an older form of globalization—colonization—seem to have revived themselves at the point at which we readily consider ourselves to be worldwide citizens forever 'hooked up' (connected) on-line" (p. 5). In order to look more intently at these models of informational and transactional flows, I first focus my attention on globalization, followed by an in-depth look at transnationalism and the global/local dialectic pertinent to this study.

Relevant Scholarship on Globalization

Globalization is not easily defined as it affects so many aspects of social order. For example, the flow of popular cultural information and goods is hastened by the acceleration of globalization, particularly that emanating from the United States. Fairclough (2000) states that "globalization can be seen as 'the tendency for economic, social, political and cultural processes to take place on a global scale rather than within the confines of particular countries or regions'" (as cited in Pennycook, 2003, p. 521). Suarez-

Orozco and Qin-Hilliard (2004) delineate its multiple interpretations as "quite broad and lack[ing] well-defined boundaries. Some simply equate globalization with free markets. Others use the term interchangeably with such concepts as transnationalism or postnationality. Still others use the term as a proxy for imperialism or neocolonialism. In the popular mind, globalization is often [a] proxy for Americanization" (p. 8).

Epistemologically, examining the products of globalization assumes that "actors tend to be depicted as so heavily constrained that they cannot possibly react against these universalistic systemic forces" (Khagrem & Levitt, 2007, p. 4). Globalization, in this sense, is well rendered by the metaphor of a "steamroller" which tends to homogenize local sites in predictable ways (Silver, 2003, as cited in Khagrem & Levitt, 2007, p. 4). In terms of power distribution, the assumptions accompanying globalization include colonialism, as power tends to remain centralized and flows unidirectionally rather than reciprocally. These shifts in our understandings of global phenomena are evident in the ways the participants' view how culture gets exchanged.

The tenacity with which globalization operates conveys a new wave of frontierism that is not satisfied with commerce or culture within its own geographical space. Rather, it must cast its goods and ideas into global landscapes for optimal revenue. Accordingly, I will examine the globalization paradigm and its homogenizing tendencies. I will then discuss the literature that identifies the ways that globalization is epistemologically reconfigured to allow for ideological shifts mobilized through transnationalism.

Vertovec (2009) supports the idea that globalization primarily affects "interactions between national governments (such as formal agreements, conflicts, diplomatic relations), or concern[s] the toing and froing of items from one nation-state context to another (such as people/travel and goods/trade)" (p. 3). The force of globalization has gained increasing momentum as new technologies and optimized transport of goods have opened new channels for consumerism on a global scale. For these purposes, I describe globalization as centralized and positioned in a secure hegemony in the world. Therefore, the belief systems and commodified products thereof are disseminated from a central locus outward into the receiving nations,

with very little concern for the impact those visions may have on them. In this way, globalization has a homogenizing tendency, that which plasticizes and transforms.

Pennycook (2003) cites Kubota (2002), who "suggests three related processes: 'Globalization implies increased local diversity influenced by human contact across cultural boundaries as well as speedy exchange of commodities and information...cultural homogenization influenced by global standardization of economic activities and a flow of cultural goods from the centre (sic) to the periphery'" (p. 521). As Rubdy and Alsagoff (2013) state, this model of globalization tends to demonstrate "a flow from the West to the rest. To be sure, 'there is substantial asymmetry in the flow of meaning in the world: the center mostly speaks, while the periphery listens'" (citing Hannerz, 1992, p. 219). As a consequence of this enhanced mobility, the movement of more abstracted entities is enabled to access broader audiences as well, creating *contact zones* whereby ideas and goods are negotiated according to local standards, needs, and wants (Pratt, 1999). Key to understanding the model of globalization that Kubota renders is that there is a hegemonic nation-state at the center that decides what to disseminate or distribute, and radiates outward to less powerful recipient nation-states.

Relevant Scholarship on Transnationalism and Global/Local Relationships

In this project, I pull the locus away from what globalization views as a unidirectional flow of ideas and information that moves from a centralized location and spreads across the globe, reconfiguring localities and their practices. In its place, I employ the language and framework of transnationalism, which describes flows of information through a complex set of networks that move multi-dimensionally and reciprocally, allowing information to be shared rather than accommodated.

To revisit the description of a nation-state, Brettell (2003) reminds us that "there is a widespread, long-standing model of the nation-state that portrays it as the combined legal and institutional structures governing the people, economy, and political processes contained inside a recognized border" (p. 85). While this may be considered a relatively benign definition, a number of theorists concerned with this

concept challenge it as being overly deterministic, and call our attention to an encroaching *deterritorialization* (Appadurai, 1992). Deterritorialization insists that "the landscapes of group identity…around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous" (Appadurai, 1992, p. 191).

> There is, Appadurai later contends,
>
> an urgent need to focus on the cultural dynamics of what is now called *deterritorialization*. This term applies not only to obvious examples such as transnational corporations and money markets, but also to ethnic groups, sectarian movements, and political formations, which increasingly operate in ways that transcend specific territorial boundaries and identities. (italics original, Appadurai, 1992, p. 192).

However, keeping in mind these transnational possibilities, some seek the very (imagined) stability that borders create. When taking such descriptions into account, previous notions of the nation-state must contend with novel concepts such as deterritorialization. As the result of transnationalism, borders necessarily weaken and the momentum of multi-directional dispersal of people and the ideas they carry with them becomes strengthened and ultimately less fixed. Transnationalism tends not only to emanate outward but receive inward, allowing receiving nations the ability to leverage their own ideologies and ideological products to affect any given transaction. In this way, one might envision a symbiotic system – a system that sustains itself without either/any elements being depleted. However, the language of "transnationalism" is less often discussed in analyzing such findings and often reverts to the prevailing notion of globalization.

> Khagram and Levitt (2007) state:
>
> Transnationalism drives home the importance of the socio-historical context and the danger of making universalistic generalizations that wash out critical shades of difference. It also

demonstrates the continuing importance of individual agency, local knowledge, and cultural

practice. (Khagram & Levitt, 2007)

They propose five aspects of a transnational approach to studying global economic, social, and ideological movements and exchanges. Below I present a table outlining five aspects of transnationalism by which I will determine its relevance to the study. These approaches are intended to analyze the historical and spatial shifts that impact local cultures, beliefs, and practices more exhaustively. Table 1 outlines the criteria and purposes of these five foundations of transnational studies.

Table 1

Foundations of Transnational Studies

Empirical Transnationalism	"Encompasses discourses, material flows, cultural interactions, and artistic genres that are produced and exchanged across borders…concerned about what circulates, how it moves, and with explaining why certain ideas and practices take root while others are ignored."
Methodological Transnationalism	"Reformulates existing data and accounts, invents new kinds of information and evidence, applies existing investigative approaches in novel ways, and designs novel research tools and approaches with which to analyze, explain, and interpret transnational phenomena and dynamics."
Theoretical Transnationalism	"Constructs and tests explanations and crafts interpretations that either parallel, complement, replace, or transform existing theoretical accounts."
Philosophical Transnationalism	Assumes "the metaphysical view that social life is transnational to begin with—transnational phenomena and dynamics are the rule rather than the exception, the central tendency rather than the outlier."
Public Transnationalism	"Creates a space to imagine options for social transformation that are obscured when borders, boundaries, and the structures, processes, and actors within them are taken as given."

Table 1. Khagrem & Levitt, 2007, pp. 5-10.

Through the lens of *Empirical Transnationalism*, the analysis of hip hop as a genre moving through spaces and across time reveals the more practical aspects of marketing and distribution. Hip hop, like many American pop cultural institutions, tends to dominate music, film, television, and cultural goods emanating from North America and distributed first to economically developed nations worldwide (Blommaert, 2010). There, these trends are taken up and circulated widely for their entertainment value and sense of authenticity. Clearly, however, the distribution expands to nations in diverse economic

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circumstances, meaning it reaches those nations that wield substantial power and nations that may have less economic and political influence. Therefore, hip hop can be found in the most remote of locations, where local inhabitants don t-shirts of rap artists and have contact with resources that can disseminate songs and videos (Charry, 2012). One must thus consider the marketing strategies of these goods: what is sold and what is not, and more importantly, where. This speaks to the universality of the sounds and sentiments of the genre. With this in mind, it becomes apparent that the central themes expressed in hip hop music can be adapted to reflect the experiences and desires of people living in vastly varied social, economic, and political contexts.

Methodological Transnationalism can be considered as an inquiry into hip hop exigencies as viewed through ethnographic and sociolinguistic frames. Often, studies in popular culture as transnational events are viewed through statistical measures that quantify experiences and ways of being in order to satisfy governmental agencies. Taking an ethnographic stance allows the researcher to look at the complexities of how cultures grapple to understand one another, and how this tension finds itself expressed in local human lives. Discovering transnationalism with sensitivity to its nuances and complications requires alternative research methods that can critically interrogate inequalities and efforts to disrupt them. This study was approached with the assumption that the participants integrate global hip hop ideologies into their localized practices and broadening worldviews. In this way, they are challenging borders and overriding insular attitudes in the ways they identify themselves as hybrid.

Well-aligned with Khagrem & Levitt's views of *Theoretical Transnationalism*, this study also addresses the theoretical assumptions of the Hip Hop Nation as outlined by Watkins (2001). The Hip Hop Nation considers the overarching forces that unify hip hop practices worldwide. The notion that hip hop is an international collective supersedes the previous ideas that looked at hip hop in isolable instantiations, without continuity and connectivity between localized hip hop activities. The Hip Hop Nation, as a construct, mobilizes local peoples as agentive in their practices and as contributors to something larger than their own individual practices. This theory fully realizes the nature of a universal movement of hip hop and

the plausibility of hip hop as a worldview. This worldview dissolves boundaries and allows its participants to view their lives as a necessary contribution to the evolution of the genre.

For example, one participant in the study, Macko, collected a purely visual series of videos capturing the broad and various graffiti pieces installed throughout Innsbruck. In this way, his vision displays a *Philosophic Transnationalism*. Macko experienced the practices of a graffiti writer as being fully in communication and harmony with the attitudes of graffiti writers on an international level. He demonstrated tagging, which is a practice where graffiti writers stake claim to a space by marking it with their own personal "signature," or a stylistic interpretation thereof (Interview, 5.31.12). This practice can be seen in spaces that transcend borders, and is adopted by hip hop and graffiti artists worldwide. Macko's depiction of graffiti demonstrated aesthetic traditions that have been put forth with great consistency throughout the Hip Hop Nation. As such, graffiti styles and the aesthetic or artistic forms they produce are recognizable regardless of the language or semiotic system. In this way, graffiti tends to support the notion that it exists transnationally and without borders.

With regard to *Public Transnationalism*, hip hop as a social movement calls for solidarity and cohesion among its participants. While some hip hop is possessed by competition and domination, for the most part the Hip Hop Nation calls for community and an attitude of support and collegiality. Social transformation is key to a hip hop sensibility. Whether it is a rising up against social, economic, or political oppression, hip hop puts forth the idea of unity and cultural solidarity. Even in the cases of those hip hop artists who are more consumed by the spoils of success, they still, in their own ways, speak of breaking free from previously held expectations imposed by cultural dictates. In these cases, success is financial rather than social. However, the sense of unity overrides judgment and discrepancies. To paraphrase Macko's earlier sentiment, when you are a hip hopper, you see the world differently than other people, and this transcends personal differences (Macko Interview, 6.14.12).

In discussing these ever-expanding flows of global ideologies, the term globalization is often a proxy for transnationalism, as these concepts are only now being distinguished from one another. Rubdy

and Alsagoff (2013), for instance, discuss globalization with qualities reflective of transnationalism. They put forth a keen observation:

> Whereas traditional conceptions of culture assumed an isomorphism between place and culture, globalization has dislodged culture from particular locales. In a world of 'culture in motion', however, 'the deterritorialization of culture is invariably the occasion for the reinsertion of culture in new time-space contexts' (Inda & Rosaldo, 2008, p. 14). Hence, global cultural forms are not free-floating but are always reinscribed in new time-space contexts, relocated and relocalized in specific cultural environments. This means that globalized culture is never simply deterritorialized. It is also always reterritorialized, the two processes occurring simultaneously. (p. 7)

In a transnational context where presumptions are often conflicted and expectations are reevaluated, the former institutions of culture, race, and ethnicity are questioned and new formations of shared experiences defy generalizations. The challenges of locating individuals within these spaces further complicate such classifications. The spaces are configured as networks that make contact with the people, places, and ideas in increasingly complex ways. Such connections facilitate contact that, unlike a unidirectional globalization, takes the mobilized ideas and transforms and reciprocates them in free communication with one another. This allows individuals to share information rather than receive information.

Vertovec (1999) suggests that "in one sense depicted as shorthand for several processes of cultural interpenetration and blending, transnationalism is often associated with a fluidity of constructed styles, social institutions, and everyday practices" (p. 4) Further, he cites Mahler (1998), Levitt (2001), and Golbert (2001), who describe the access of individuals who share information and ideas across space and time and the belonging of those "who have never moved but whose loyalty is significantly affected by the activities of others abroad" (cited in Vertovec, 2009, p. 87). Gee (2000) contends that these networks and the ways in which they become active and increasingly complex across time and space connects people in what he calls "affinity spaces." Lam (2006) suggests that "[a]n affinity group identity is developed through networking, collaborating, and affiliating, sometimes across distance, around common interests, joint

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endeavors, and shared causes." Placing analytic focus upon them, Lam proposes, may bring into relief "how dominant notions of culture (as ethnic, class, and gender differences) are inflected, perpetuated, or given new meanings in these practices" (p. 219).

The roles and responsibilities of an individual are to express allegiance to these groups and participate in shared experiences which strengthen the network connection and integrity of the group (Gee, 2000). Lam (2006) further explains that "by involving multiple and nonexclusive affiliations, these transnational spaces challenge conventional notions of locality, community, and belonging" (p. 223). As evinced by these teens, local is suddenly refashioned to reflect styles indexed by a social movement originating thousands of miles away, while community and belonging are rapidly expanding global enterprises. Necessarily, the contact that local teens make with global hip hop results in recontextualization and reimagination. As Littlejohn and Putnam (2010) describe, these teens "live at the axis of these cultures forming a 'glocalized' community" (p. 121)

Instituting glocalized communities summons a reconsideration of what constitutes borders and boundaries. When looking at the flow between global and local forces, questions arise regarding how boundaries are characterized. From a revised sense of contiguousness, Wimmer (2007) contends that "boundaries result from actions of individuals on both sides of the boundary and from their interactions across the boundary" (p. 14). In this sense, a boundary is imagined and dependent upon the individual's needs and what is reflected back, hence *blurring* what was once fixed and reified (Zolberg & Woon, 1999). The hip hoppers in this study refashion international identities that demonstrate what Warikoo (2007) calls "boundary work" (p. 389). She describes what Zolberg and Woon (1999) articulate as "boundary blurring," whereby groups exhibit "the tolerance of multiple memberships and an overlapping of collective identities hitherto thought to be separate and mutually exclusive" (as cited in Warikoo, 2007, p. 389). Brubaker (2002) further claims that "a diffuse postmodernist sensibility emphasizes the fragmentary, the ephemeral, and the erosion of fixed forms and clear boundaries" (p. 164). Lam (2006) asserts that studying transnationalism "allows us to explore the porous boundaries between cultural practices as these practices travel with people and media channels across diverse communities and shifting social and spatial territories

(p. 217). Along these lines, Bizzell (1982) contends that "no community is completely closed off from another; virtually every community and/or culture that can be identified in a complex society like that of the United States is going to be relatively 'soft-shelled' with interactions across community boundaries and/or is going to 'intersect' with other communities" (cited in Farr & Guerra, 2009, p. 8).

Integrating distinct ways of being into an unfamiliar community may prove difficult considering the uncertainty accompanying new social structures and their various configurations. *Framing* defines ways that individuals may make accommodations and adjustments in the face of new expanding network intersections. It refers to "processes of negotiating conscious, shared meanings and definitions with which people legitimate, motivate, and conduct their collective activities" (Vertovec, 2009, p. 44). The participants in this study have never travelled to the United States; however, they access American hip hop goods, aesthetics, and ideologies that govern their social identities and affect their daily practices and worldviews. In this way, the global is brought to the local as new information makes contact with the extant knowledge and beliefs of individuals.

Looking at the transnational flow of the Hip Hop Nation, it becomes necessary to interrogate the processes by which these cultural messages get taken up by the participants in this study. To situate this in the context of global hip hop, I consider Levy's (2001) view that hip hop constitutes a "global urban subculture that has entered people's lives and become a universal practice among youth the world over…From a local fad among black youth in the Bronx, it has gone on to become a global, postindustrial signifying practice, giving new parameters of meaning to otherwise locally or nationally diverse identities" (as cited in Pennycook, 2007, p. 7). Global hip hop is disseminated across networks, finally making contact with individuals in local spaces throughout the world. It is worth questioning the specific ways in which, for the purposes of this inquiry, these transactions take place. Below, I will examine more closely the specific models of engagement that transpire when these global forces make contact with local, particular individuals.

While I assert that transnationalism implicates the influences that global and local cultural processes both operate independently, I focus more carefully on the functions and outcomes of reciprocity,

or how those influences inform one another. To be clear, I do not assert that when a local culture makes contact with some external force, the local must accommodate the new ideas by discarding preexisting characteristics to somehow "make room" for those incoming influences. In this way, I do not suggest that new ideas replace previous cultural knowledge or assume the premise that something is lost on contact. Rather, I would argue that the incoming ideas are synthesized with preexisting norms and only serve to proliferate shifting cultural expectations over time and space.

As cited in Rubdy and Alsagoff (2013), Kumaraivelu (2008) asserts that "'cultural transmission is a two-way process in which cultures in contact shape and reshape each other directly or indirectly'" (p. 4). Tomlinson (1999) restates this notion by reframing globalization, which as noted above tends to assume that receiving cultures are passive and information flows unidirectionally. Rather, the transnationalist model gives individuals agency, such that "'local' groups absorb communication from the 'center' not in a unidirectional manner but through 'selective incorporation' in a great variety of ways" (Rubdy & Alsagoff, 2013, p. 5). These ways are multiple and are made visible from the appropriation of goods to social identities. From this perspective, global ideologies, discourses, and cultural products are transported through technological advancements and make contact with existing local cultural frameworks throughout the world, creating a kind of *hybridized space* where negotiations are brokered and both forces are affected and synthesized to create new understandings.

Bhabha (1994) describes this phenomenon as "the interstitial passage between fixed identifications, which 'opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy' (p. 4). The hybridized space is an *inter*-cultural space "where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between*" (emphases original, as cited in Rubdy & Alsagoff, 2013, p. 7). The confluence of ideals or identities is generated when global and local forces make contact and this space is created anew, a transformation placing the global in the local and the local in the global. Specifically, Bhatt (2008) argues for a discursive space where

> 'two systems of identity representation converge and are co-modified and commodified in
> response to the global-local tensions on the one hand, and the dialogically constituted identities,

formed through resistance and appropriation, on the other' (Bhatt, 2008, p. 178). Hybridity thus

challenges and problematizes essentialist dichotomies and identities and so leads to the restoring

of agency and enfranchisement. (Rubdy, 2013, p. 45)

Considering the growing attention paid to the concept of hybridity, as noted above, it is worth

clarifying what is meant by the term. Rowe and Schelling (1991) define hybridity as "'the ways in which

forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new form in new practices'" (as cited

in Rubdy & Alsagoff, 2013, p. 8). Rubdy & Alsagoff (2013) further elucidate the broader meanings and

implications of this complex idea:

> The main thrust of hybridity thinking today concerns cultural hybridity, as in recent cultural
>
> blends in art and music, but also in the diverse cultural influences in management techniques in
>
> business, and interdisciplinarity in sciences and education. Most common of all is everyday
>
> hybridity in identities, consumer behavior, lifestyle and so forth. Thus having been enlisted for
>
> various political and scholarly agendas, hybridity has emerged as a master trope, a privileged site
>
> for conceptualizing global/local articulations. (p. 8)

Those global/local articulations are key in understanding the relationships between cultures in a

transnational model. However, they are also key in freeing the individual from an identity that is fixed,

singular, and persistent regardless of contexts within cultures. Otsuji and Pennycook (2013) discuss

hybridity as being "mobilized to oppose what are seen as essentialist accounts of culture and identity.

Rather than people being assumed to adhere to ascribed identities…whose characteristics are pre-given and

known, hybridity has emphasized multiplicity and the diversity of mixed outcomes" (p. 84).

To support the relationships between global and local ideologies put forth by Rubdy and Alsagoff

(2013), I explore the theoretical construct of contact and how it informs notions of appropriation. Contact,

as a concept, describes the point where the unfamiliar is made familiar to the extent that new information

and ideas can be accommodated by the receiver's existing cultural framework. Rubdy and Alsagoff point

out that "the image this evokes is of a world full of movement and mixture, contact and linkages, and persistent cultural interaction and exchange" (p. 3). Pratt (1991) describes contact zones in this way:

> I use this term to refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today. (p. 1)

In Pratt's (1999) summary, "[t]he term contact zones refers to the places where cultures from disparate historical trajectories come into contact with each other," adding, "[i]n contact zones, social and cultural formations enter long-term, often permanent states of crisis that cannot be resolved by either the conqueror or the conquered. Rather, the relationships of...past/present, before/after, become the medium out of which culture, language, society, and consciousness get constructed" (pp. 3-4). Pratt (2002) also cites Geertz's more nuanced interpretation of this phenomenon, "'getting straight how the deeply different can be deeply known without becoming any less different'" (p. 1284). In this sense, the hybridized space created upon contact is one where a tension exists and persists as these forces occupy that zone. Still, I would argue that the deeply different elements mentioned above are in fact somewhat transformed through the reciprocity of becoming "deeply known," and this process reflects the transactions that take place in the transnational model.

For the participants in this study, the contact made with American hip hop transforms their worldviews and the ways they interact in their local spaces. This questions the previous assumption that culture is deeply tied to place. In this case, the participants have *dislodged* (Rubdy & Alsagoff, 2013) hip hop from its place of origin, the Bronx, New York, and created a new face of hip hop particular to their own previous identifications. In this way, and for their purposes, hip hop was deterritorialized and reterritorialized as a hybridized space where they can make decisions about which elements of the culture are suitable for their needs. Rubdy and Alsagoff (2014) illustrate these processes, stating that

> [t]he general weakening of the ties between culture and place does not imply that globalization destroys localities, but on the contrary that 'cultural experience is in various ways "lifted out" of

its traditional "anchoring" in particular localities' (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 273), becoming

reterritorialized into hybrid forms due to their shifting contexts. (p. 301)

The new semiotic spaces that the participants continually create and recreate are, again, functioning with a

tension between global and local forces. Rubdy and Alsagoff (2014) explain the tension's generative

nature, attesting that "it represents a space where difference is neither global nor local in orientation, but

one that is capable of accommodating the potential incommensurability of differently located identities" (p.

302). The participants' own identities are brought to bear on the global cultural messages they access and

sort according to what is most compelling, resisting those elements that are less desirable. Such interfaces

give life to hybrid identities, born out of the comingling of two (or more) cultural *ethnoscapes* - or

representations of group ideologies and shared practices (Appadurai, 1992).

The processes that occur when global hip hop meets local contexts, particularly local individuals,

are essential in the development of social identities for the participants in this study. The information

accessed by the participants becomes synthesized/hybridized and becomes particular to the individual

affected. This creates novel knowledge and is therefore authentic.

Relevant Scholarship on Social Identity

In order to understand the participants' perspectives, attitudes, and practices more

completely, exploring the ways that the participants construct their own social identities is vital. It is also

critical to clarify how I analyze these constructions in light of previous scholarship, and how earlier studies

affect my own. First, Tajfel (1978) advanced the concept of Social Identity Theory (SIT) as explained by

Nezlek and Smith (2004). According to Nezlek and Smith (2004), Tajfel "stated that social identity 'is a

part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of a membership of a social group

(or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership' (p. 63). This membership

may be ascribed such that people are born into membership (e.g., race, gender), or it may be attained such

that people actively seek it (e.g., clubs, political organizations)" (p. 244).

Further development of these ideas emerged more widely as critics began to question the verity of a single, unified, authentic identity that passes discretely through developmental stages toward its achievement. Rather, theorists began to see identities as socially constructed and multiple, that take form only temporarily when viewed as a process in constant negotiation. Dimitriadis (2001) notes, "Conquergood (1991) ... has argued most persuasively that a priori assumptions about culture and identity are no longer relevant, that culture and identity must be constantly negotiated, configured, and reconfigured in the present tense" (p. 10). Turkle (1995) posits that there is in fact a complex of selves that are interconnected and assembled in various configurations depending on the intended audience (as cited in Calvert, Jordan, and Cocking, 2002). Harter (1990) argues that, like a play, adolescence presents "a complicated cast of characters who do not always speak with a single voice" (p. 10).

This performance can be examined more exhaustively by the Butlerian *performative theory* (1996) which explains the iterative aspect of the identifications with ideals of group cultures. That is, she describes the iterative function of identity building/altering based upon a performed ideal (which itself is unstable). Each performance is seen either to reify or resist expectations, and as a process, detaches the self from essentialized identities. This may be congruent with some aspects of performativity championed by Butler (1996). She contends that "[t]his repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation" (as cited in Richardson, 2011, p. 232). Connections are thus created between a number of messages of acceptance or rejection, and as these pathways are strengthened, certain characteristics may prove to have more cachet than others. Individuals are considered to achieve an ideal identity by repeatedly enacting those compelling traits and actions in various contexts, thus defying and defining norms of behavior aligned with the desired self.

Hey (2006) describes this process as well, noting that identity "is the result of an illusion sustained by the incessant replication of norms that materialise that which they govern." Hey confirms that Butler "argues that this fiction is produced by compulsive (but alterable, also potentially subversive) repetition" (p. 440). Youngblood Jackson (2004) similarly suggests that "[r]epeating an identity category does not

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imply that we are locked into that category; on the contrary, as Butler (1996) noted, 'it is precisely the repetition of that play [taking up an identity] that establishes as well the instability of the very category that it constitutes' (p. 375)" (p. 679).

According to Warikoo (2007), Butler would argue that authenticity involves that which individuals refer to as a presumed stable typification:

> [g]iven the lay understandings of ethnic and racial identities as essentials and unchanging (in spite of their actual mutability), the authenticity of those identities can be claimed by individuals and/or questioned by others, using some fixed criteria, or scripts, for defining identities" (Warikoo, 2007, p. 389).

In other words, we all carry with us agreed-on stereotypes for identity categories and compare them to those whom we meet, and of course, to ourselves. Compliance to these ideals is necessary for citationality in "performative politics" (Youdell, 2006, p. 512).

These perspectives situate the individual in broader contexts, since "taking the temporal performative nature of identities as theoretical premise means that more than ever, one needs to question how identities continue to be produced, embodied and performed, effectively, passionately and with social and political consequence" (Bell, 1999, p. 2). In the case of this study, I will be looking at how the participants access knowledge of hip hop discourse, and the ways that they perform and re-perform aspects of this discourse. Language, for every embodied discourse, is a key element in defining one's relationship to an idealized identity. Language gets performed citationally in reference to the agreed upon norms of a given code, thus offering speakers more authentic participation in the desired discourse.

Peer groups, along with family and broader social frames, contribute to how individuals align themselves among choices that act as sounding boards, against which the adolescent must negotiate and renegotiate himself or herself in the light of varying circumstances. Chun (2009) suggests "I identify, therefore I am" as a way of highlighting the socially bound choices that help individuals construct the identities they project (p. 337). He further explains that "identity is also less about the *fact* of who we are

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than about the *perception* of those facts. *Discourses* of identity are based on perceptions; one should emphasize too that they are selective and strategic by nature" (emphases original, p. 337). When perception becomes the measure of one's identity, the central focus is pulled away from the notion of a singular, contained, internal self.

The assumed view of identity tends to correlate relationships of the self either to inherited cultural perceptions of what one must inherently be or invested cultural perceptions of what one wishes to be. In this way, people identify with groups that themselves are invented and reinvented, based on functional agreement that these groups are stable and predictable. Chun (2009) puts it this way:

> By choosing to identify, people are in turn dealing with a priori categories about who they are supposed to be as persons and how they relate to others in the group….This communion with imagined others explains in effect the overwhelming focus that cultural discourses inevitably put upon conformity to shared values and common lifestyles. At the level of public discourse, it is not surprising to see that people seem to be incessantly obsessed with discovering who they 'really' are and less concerned with questioning existing categories or the way in which these categories have framed the discourse. (Chun, 2009, p. 337)

Brubaker defies a single conception of identity, instead considering there to be "a plethora of meanings ranging from strong conceptions that highlight the fundamental sameness within a group to weak ones that accent, especially in a postmodern, poststructuralist sense, the multiple, competing, fluctuating and fragmented nature of identity." Accordingly, he views identity as a "relational process" and "social practice" (Chun, 2009, p. 333). In this sense, adolescent social identity formation is delicate and complex, correlating to Bell's (1999) statement that "belonging is an achievement at several levels of abstraction" (p. 3). As Tajfel confirms, testing the rules of belonging allows the adolescent opportunities to tailor his or her participation in multiple discourses, thus multiplying and often overlapping his or her status in a complex matrix of membership. And while family structures and locally agreed upon institutions such as religion and politics are vastly responsible for the choices adolescents make, Berger (1999) and McCarthy et al. (1999) note that "[i]n many respects, popular culture provides the key narratives or stories...that people

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make use of in coming to inhabit validated identities. Increasingly, in fact, young people are turning to popular culture to inhabit particular identities, often in lieu of narratives available in traditional institutions such as school and family" (as cited in Dimitriadis, 2001, p. 96). As hip hop continues to assert its commercial dominance as a product of popular culture, it may now be perceived as a stable institution, providing adolescents a frame with which to position themselves within society. In this study, I will examine the ways adolescents use features of popular culture to construct social identities, particularly where they locate those features that signify authenticity. By examining how adolescents are (re)creating themselves at the point of this global and local contact, questions of globalization are brought to bear in this discussion.

This issue of authenticity becomes particularly salient as it is not only deeply anchored in the mores of the Hip Hop Nation, but it is of primary concern to those who practice hip hop in their local contexts. Looking at the emphasis on authenticity in global hip hop offers insight into many of the strategies that the participants deploy to establish credibility within their communities and to satisfy their own understandings of themselves. The precariousness of these contrasting belief systems was an ongoing struggle for the participants and their self-images. Sohne acknowledged that these differences are clearly manifested in the Hip Hop Nation, but that he doesn't know how to reconcile those differences and "take sides" or posture one prevailing attitude (Field notes, 3.12.12). These struggles are vitally important in how the participants make choices to interpret and reproduce hip hop ideologies, which are in turn vital to how they construct or project social identities. The very personal nature of interactions between the participants and these hip hop ideologies places emphasis on how they determine what it means to be authentic, or asks what aspects of hip hop communicate *vraisemblance* that can either reify or transform their worldviews. These central dilemmas indicate the complications inherent in trying to separate the concepts of identity and authenticity.

Authenticity and identity are closely married in a dialogue of reciprocity and interdependence. Pederson and Altman (2015) further explain:

In *On Being Authentic* Guignon sets out to trace the development

of and the problems with the pop-culture conception of authenticity. According to this conception of authenticity, each of us has certain innate traits or desires that are truly indicative of who we are as individuals. Being authentic is a matter of discovering those inner traits and desires and making sure we are true to them in the face of societal pressures to do otherwise. Guignon questions whether it is possible or healthy to maintain this emphasis on finding innate character traits that are definitively one's own at the expense of meaningful engagement with the community in which one finds oneself. In contrast to the popular notion of authenticity, Guignon lays out an alternative conception of authenticity that aims to better incorporate the ineradicably social aspects of our selves. (p. 3)

These social aspects, like Dasein, are integral in composing and recomposing the image one has of oneself, and the will to project those aspects of society most in step with how one conceptualizes the ideal self at that time. In this way, both identity and authenticity become arbitrary and wholly dependent on social context. As stated by Martin (2014), "the term 'authenticity' has come to be so subjective today as to be almost devoid of definition. Regina Bendix compares it to other so-called plastic words, which hold real power yet have become so bloated with meanings that the hope of true definition is nearly futile" (p. 14).

Bucholtz and Hall (2005) also identify language as inextricable from identity. They propose a heuristic for approaching how identity is located in language, outlining five principles for analysis:

(1) Identity is the product rather than the source of linguistic and other semiotic practices and therefore is a social and cultural rather than primarily an internal psychological phenomenon; (2) identities encompass macro-level demographic categories, temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles, and local, ethnographically emergent cultural positions; (3) identities may be linguistically indexed through labels, implicatures, stances, styles, or linguistic structures and systems; (4) identities are relationally constructed through several, often overlapping, aspects of the relationship between self and other, including similarity/difference, genuineness/artifice and authority/delegitimacy; and (5) identity may be in part intentional, in part habitual and less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation, in part a construct of others'

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perceptions and representations, and in part an outcome of larger ideological processes and

structures. (Abstract)

To further their assertions, they add that identity is "inherently relational" and is therefore always partial,

situated, and in response to ideological constructs of "self and other." As well, they note that "even

seemingly coherent displays of identity, such as those that pose as deliberate and intentional, are reliant on

both interactional and ideological constraints for their articulation" (p. 605).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The Overall Ethnographic and Sociolinguistic Research Design

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and delineate the methods and methodologies I call upon to guide my data collection and analysis throughout this dissertation. In order to best explain the main modes of inquiry, I cover two main frames for approaching the data corpus: 1) an overarching ethnographic methodology complementing a 2) sociolinguistic inquiry. While the two methods of inquiry are mostly handled separately, significant areas of overlap arise and address a need to reconcile the ways that language is brought to bear upon the broader-reaching issues I discuss within an ethnographic purview. In this first section I introduce the methods I used to collect the data analyzed in this study from an ethnographic perspective. In the second section, I will discuss the sociolinguistic principles involved when collecting data and interpreting the participants' uses of language.

Ethnography may be considered messy and unwieldy in that it involves a broad scope of sources and investigates each according to (often overlapping) contexts, looking particularly at how they function in relation to one another. Negotiating the interplay of these forces with the depth and complexity that they present demands methods that eventuate a comprehensive epistemological framework, in this case, ethnography. Ethnography presents an integrative approach that looks at the particularities of individual

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experience that reflect on and are reflected by social frames, thereby departing from many other research approaches.

Ethnographers are interested in the connections that draw together the emic and etic perspectives inherent in social inquiries. The emic moves the researcher close to access the tacit, inward focused meanings of the personal, whereas the etic allows the researcher to take a distant view of the institutionalized ideologies of a given community. Acknowledging the interdependence of these two influences helps the researcher to define some of the complexities of the experiences and understandings of participants, and shapes ideas of how these influences drive their choices and behaviors. Heath and Street describe this as "back-and-forth observing" (p. 33). They discuss Todorov's (1988) analysis of

> the relationship between proximity and distance. Anthropologists privilege their ability to act as a 'fish out of water,' taking a distant view of local practices. Yet they also give highest credit to colleagues who have immersed themselves in local practices and can think like the 'native.' Todorov suggests that the issue is not seeing just the either/or but recognizing the full axis. (p. 64)

The "full axis" is the goal of ethnography, and the methods I used in my study were designed to support my participants and learn from them the particularities of their experiences, beliefs, affiliations, and attitudes, as well as the organizing structures that underpin them. Those methods will now be discussed in greater detail. First, as is essential to accessing the emic understandings I sought, reaching a point of personal disclosure requires trust. In order to elicit more reliable accounts, rapport must first be established between the researcher and the participants. Johnstone (2000) notes that "strategies for creating rapport in the first place include self-disclosure and joint activity with the people being studied (Jorgensen, 1989, pp. 75-78), and these may themselves be rewarding to the research subjects, if they like having a new friend and collaborator" (p. 90).

Taking this into consideration, I organized my data collection to begin with individual interviews in hopes of reaching a mutual understanding as quickly as possible. Realizing the importance of setting the stage for future work together, I needed to consider ways of disrupting power imbalances in the traditional

interview format. I wanted to create interviews that were friendly and informal. To meet these needs, while designing the format for the interviews, it was critical for my goal of building a trustworthy rapport that I disclose information about my own knowledge and experience with the topic during the first interviews. Particularly in hip hop culture, one of the pillars of the community is "keepin' it real." This involves remaining closely aligned with a self-awareness and frankness of attitude.

I knew that in order to elicit honest responses from the participants, I would need for them to see me as an "insider": someone with the credibility that comes with keepin' it real, hence lowering their affective boundaries and opening access to shared knowledge. Johnson (2000) suggests that "it is easy to imagine that the "best" data for answering….questions come from the 'best' interviews: ones that are relaxed, friendly, spontaneous sounding, like a good conversation" (p. 114). In order to achieve this, I needed to be responsive to the participants' ideas as they arose, following through with revelatory topics and areas of interest or concern as they emerged. This meant sometimes steering away from a prescribed agenda of questions and following a participant's lead. Glesne (2006) states,

> The questions, typically created by the researchers, may be fully established before interviewing begins and remain unchanged throughout the interview. Questions may emerge in the course of interviewing and may add to or replace the preestablished ones; this process of question formation is the more likely and the more ideal one in qualitative inquiry. (p. 79)

Encouraging personal and productive conversation insists on the principles of dialogue and the investment of all parties. Therefore, I also had expectations to uphold as a sharer in the conversation. This meant that while the conversations didn't always lead neatly into my organization of questions, I was obligated—as an invested participant—to share in and be guided by the dialogue.

The values of ethnographic principles include the importance of close proximity between the researcher and the participants.   It is through these relationships that trust and confidence are developed, through which greater insight can be achieved. In this study, I was able to cultivate these relationships with a great deal of focus and attention to their stories and their own curiosities as they related to their feelings

of belonging and identification as hip hoppers. While I discovered feelings of trust and camaraderie within their relationships with one another, there was also a certain bond that I had developed with these young participants. While these bonds were valuable and sustained the interest and commitment of the participants throughout the two-year study, it was also necessary that I nurtured an etic perspective on the data I was collecting. I was able to maintain a necessary factor of objectivity while retreating to my office located some distance from the schools where I worked. In this remote location I was able to analyze the data with more objectivity than I was experiencing as a teacher within the schools, with the participants and their friends. With this ongoing analysis, I found it helpful when entering into new conversations and interviews with the participants, I was able to direct or redirect these interactions toward greater productivity.

To further increase the etic perspective within this study, I was able to travel back to the United States for longer holidays whereby I was able to not only retreat from the contexts of the schools, but I was able to distance myself from the broader context of Innsbruck, and the Austrian influence. With this distance, I was able to recalibrate my own vision and assess the data more objectively. I was able to make comparisons between the cultures of the schools, Innsbruck, and Austria more generally.

As mentioned before, the data collection included multiple interviews with each participant over time. Therefore, when questions unfolded in unanticipated directions for a given interview, I was often able to recapitulate which intended topics were addressed and which could be shifted to a more conducive discussion. Glesne (2006) reports that repeat interviews "allow the participant time to think more deeply about their own feelings, reactions, and beliefs" (p. 38). An additional benefit of conducting multiple interviews over time are that they allowed me to establish more trustworthy and enduring rapport with the participants. Glesne (2006) contends, "repeat interviews throughout the course of the study will aid in developing rapport and increasing the validity of the interviews" (p. 38). Interviews over time establish open dialogue and continuity, and allow participants to feel comfortable that they have enough space to express themselves in the ways they want, and that they have opportunities to develop opinions and ideas

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fully, in their own time. Further, I believe that after multiple interviews, participants invest more in the value of the study itself and take some ownership of its overall development.

Second, as an added dimension to the roles of individual interviews with the participants, I also conducted focus groups consisting of pairs of participants. Kitzinger (1994) notes that "focus groups are group discussions organized to explore a certain set of issues such as people's views or experiences…The group is focused in the sense that it involves some kind of collective activity – such as…debating a particular set of questions. Crucially, focus groups are distinguished from the broader category of group interviews by the 'explicit use of group interaction' as research data (see Merton, 1956 and Morgan, 1988)" (p. 1). The goal of exploring group interaction is twofold. First, I hoped to raise unanticipated topics as the participants were prompted by one another in their own areas of expertise. And second, I felt that small focus group interviews would remove any emphasis on my role, and position the interviewees as leading the flow of conversation. I realized my involvement was to guide the interviews if they were to veer too far off course, or if there was a lapse in communication. However, I attempted to lessen my presence and allow them to take more control of the discussion process. I discovered that my involvement was actually quite key in the progress of the focus group, and that the participants were often given to silences when the conversation ebbed, at which point I was able to rejoin the discussion and lead them toward another topic. Glesne (2006) posits,

> Focus group interviewing relies heavily on facilitation or moderator skills. […] Unlike on-on-one interviews…discussion does not rely on turn-taking between interviewer and participants. Instead, it depends on interaction within the group, stimulated by the researcher's question(s). The researcher becomes the moderator or discussion facilitator who helps the group set up ground rules…and then may only have to pose or redirect a question from time to time, keeping track of the time so that the various items are addressed. (pp. 102-103)

The arrangement of my interviewees was intentional. For two interviews, I chose to pair two participants with markedly contrasting interests within the same area of focus. I chose to work with the two in anticipation of some discussion or debate about their participation, particularly how they differed.

Another pair was organized to emphasize the similarities they shared about the focal topic and encourage deeper exploration of their knowledge and commitments to cultural activities. Both pairs met two times, allowing them to establish some familiarity with one another and also allowing them to consider the first discussion and follow up on issues with which they were unfinished or unsatisfied. These focus groups did, in fact, provoke some contentious discussion on the one hand, and more prolific sharing and agreement on the other.

My third method of data collection was conducted as a participant observer, collecting anecdotal and incidental field notes pertaining to the natural goings on within the students' school environments. Specifically, I was able to participate in the schools' educational and social activities as an employee of the Innsbruck Municipal Schools, where I taught English in the two high schools that the participants attended. In this capacity I was immersed in both school cultures, was acquainted with the participants' teachers and friends, and was able to observe them both in class and during the informal settings between classes. This form of immersion allows for a more naturalistic approach to seeing into "others' worlds in order to grasp what they experience as meaningful and important. With immersion, the field researcher sees from the inside how people lead their lives, how they carry out their daily rounds of activities, what they find meaningful, and how they do so" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 2). While my roles within the schools were fully integrated as a faculty member, the participants were aware of my "other" role as a researcher, and therefore my presence was not entirely neutral. This is not seen as a deterrent in ethnographic research. Rather, "'consequential presence,' often linked to *reactive effects* (that is, the effects of the ethnographer's participation on how members may talk and behave), should not be seen as 'contaminating' what is observed and learned…these effects are the very source of that learning and observation (Clarke 1975:99)" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 2, italics in original). In this way, ethnography – specifically participant observation – is a departure from positivist methods that attempt to eliminate the influence that the researcher has on the participants. Ethnography can offer novel insights through the relationships that the ethnographer develops with the participants, sometimes allowing him or her to be cognizant of implicit thoughts and behaviors and, therefore, able to express his or her ideas more clearly.

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Participant observation is a mainstay of ethnographic research and qualitative research more broadly. It requires artful, sensitive, and resourceful thinking on the part of the researcher in order to make appropriate judgments about responding to data as they present themselves within a variety of contexts. Jorgensen (1989) states,

> Participant observation cannot be presented simply as a series of highly mechanical steps that, when followed literally by just anyone, will result without exception in competent participant observational research. None of this is to say, however, that participant observation cannot or should not be presented in a straightforward and entirely practical fashion. […] The artful character of participant observation is readily acknowledged, and practitioners are encouraged to cultivate appropriate interpersonal skills as well as related abilities to think and act with sensitivity and creative judgment in the field. (p. 9)

Using the multiple resources appropriate to the setting, the majority of participant observation data are recorded as field notes, which can be written throughout the observation period. However, as this often serves as a reminder to the participant that the experience is engineered in some sense, to the researcher's best ability, many data are recorded after the interactions have concluded. This factor compels the researcher not only to participate fully in the conversations or tasks involved in the observation without distraction, but also to attend to the details of those activities so they can be accurately transcribed at a later time. As Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) describe,

> field researchers are deeply concerned about the quality of the relationships they develop with the people they seek to know and understand. In valuing more natural, open experience of others' worlds and activities, field researchers seek to keep writing from intruding into and affecting these relationships. They do so not only to avoid distancing themselves from the ongoing experience of another world, but also because writing and research commitments more generally may engender feelings of betraying those with whom one has lived and shared intimacies. (p. 19)

When writing field notes, the researcher is activating selective memory of observed events. Rather than attempting to recall every distinct detail of an event, naturally certain aspects stand out as pivotal or telling, allowing the researcher to focus his or her energy on the salient issues. These events include "words, gestures, body movements, sounds, background setting, etc." In this way, "ethnographers create scenes on a page through highly selective and partial descriptions of observed and revoked details…enhanced or blurred by their descriptive writing skills" (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995, p. 67). Descriptive writing skills allow the researcher to capture the essence of a situation with attention to the details of context and background, either creating continuity or illustrating the juxtaposition of irregularities disrupting it. Descriptive writing also provides opportunities to develop a rich portrayal of the contextual aspects of a setting. The researcher is able to flesh out elements that surround a complex event, thus contributing to deeper understandings of multiple, often hidden meanings inherent in social settings. In addition, it is not always possible to video-record an event given the element of spontaneity that occurs in school hallways and cafeterias. But, taking mental notes during unexpected occurrences gives the researcher the possibility to write a description at the next possible opportunity without the risk of losing valuable data. Overall, recording field notes provides the researcher greater access to events than video or audio recording alone.

To support this goal of achieving greater access to the lives of the participants in this study, I enlisted the participants to self-record videos that illustrate how they integrate hip hop activities into their lives and within their communities. This method has been used in behavioral psychology studies as a way to monitor specific behaviors enacted by subjects. Wheeler and Reis (1991) identify three methods for collecting this data from subjects: "(*a*) interval-contingent, in which respondents report on their experiences at regular intervals, (*b*) signal-contingent, in which respondents report when signaled, and (*c*) event-contingent, in which respondents report whenever a defined event occurs" (p. 339). In the case of this study, participants followed the *event-contingent* protocol, recording significant moments that illustrate ways that they actively and passively participate in hip hop. This type of sampling best serves to monitor or record "only one or a very limited number of human activities; [and] when these events can be defined

clearly for subjects" (Wheeler & Reis, 1991, p. 349). This level of involvement is particularly effective as the participants are invested in the progress of the study and feel a greater sense of efficacy and expertise. As a result, they are asked to make decisions about what to record and what to ignore or avoid. One outcome is that they are called to reflect more analytically about their thoughts and behaviors, and thereby become meta-cognizant of the various ways they represent their social identities. This allows them to question or challenge their choices, and decide what elements of their participation they can further explore and nurture to become what they consider to be more authentic.

As with participant observation and interviewing, capitalizing on the participants' engagement with myself and the study more broadly can be seen as an opportunity to enhance and embolden their experiences, validating their opinions and developing worldviews as a result of meta-awareness and reflection. In this way, while the presence of the researcher and the research itself undoubtedly has an impact on the actions and reactions of each participant, this can in itself inspire greater meaning for both. Glesne (2006) asks, "How do we learn from each other and create a dynamic in which no one person is pitching the questions while the other is sending words flying? In other words, how do we co-construct knowledge?" (p. 107). Inquiry into others' lives overtly creates a new relationship, and a new dimension to that person, one that is equally valid and valuable. For the purposes of the study, sometimes it does even more.

Discussing the value of elements that contribute to a richer understanding of the participants – and my role in their engagement – leads me to inquire into the artifacts collected from the participants. In the case of this study, there was no emphasis on school documents or other traditional items for investigation. Therefore, there were scant items to be collected. There were, however, a number of photographs, video stills, graffiti samples, and rather unusual audio recordings produced online. In terms of data collection, two of the participants were graffiti artists and had a strict policy of producing no evidence of their crimes. They were insistent about their work remaining anonymous to the public; only members of the graffiti community were permitted to be privy to their authorship. I was able to collect data about graffiti to some extent, as the pieces I saw were legally performed or the data they collected were pieces done by other

writers. Overall, artifacts of this nature were limited due to the illegal nature of the art form. In these cases, I was pursuing evidence of "*measures of accretion*, or things people have created" (Glesne, 2006, p. 67, italics in original). In this category, Glesne includes "graffiti, murals, notes, and songs" (p. 67). The particular variety of artifacts I collected were consistent with Glesne's description: they "enrich what you see and hear by supporting, expanding, and challenging your portrayals and perceptions. Your understanding of the phenomenon in question grows as you make use of the documents and artifacts that are a part of people's lives" (p. 68). Artifacts, therefore, provide additional layers to the holistic understanding of the participants, and the choices they make to affiliate themselves with the cultural practices they enact to define their social identities. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) write,

> Often, there are multiple sources of relevant documentation for any setting or group of people one might study. Given this, we need to think of contexts as involving documentary constructions of reality (Coffey and Atkinson 2004): documentary sources construct 'facts', 'records', 'diagnoses', 'decisions', and 'rules' that are crucially involved in social activities (see Prior 2003, 2004). Moreover, this is not just a matter of words: images can be involved in this process too. (p. 121)

In the case of this study, artifacts are elements that enhance my understandings of the participants rather than elements that are essential to my understandings of them. However, I believe that they are indicative of the forms of participation they have developed over time, and thus must be taken seriously. Just as participants define their attitudes and actions with words, they also define them in the objects they use and produce. Additionally, the researcher must acknowledge and honor the digital fields that occupy space in participants' lives (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Virtual tools allow participants greater latitude than they may otherwise have control of, or perhaps more pertinent to this study, what they may have privilege to access. The production of digital works is valuable in honoring the creative and intellectual talents of the participants as they define their social identities within various spheres. I hope to

indicate the intrinsic meanings of these artifacts carefully, as they reveal the dedication and motivation the participants contribute back to the popular culture genre which they also consume.

Using ethnographic tools, there are critical elements of this inquiry that support and sustain the richness and complexity of the findings. One of these elements invokes sociolinguistic principles to highlight the value of language(s) and the social embeddedness contributing to the repertoires of the participants. A sociolinguistic vantage is of importance to this study as it includes considerations of "meaning, about language acquisition, about social roles and relations, about communication, and about identity" in complex representations, and about how they are produced (Johnstone, 2000, p. 103). In order to understand these productions more comprehensively and how they shift given contexts and notions of self-invention, I prioritize the influence of language use and how the participants (re)configure aspects of language to clarify their worldviews. Johnstone (2000) notes,

> Although many sociolinguists believe that the 'best' data come from actual recorded speech, knowledge about the cultural world in which speech is embedded is almost inevitably part of the knowledge sociolinguists bring to the analysis of these data. Explicitly or not, in other words, ethnographic observations are part of the methodology of sociolinguistics, and it can be argued that being explicit about our ethnographic methods and our reliance on their results is better than not being explicit. (p. 84)

Using ethnographic methods to approach sociolinguistic inquiry provides the researcher with documented examples of not only speech events, but a holistic view of how these events unfold: where, when, how, and ultimately why. Hymes (1974) supports placing language use in the context within which it is used to reveal meaning, and contends that "one cannot take linguistic form, a given code, or even speech itself, as a limiting frame of reference. One must take as context a community, or network of persons,

investigating its communicative activities as a whole, so that any use of channel and code takes its place as part of the resources upon which the members draw" (p. 4).

Epistemologically, sociolinguistics and ethnography demonstrate many parallel beliefs, and therefore, similar methods of inquiry. They both seek to uncover the particular, the individual experience, in order to generate themes for study inductively. They complement one another in other ways as well. They both trouble the hidden agendas of participants and how those agendas are made visible in either action to ethnographers, or language to sociolinguists - and of course, where these overlap. Additionally, it is nearly impossible to organize a thorough ethnography without including some cursory investigation into the speech/language of participants. This study attempts to integrate both research methodologies to the extent that understandings of the participants are multi-dimensional and that all recognized elements of their thoughts and actions, including speech, are carefully assessed and arranged in relation to one another to reveal the richness of the data.

Further supporting this methodological approach, Gumperz (1982) offers a series of tools with which to explore such a study. What is most applicable to my study is his agreement that communication does not rely on speech alone; rather, its situatedness in social context creates meaning. Acknowledging this situatedness takes into consideration the nuances influencing speech and communication events, and therefore allows the events to develop multi-dimensional forms. Gumperz further states that "[researchers] thus rely on indirect inferences which build on background assumptions about context, interactive goals and interpersonal relations to derive frames in terms of which they can interpret what is going on" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 2). It can be argued that when taking into account the multiple factors that surround speech events, the ethnographic methods outlined in this study offer a layered, multi-directional approach for representing the complexities of linguistic resources. The resources available to the participants are highly idiosyncratic, though the shared spaces and places they inhabit indicate how some resources converge and create communities within the social and cultural worlds in which they live. These shared resources allow for many overlapping experiences that are interpreted and accommodated differently for each participant.

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In the field of *humanistic linguistics*, Becker (1985) contends that what we all practice is a slight semantic move he calls "languaging". He states, "[y]ou will notice that I shift from the word 'language' to the word 'languaging.' That is one of the easiest ways I know to make the shift from an idea of language as something accomplished...to the idea of languaging as an ongoing process" (p. 25). This reconsideration of the term removes language from abstraction and places it firmly in action, acting in personal ways through individuals and their own imaginations. One aspect that the idea of "languaging" implicates is what Tannen (1989) discusses in terms of "prepatterning." In prepatterning, language is less autonomously generated and resembles more of a piecework, borrowing from what we have learned before and constructing particular language as needed. Describing the concept of *verbal art*, Tannen states that it is – in all of its complexity – "the play between fixity and novelty that makes possible the creating of meaning," and the very fashioning and refashioning that allows languaging to be a creative act (p. 37).

Considering the languaging aspect of speech, I had begun the study with a certain set of assumptions with which I was approaching the participants. First, I expected to hear much more of this hip hop languaging from them. I assumed a certain level of code mixing whereby the students would adapt their hip hop linguistic knowledge to their conversational German speech. I did not take into account that while this may be the case in speech among them, that they would protect that langauging from me, an outsider – a researcher no less. Participants were telling me repeatedly that they did not use English hip hop language nor did they know others who did. However, following ethnographic tradition, I was able to suspend those lines of inquiry for some time and place my foci on other aspects of hip hop identity construction as they arose throughout the observations and interviews. Issues of globalization and transnationalism rose to the surface, as well as ideas concerning how models of global/local contact influenced the social identities of the participants began to become more visible. The concerns of authenticity and how this notion placed them on a continuum between collectivism and individualism took shape. By employing ethnographic tools, I was able to attend to these notions as they made themselves apparent and expand, refocus, and discover the intricacies of the lives of these young men and their engagement with hip hop. With time and the development of trust, I was able to pursue the element of hip

hop languaging as seen in this study, however, if I had focused solely on my initial assumptions, I would have very little usable data, needless to say, a limited scope of analysis.

Settings

The first of the participants' high schools specialized in art and architecture, and was the only school of its kind in the city of Innsbruck. The facility was located near the University of Innsbruck on the south side of the Inn River that skirts the edge of the city. It was located in a neighborhood of a median income bracket consisting entirely of owner-occupied apartment buildings, with no detached homes found in the area. The school was what by US standards would be considered a "vocational school," called an "HTL." However, in contrast to US vocational schools which offer students a trade, the foci of this HTL were visual fine arts, graphic design and advertisement, and architectural design, with a separate major for infrastructure planning. Unlike in the US, attending a vocational school did not hinder students from attending universities in Austria, and therefore, they did not suffer the social stigma often associated with vocational schools in the US. Traditionally, students who wish to attend university have been accepted (or placed) in what is considered the most academically rigorous schools, called gymnasiums. In gymnasiums, students were expected to complete a "matura," which is a program whereby students select a research topic and must pass a series of examinations, often including English as a foreign language. While the students at the HTL were not placed in gymnasium, they still had the opportunity to complete a 5 year-- rather than the standard 4 year--program that will eventuate in matura studies and examinations, opening opportunities for higher education.

The atmosphere of the school encouraged student creativity and autonomy. Students' dress and hair styles often reflected this creativity and autonomy, and confidently displayed students' multiple and rapidly changing interests. These students often share special bonds with their teachers and the teachers welcome and nurture this, which is less common in the other Innsbruck high schools in which I worked. The central building contains the academic classrooms, and each year, students were given the opportunity

to design and paint their homeroom as they wish. The room themes ranged from medievalism to contemporary graffiti and highlight the sensibilities of the groups. Unlike the common flow of US high schools, students stay in their classrooms for the majority of their school periods and it is the teachers who are mobile, changing from room to room throughout the day. Adjacent to the main building, the remaining small buildings were custom spaces to accommodate art studios that include painting, print making, and sculpture; computer graphics labs; and large workshops where students worked with building materials to prepare them for careers in architecture and infrastructure design. The school interacted with the neighboring surroundings as students often gathered at the cafe across the street, ate lunch at the small pizzeria on the next block, or bought snacks at one of the two grocery stores in the immediate vicinity. The students who did not have mopeds or bicycles took public transportation to commute between home and school.

The other school where I taught and conducted research was another HTL, or vocational school. This one was more closely aligned to what we expect from American vocational schools. The students there were studying electrical engineering, computer science, machine designing and building, and structural engineering. Shortly after I started teaching there, I was startled to realize that nearly the entire student body was male. On a given day I might have taught three or four girls, sometimes more, but sometimes none at all. The school is trying to appeal to more girls to help balance the student population, but they are frustrated that there seem to be fewer girls interested in the major disciplines they offer. Another great difference between the two schools was the type of activities the students participated in during free time. Here they were much more oriented toward sports and games and played them very aggressively, with many types of tournaments and other classification systems for determining the hierarchy of winners. Classroom discipline was also more challenging. The aggression, though usually good-natured, followed them into their learning spaces. I gleaned that the quiet students, including one of my participants, learned to be silent and not pay attention to the more active students' behaviors or verbal attacks. This school was exciting in many ways, and despite the overwhelmingly homogenous student profile, both of my participants from that school were friendly and very good-natured.

The city of Innsbruck supports approximately 120,000 inhabitants, who live mainly in the narrow Inn valley located within the rugged Austrian Alps. Innsbruck is the capital city of the province of Tirol, due in part to the bridge over the Inn River which allowed for greater trade and commerce. The name Innsbruck is a testament to the importance of this bridge as it comes from the German word *Bruck*, meaning bridge, and the name of the Inn river, which flows along the edge of the city. Also contributing to the early success of the city is the Brenner Pass, a winding mountain road that allowed the easiest and safest passage over the Alps for goods and communication. Surrounding the Inn Valley are three main mountain chains that provide the city with its primary financial earnings – tourism – with winter sports as the mainstay. The insular location of Innsbruck provides a sharp contrast to the typically cosmopolitan attitude of many of Europe's capital cities. It maintains a strong hold on Tirolean traditional culture, which relies on the preservation of historical tropes and also attracts tourists from around the world. Of the many traditions they preserve, a source of great pride are the many Tirolean German language dialects. One of the participants in this study reported that Tirol supports nearly 100 different dialects which are maintained by speakers due to the pockets of valleys throughout the Alps, separated by sharply rising mountains, as well as by the inhabitants of remote and isolated mountaintop villages.

Austria has a long and expansive history, including the rule of the Holy Roman Empire and the reign of the Hapsburgs. This conceptualization of top-down power dynamics took a backseat to democracy with a shift of power in the 2006 general elections, when the Social Democrats (SPÖ) became the strongest party with 35.3% of the vote. The party protects and enforces such institutions as unemployment benefits and socialized medicine (Grusch, 2006). The traces of the Holy Roman Empire do, however, still maintain a strong hold on the Austrian people, as 78% of Austrians are still practicing Roman Catholics (Encyclopedia of the Nations). The significance of this presence is that while leftist governance is rising in popularity among voters, strong hierarchical constructs still play a dominant role in government, affecting bureaucratic matters and education.

When considering macro-systems in the present age of Innsbruck, Austria, it is increasingly pertinent to include an examination of technology and hyper-media. Previously, decisions about what

goods and information were traded world-wide were based upon their commercial viability, and often disregarded less lucrative media. Current computer capabilities and nearly universal access to information and entertainment hasten the progress toward a broadening global community. Such access to world resources contributes to a youth culture sharing media and maximizing global communication. Today's youth in particular are engaged in many functions of technology, and without limits of geography they have acquired skills allowing them to participate in cultures previously confined to local spaces. With these increased capabilities, youth engage in experiences that inform and transform how they take up any number of social and informational media. It is through these transnational flows that the youth in this study are able to participate in and exchange culturally significant ideas and information, thus enhancing their knowledge and facility with more comprehensive hip hop activities.

Participants

The participants informing this study are four Austrian heritage males and one Turkish heritage male, spanning ages 15-19. All five participants identified themselves as being hip hoppers and practiced a range of hip hop activities. According to one participant, taking part in hip hop activities is a defining factor that distinguishes "authentic" hip hoppers from mere consumers. The recruitment phase was longer than expected, as potential participants presented greater hesitation than I had anticipated. The recruitment flier I had prepared and posted in each classroom only piqued the curiosity of one student, who in fact became the first participant to join the study. I scouted students for visual cues such as certain fashion conventions previously popular among hip hoppers; however, this proved unsuccessful as the hip hop industry clothing styles have shifted in recent years and are less conspicuous. They also overlap with other popular youth cultures in Innsbruck, such as skateboarding and snowboarding.

What proved most successful were referrals by students and teachers. After I established positive working relationships with a number of teachers within the school, my colleagues began to suggest possible students to approach as they suspected that these young men were engaged in hip hop related activities. Of

the nine students I approached, four expressed interest in sharing their hip hop experiences with me. It appeared that certain prospective participants were unwilling to risk any sort of ridicule that they anticipated might arise from their peers. Those willing to accept such risk expressed reluctance to commit to an interview schedule beyond one initial interview. Under these circumstances, I was willing to accept a single video-recorded interview with hopes that the students would gain more interest in the project once they experienced the initial interview. I conceded that rather than doing a series of sequential interviews over time, I might have to conduct single interviews with a larger pool of participants. This formula would limit the depth I had hoped to reach through developing relationships with the students over time, but at the onset of data collection I was left with few options.

In order to establish relationships to the data discussed later, I will introduce the participants in the order that they joined the study. The first participant recruited was Flow, both an abbreviated name for Florian and also a nickname mimicking "flow," an important feature of rap performance. Flow's knowledge of hip hop was extensive and consisted mainly of European – particularly German language – rap. He was 19 years old and was completing his third of four years at the high school. Flow was an only child and had a close relationship with his mother and father. They were both professional musicians who were classically trained and performed traditional Austrian music throughout the world. Flow had the opportunity to accompany his parents on some of their trips, including a lengthy stay in Japan. This exposure to world cultures provided him a worldview that allowed him to be open to multiple possibilities, and developed in him a deep appreciation for music. He claimed to have moved through a variety of phases of musical styles and "ended up" at hip hop; he said he liked its versatility and vibrancy. He often shared his musical preferences with his parents, and admitted that their musical training allowed them to appreciate additional elements of rap music that he may have personally missed, particularly when dealing in styles of rhythm and vocal flow. However, their initial reaction to hip hop music was unfavorable due to the lifestyle that Flow had adopted in the early years of his engagement with hip hop.

After one of our interviews, I asked Flow if there were any additional items he wished to share or elaborate. He stated that he was not sure if the information would influence my study, but he wanted to talk

about his experience some years ago when he was running with a group of Chechen asylum seekers who were involved in guns, drugs, and gangster rap - particularly German rap (Field notes, 3.8.12). He shared this experience with his close friend and fellow participant in the study, Macko. He admitted to having had some run-ins with the police during this time, and a troubled relationship with his parents. Eventually, he had had enough of that lifestyle and was able to withdraw from the group, though he maintained his interests in hip hop and rap music. His appreciation for the music encouraged him to expand his listening to include other styles of hip hop, though he admits that music has to either "be aggressive or question something" to be interesting to him (Flow Interview, 2.26.12).

Flow's disposition was well aligned with vigorous questioning. He was incredibly introspective, and a flexible problem solver who often got into friendly debates with his teachers concerning points in the curricula. He was dedicated to his dog, which he trained rigorously as a mountain rescue dog. This dedication and sense of discipline was also reflected in his health care regimen. He enjoyed boxing and while training, he preferred to listen to aggressive rap, often West Coast gangsta rap. As a graphic artist he enjoyed participating in street art and graffiti, one element of hip hop culture, particularly a style of painting using handmade stencils. He exhibited some pride in being a part of the study, and contributed the most in-depth interviews. During one interview I asked him how he felt about the series of interviews, to which he replied that he enjoyed it because he had never had an analytical conversation about hip hop music with anyone outside of his crew, and he was happy to reflect on his interests in this manner. He was also responsible for introducing me to his friend, Macko, whom he recommended as a potential asset to the study. Additionally, Flow was key in developing a data corpus that approaches the scope I had ideally anticipated. He contributed hours' worth of self-recorded data of himself and the interactions he had with the music and related activities.

The second young man to join the study was Sohne, a 15-year-old whose primary engagement with hip hop culture was music and contemporary, popular hip hop dance. He, like all of the participants, had a great appreciation for rap music, particularly contemporary American rap. He practices a style of dance called "jerkin," which is relatively new in the hip hop dance landscape. In terms of data collection,

Sohne's participation was sporadic: he was often absent from school, and was often reluctant to commit time to interviews. He often had other engagements outside of school that did not allow him to participate fully. Nevertheless, his commitment to each interview was focused, and he was eager to share his knowledge and expertise. Sohne lived in a village outside the city and admitted that there was a greater hip hop scene in the smaller village of Telfs than what he found in the city of Innsbruck. Sohne primarily listened to American hip hop, and paid very little attention to German-language rap. He asserted that hip hop is an American cultural phenomenon by right of origin. He, like the other participants, had an extensive collection of artists and songs that he accessed primarily via internet outlets.

As his music and dance preferences were shared within his family, Sohne's younger brother of 13 years old had also adopted an interest in the music and its concomitant elements and styles. Simon often traveled to nearby Munich, Germany to visit his cousin who was also a jerker and hip hop consumer. Sohne said that he and his cousin were not particularly close until Sohne brought up hip hop music and discovered that they shared an affinity for it. In the beginning of this new relationship, Sohne said that they mostly bonded over hip hop, but that they are much closer in other respects now that they have had the opportunity to bond over a shared interest. He often spoke of his family and described his parents as very loving and quite funny. As the eldest child, he often adopted an air of pride when discussing his younger siblings. He was impressed by his brother's burgeoning deejay skills, and enjoyed spending time in his room as he practiced.

Bonus was the third participant to join the sample group and was recruited based on my observations of his style of dress, which was in keeping with the commonly and historically accepted hip hop style: baggy pants, oversized graphic t-shirts, and bulky basketball shoes. The final feature of his dress that compelled me to approach him were the oversized headphones hanging around his neck. He was 16 years old and was initially torn between interest in the study and his own looming secret that he did not wish to discuss with a stranger. He agreed to a 15-minute interview between classes to decide whether to participate or to withdraw with some suspicion of my motives. During the first interview, he was very guarded and careful about how he spoke about hip hop. He did, however, have a rather sophisticated

concept of hip hop that emerged intermittently. I finally asked him if he was actively involved in hip hop activity, which he initially denied, but I caught his hints and pursued the line further to discover that he was a graffiti artist/writer. He asked a number of times who would be viewing the interview because of the illegality of spraying.

I bring up this first encounter as it offers an extreme contrast to the relationship I developed with Bonus through the two years I knew him. He was, indeed, very active in the graffiti scene in Innsbruck. In fact, he said that he thought about it all the time and throughout the school day, as he practiced new designs for murals and tags in his "black book." He had experienced some difficulties with local police regarding his graffiti; therefore, he implemented a policy against creating any type of evidence when he sprayed. This included a no-photograph policy, unfortunately, so he had no samples of his work that could be used as a rich source of data. He did, however, break his rule and drew for me the tag he used to identify himself in the community. Bonus' musical interests resided mostly in what is called consciousness-raising rap and underground. His favorite artists produced music between 1990 and 2000, though his tastes fell outside those lines in certain cases. In addition, his preference was for American hip hop and rap. He could list only two or three German language rappers that he enjoyed because he thought they were aggressive and mostly only participated in braggadocio - constantly praising themselves and condemning other artists world-wide. Bonus was an imposing figure. He was over 6 feet tall and broad shouldered. His attitude, however, was peaceable and relaxed. His command of English was competent, but compared to the other participants, he often code-switched between German and English to communicate more conceptual matters or ideas he felt strongly about.

The next participant to join the study was Macko, a name given by his friends. The moniker Macko is a reference to a hip hop term, *Mack*, which is a person with credibility and savvy within the hip hop community. Macko was 17 years old and also in his third of four years of high school, which by Austrian school standards was a common age. He was introduced to the study by his long-time friend, Flow, the first participant I discussed. He, like Bonus, was involved in the graffiti scene in Innsbruck and had been interested in hip hop since he was 9 years old. Macko appeared to be less forthcoming than the

other participants. He came across as shy, which could also reflect insecurity about speaking a foreign language to a native speaker. His English was spoken well, though I sometimes wondered if he understood all that I was saying during our discussions. Like Sohne and Bonus, Macko listened primarily to American hip hop and tended to appreciate East Coast rap over West Coast, a matter of stylistic debate within the hip hop community. He, like the others, was very interested in the lyrics of rap music and took time to research any meanings that were unclear. He claims that our discussions helped his academic English substantially, and reckoned that he was the top student in his English class. Macko, like the other participants, had a calm demeanor that parlayed into his behavior in the school hallways and classroom.

The final participant is Turtle, a 15-year-old Innsbrucker from a Turkish background. This is significant due to the overwhelming and commonly accepted attitude in Austria that stigmatizes people of Turkish descent. Interestingly, Turtle approached me about participating in the project. I was at the other HTL (vocational) school and was teaching an English lesson when at the end of the lesson, he raised his hand and asked, "Do you know Bonus? From the other HTL?" When I saw the oversized headphones wrapped around his neck, I knew to whom he was referring. "He's my best friend," he explained. Turtle met me at the door after class and I asked him immediately if he was "into hip hop," to which he replied with an enthusiastic "yes, I love it." I asked if he would like to participate in the study and he immediately accepted. This display of enthusiasm was indicative of his overall level of commitment to the project. He pre-empted my asking him for another interview on a few occasions, and has offered to meet me at other locations. He was also able to use his school studies of electronics to master a rather tedious and difficult hip hop mixing software program called MPD. This program, along with other specialized equipment, is used by professional hip hop producers to create the beats heard under vocal tracks. In this way, he took up the role of deejay as he cut and mixed together samples from obscure American soul music sources to mash up intricate and danceable beats. He tried to teach Bonus to use the equipment, though Bonus preferred to write lyrics to Turtle's tracks. He had a willingness to cooperate and always showed his polite nature in his email correspondences with me and in all our one-on-one and classroom interactions.

Access

Descriptively assessing the settings and participants' profiles required becoming an established part of the contexts these students both occupy and create. First, I chose Innsbruck since I had lived near Austria some years ago, when I cultivated a general understanding of the country's physical and cultural setting. During this earlier period, I often noticed the presence of hip hop music, language, and attire. These encounters stirred a curiosity in me about Austrian adolescent involvement in "authentic" hip hop music, practices, and ideologies – authentic meaning to me, at the time, American. Even further, I wondered if they had any knowledge of hip hop that was not "pop" music heard widely on radio stations and music video channels. Where was this coming from? What did they know? And more interestingly: How did they know? These questions stayed with me for years to come, yet became subterranean as time went on. It wasn't until years later, during my doctoral studies, that I rediscovered the potential of this line of inquiry and learned that I could not only continue to ask those questions, but I could try to find some assemblage of answers, though partial and never complete.

When considering Austrian locations, I felt that Vienna would be too expansive, thus making it more difficult to unite the group of participants periodically. I had hoped to develop a sense of cohesion among the participants, and Vienna seemed an unlikely city for such goals. On the other hand, it I also seemed unlikely to have any success in any of the smaller towns I had come to know, as there was no visible hip hop community, and I was concerned about settling into a location where the process of assembling a sample group would create time issues for the progress of the study. This is certainly not meant to imply that smaller towns and cities do not have a hip hop presence; I was simply concerned about the amount of time it would take me to become acquainted with any type of hip hop scene, as any activity seemed to be taking place underground. The size of Innsbruck seemed ideal considering that it was not too large and yet had an urban sensibility about it, as well as a strong youth culture. As a result of my research grant, I was hired by the municipal school system as an English teacher in the two schools where I met the participants and gained a more than acceptable amount of access. My access not only led me directly to the participant group with which I worked, but also allowed me to observe them in classes and during normal

school activities. I also grew familiar with many of the faculty and was able to discuss aspects of the participants that I had not gleaned from my own interactions.

As described above, at the onset locating the participants was quite difficult. Typical hip hop clothing as it is known in the U.S. consists of oversized clothes, baseball caps or toboggans, and fashionable footwear. As Innsbruck is a ski town, there are many snowboarders whose styles mimic those common among hip hoppers. Therefore, I was not always able to distinguish students based upon dress. I shared my project with the other English teachers and through some references and a lot of trial and error, I was able to compose a group. They were very wary at the onset; however, with some time and shared conversations we developed a more intimate rapport. Not all of the students knew each other, but there was enough overlap that there was cohesion among the group. As a teacher, I was able to conduct interviews in the schools, thus providing a familiar context for them that allowed for minimal affective boundaries (Krashen, 2003) and ease of communication.

Data Collection

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) report that ethnographic research is constituted by the following principles:

(1) People's actions and accounts are studied in everyday contexts, rather than under conditions created by the researcher...research takes place 'in the field', (2) data are gathered from a range of sources, (3) data collection is, for the most part, relatively 'unstructured', in two senses. First, it does not involve following through a fixed and detailed research design specified at the start. Second, the categories that are used for interpreting what people say or do are not built into the data collection process through the use of observation schedules or questionnaires. Instead, they are generated out of the process of data analysis, (4) the focus is usually on a few cases, generally fairly small-scale, perhaps a single setting or group of people, and (5) the analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional

practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider, contexts. What are

produced, for the most part, are verbal descriptions, explanations, and theories. (p. 3)

Following the basic premises through which ethnographic research is defined and conducted, this

study investigates a smaller sample in greater depth over a longer period of time. Also concurrent with

ethnographic methods, there is a very pronounced degree of participant observation designed to capture

emic perspectives of the participants. Hammersley and Atkinson (2010) state, "in terms of data collection,

ethnography usually involves the researcher participating overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an

extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through

informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artifacts - in fact, gathering whatever data are

available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry" (p. 3).

As I will discuss, the data collection methods I used were reflective of these principles. What I

hope to illustrate is that these methods lead to more than a mere collection of generic tools; instead, they

support this study as an ethnography consistent with the ideals of the field. A thorough ethnography can

enlist a number of strategies to help validate methods and analysis. As a form of qualitative inquiry, the

data are best realized through a process of triangulation. Glesne (2006) notes that "qualitative researchers

depend on a variety of methods for gathering data. The use of multiple data-collection [sic] methods

contributes to the trustworthiness of the data. This practice of relying on multiple methods is commonly

called *triangulation*" (italics in original, p. 36). In order to achieve a multi-dimensional view of the

research, I sought to triangulate the data by using the following methods: (1) individual interviews, (2)

focus groups, (3) participant observation field notes, (4) self-recorded video, (5) artifact gathering, (6) and

pre- and post-study lexical surveys.

As an ethnographer, I used multiple tools to "search for interconnected patterns" (Heath & Street,

2008, p. 7) and seek a holistic view that interrogates institutional forces and patterns that indicate the

complexities of human agency. To capture this unfolding, Heath and Street describe the complicated

processes of ethnographic work, noting that

As ethnographers, we are never more in the classic hermeneutical circle than when we are working with…data embedded in behavioral contexts. The ethnographer has to work from a seemingly unending circle into a spiral that gradually lifts the ethnographer to a vantage point in which the listening and looking make for clarity of meaning. It is up to the ethnographer to record, sort, rethink, revisit, and reconcile conflicting, nonparallel data and misleading bits and pieces. (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 107)

One sociolinguistically oriented data collection method I introduced to the study that is unusual in an ethnographic study was a lexical survey, which was administered once at the beginning of the data collection period and then repeated at the end of the study. The survey offered a combination of 101 English and German hip hop terminological items. Participants were asked to read all the terms, then (1) circle the terms or phrases they had heard and understood and (2) box the terms or phrases they had used themselves. They were also encouraged to write any hip hop language they heard or used that were not found on the list into a blank space on the back of the survey. I administered this survey at the two intervals to see if, in the course of the study, the participants had become increasingly familiar with some of the terms and phrases, or if by the end of the study they would have become more forthcoming about what they actually knew.

According to Johnstone (2000), repeating a survey is considered a helpful method to test reliability. She recommends "systematically asking [participants] to look at data, asking the same questions or applying the same labeling and categorization schemes" (p. 61). In the survey, I integrated the English and German terms as I believed that the participants used them interchangeably within the context of their everyday German use. I realized that apart from their English classrooms, they were not using the English language as a common form of communication within their own communities. Therefore, if they were integrating or adapting English terminology into their German speech, I wanted the survey to somewhat reflect that reality. Many of the terms were brought to my attention by hip hop literacies researcher Elaine Richardson, and her work with German online hip hop activity. The survey was helpful as an entry point

into conversations about language use that identified the participants as hip hoppers. I will touch upon their reactions to this survey later, when I discuss the findings of the study.

In addition to the lexical survey, I discussed language choices explicitly with the participants during one-on-one interviews. "Sociolinguists have shown over and over that people's intuitions about their own language use are unreliable" (Johnstone, 2000, p. 76). This may be because this level of meta-linguistic analysis can be quite onerous for participants at first. Accordingly, I maintained that line of questioning across several interviews, allowing them time and opportunity to think more analytically about how they in fact use hip hop language in their everyday speech. I have video recordings of these interviews and analyzed their responses, looking for patterns either accepting or denying their use. One impediment in this area of inquiry was that I am an American woman with experience in hip hop culture, and I have had much greater contact with Black Americans who the participants tend to identify as being the authentic speakers of hip hop language. I felt that they may be hesitant to admit that they appropriate, or in their minds perhaps "borrow," this speech for their own purposes. This tension was a factor during analysis of the data. However, as a teacher/participant observer in their schools, I was also able to observe their casual language use with their peers in classrooms, hallways, and cafeterias. I made incidental notes marking frequency and types of speech or terminology and was able to develop a more naturalistic view of their actual usage, which was of much higher frequency and greater variety than they self-reported. I will approach this in greater depth as I discuss my findings.

Data Analysis

Purposeful data collection methods should render meaningful and reliable points of analysis. Johnstone (2000) states,

Ethnographic analytical techniques are often referred to as 'unpacking' or 'uncovering.' […] The metaphors of unpacking and uncovering suggest that the material we analyze has layers, and that the more you peel away, the closer to the center of things you are, the center of things being the

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native-like account of what is going on and the general ethical and epistemological principles that underlie it. (p. 99)

As popular culture phenomena that are deeply rooted in the arts and aesthetic sensibilities, describing the characteristics of hip hop activities and ideologies requires a reasonable amount of artistic interpretation and intuition. One approach that permeates all of the data analysis methods in this study proposes that humans make particular connections to various artistic genres, and those connections can be honored and preserved when looking at socially mediated objects (including language) and symbols (including aesthetics).

Hip hop is, in essence, an aesthetic vehicle through which deeper meanings and messages are communicated. This aesthetic appeal does not preclude the potency of the underlying ideologies that distinguish it from other art movements; in fact, it is difficult to articulate one without the other. Maintaining a broad and inclusive scope was necessary in understanding how these forces influence one another and how the participants internalize the myriad configurations as they are represented in particular ways. Due to the elusive nature of the arts and the pervasiveness of artistic influences in the participants' affinities, the data points for analysis presented themselves as patterned and thematic, resonating across participants' attitudes and activities. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995) discuss the emergence of a "thematic narrative." They assert that "thematic narratives incorporate several analytic themes or concepts linked by a common topic," and discuss the overall development of an ethnographic piece involving thematic analysis. Specifically, they recommend

discuss[ing] a series of steps that move progressively toward creating a thematic narrative that is fieldnote-centered [sic]. These steps include writing out initial statements of analytic themes, then selecting, explicating, sequencing, and editing fieldnote [sic)] excerpts and analytic commentary. (p. 170)

This organization of data along thematic lines is a method of data analysis proffered by Glesne (2006) and Ellingson (2009). Thematic analysis is pertinent to my research study as the dominant data

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collection methods consist of field notes, video-recorded interviews, focus groups, and student-recorded videos, which include both documents and artifacts. Buetow (2010) states that thematic analysis

> attempts in general to reveal core consistencies and meanings in a text by identifying and
>
> analyzing themes, which are large, abstract categories of meaningful data segments. In themes,
>
> these segments, which are known as codes, *recur* in the broad sense that repeated codes are similar
>
> or connected to each other in a patterned way. (p. 123, italics in original)

Thematic analysis allowed me to examine the transcripts for patterns and similarities which could be coded and categorized to reveal patterns of speech and behavior on the surface level, revealing ideologies and belief systems as more deeply embedded themes.

Glesne (2006) summarizes coding as "a process of defining and sorting those scraps of collected data (i.e., observation notes, interview transcripts, memos, documents and notes from relevant literature) that are applicable to your research purpose. By putting like-minded pieces together into data clumps, you create an organizational framework" (p. 152). As this study involved a small group of participants, I was not only able to compare an individual participant's responses to his earlier responses, but also to make broader connections among other group members to gain a multi-layered perspective of their beliefs and practices. In this way, the research analysis was grounded in the data and can be used to generate understanding of how these group members experience the role of global hip hop in their local lives.

Glesne describes grounding in terms of the discussion by Strauss and Glaser (1967), who contend that "the purpose of grounded theory [is] to 'demonstrate the relations between conceptual categories and to specify the conditions under which theoretical relationships emerge, change, or are maintained'" (2006, p. 12). She further outlines the connection between the data and the generation of theory. She cites Wolcott (1994) who lists "three means of data transformation": "description, analysis, and interpretation" (p. 163). Wolcott claims that description involves staying close to the original form of the data. Analysis follows with "the identification of key factors in the study and the relationships among them" and leads necessarily

to interpretation, which takes place when deeper analysis "'transcends factual data and cautious analysis and begins to probe into what is to be made of them'" (as cited in Glesne, 2006, p. 164).

One aspect of thematic and grounded analysis methods is their reliance on patterns of recurrence across informants' ideas and behaviors. Buetow (2010) introduces one inherent flaw in that approach. He supports thematic analysis as an overwhelmingly successful method that garners the attention and respect of researchers in all areas of qualitative analysis. This additive resource for analyzing data involves "saliency analysis," which according to Buetow

> assesses the degree to which each code recurs, is highly important or both. Codes of high importance are ones that advance understanding or are useful in addressing real world problems, or both. This saliency analysis can expose what is non-recurrent but potentially important to the aims of a study. (p. 124)

Deeper investigation clarifies that research into an artistic movement merges with political and social domains. Ellingson's (2009) interpretation of thematic analysis involves more artistic imagery. She describes the process of interpretation as "crystallization," as it reconceptualizes previous approaches that she sees as one-dimensional (p. 2). She draws upon the metaphor of a quilt in describing the multiple influences that enhance interpretation:

> The making of a quilt involves creating art and producing a functional object piecing together bits of fabric into a holistic pattern that beautifies, warms those who use it, reflects the artistic voice of its creator, and often provides a social outlet during its creating...Likewise, crystallized qualitative projects produce both aesthetic and functional products...and reflects the voices of both researchers and participants...Keeping an image of a quilt in your head while creating a crystallized, multigenre text may aid in simultaneously envisioning the big picture of your social, political and scholarly goals for your project, while also enabling you to focus on one particular patch of work at a time. (p. 99)

By organizing and interpreting my data along these guidelines, I have been able to draw together insights pertaining to individual participants, as well as form some generalizations that reach across multiple data sources and serve to inform theses generated by the data.

Description of the Data Corpus

The data corpus involves documented and transcribed events and artifacts reflective of the data collection methods. These methods were designed to create a strong network of data points that could be triangulated for rich analysis and reliable evidence. The majority of the data are in the form of field notes that I was able to record as an outcome of deep participant observation opportunities, and include jottings, descriptive notes, analytic notes, and autobiographical notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Glesne, 2006). I was able to carry a notebook with me throughout the school day, into my classes and into the hallways and cafeterias, and collected over 160 pages of field notes across the months I worked with the participants. Likewise, I kept notes on my experiences during the summer months when I returned to the United States and continued work on the study. These notes were valuable as they reflected the necessary back and forth between the emic, which I explored in Innsbruck, and the etic, which I drew from once I gained some distance from the environment and the people influencing it.

Second, I have 26 hours of digital video-recorded one-on-one and focus group interviews. The videos have been transcribed for analysis. Four of the focus group recordings experienced some corruption during the recording process and I lost all of those data. However, once I became aware of these errors, I was quick to write down the most salient or noteworthy aspects of the interviews and was able to do so with relative accuracy. In conjunction with the traditional interview formats, I also provided the participants with video cameras to record ways that hip hop impacts their out-of-school lives. I was expecting greater participation in this area; however, many of the participants did not recognize when, how, and where they enact hip hop activities and behaviors. I received 54 short length videos from the participants, all related to their hip hop practices outside of school. Not all of the participants recorded

video, unfortunately, but the extant videos contributed a significant amount of knowledge when compounded with other data sources.

To further understand the positions that the participants took at the beginning of our work together, I asked each of them to fill out a survey about their engagement with hip hop discourse. As noted above, I also documented a lexical survey to identify what kinds of hip hop language they understand in both English and German, with the hybrid category of "hip hop language" between them. This survey was re-administered at the end of the data collection period to better understand any changes that occurred, and to allow for a greater sense of honesty among the participants after we had developed a relationship.

Related artifacts include a USB drive with approximately 60 German rap songs, a gift from a participant in order to engage me in the music he listens to. From one of the graffiti artists in the groups, I also received a personalized "tag" of my name that he designed, as well as a copy of the tag he uses when tagging or completing a graffiti piece. Artifacts can also be audio items. I received songs created by two of the participants either by MP3 media or on the SoundCloud website. Finally, I was also able to collect a small number of photographs depicting various people and graffiti pieces completed by Bonus.

Data Analysis Procedures

The theory behind these data analysis procedures is explained in the methods section above, but in order to make explicit the steps taken during analysis, here I will specify those strategies and how they relate to the study. First, all of the video-recorded data was transcribed, indicating not only the speech itself but also the paralinguistic features of the responses, such as pauses, emphases, physicality, and other features that communicated attitudes. Second, I performed an utterance-by-utterance analysis to organize responses by indexing global/local/globalization, identity, authenticity, resources, and reactions to key contradictions found within hip hop discourse. Third, I coded those responses as they developed into themes or categories that were addressed by multiple participants. Within the codes, I assessed continuity and contradictions based on participants' reactions, crafting a more nuanced orientation and allowing

greater depth of analysis within the categories. Fourth, I returned to the corpus to a.) confirm that these

themes properly reflect the given context, b.) account for the frequency of themes within the corpus, and c.)

establish how the themes relate to one another. Lastly, I employed the "saliency analysis" approach which

gives credence to the intuitions of the researcher in selecting items that may not recur, but do offer

significance to either support, contrast, or contradict other themes within the corpus. I sought to assemble a

rich and layered analysis that fully captures the sentiments of the participants and how they engage with the

range of themes presented in this study.

Chapter 4: Authenticity in the Contexts of Collectivism and Individualism

The Purpose of this Chapter

In this chapter, I present findings regarding the participants' developing identities as both Tirolers and hip hoppers. Consistent with the practices of many ethnographic and discourse analytic studies, the presentation of findings also includes interpretations and discussion of those findings, along with references to theoretical discussions in the scholarly community. One theme present in most of these findings concerns authenticity; another theme is the tension between individualism and collectivism. Related to these findings, I note that these two themes are also pervasive in global hip hop ideologies, which is a major component of the broader context in which the participants in this study are constructing social identities for themselves. Thus, this chapter begins by discussing how various theorists have approached the issues of authenticity and the tension between individualism and collectivism in the development/construction of social identity.

Findings on Authenticity, the Dialectic/Tension Between Collectivism and Individualism, and Social Identity

Authenticity and Social Identity

Identity plays a critical role in how the participants managed their day-to-day lives as hip hoppers. Recognition of these identities rose to the surface for many of them, and the multiplicity and interactive nature of identities challenged them to make critical maneuvers to manifest certain identities given the changing contexts of their lives. For example, Bonus spoke of his identities as a graffiti writer and a student, noting:

H: Yes, you think, when, when, I go out, and see my paints and my spray paintings, and nobody sees, also they see my painting, but they don't see me, and that's, how can I explain that? That's a good feeling. And, "hip hop."

J: Mysterious…

H: Mysterious, yes. You have two identities, one identity with your crew at 2 o'clock in the night, and one identity you go to school and talk with the teachers, and they don't know what is going up. But, that's better so.

(Interview, 10.8.12)

When Bonus says, "And, 'hip hop'" he means that his activities in the night are aligned with true hip hop behaviors and attitudes, and indicate that his lifestyle is authentic. His ability to sequester his graffiti identity is integrated into his understanding of embodying multiple selves, in this case, his life as a graffiti artist and his identity as a "traditional" student. In fact, upon first pursuing Bonus as a potential participant, I met him outside of one of his classes. When the teacher arrived and saw Bonus, she put her arm around him and said "Der ist eine gute," meaning "he's a good one" (Field notes, 11.12.11). This implies that Bonus is quite adept at distancing his illegal graffiti identity from his school identity. This may have been heightened due to the fact that his father was also a teacher at the school, as another of his teachers explained to me (Field notes, 5.12.12). Interestingly, Bonus neither mentioned his father's position at the school, nor did it ever come up in conversation.

Regarding Bonus' criteria for "real hip hop" as a legitimate identity, he believes that it is strictly tied to one's commitment to sanctioned hip hop practice or practices for which approval should come from insiders who also practice, rather than from outsiders such as family, teachers, or even myself (Interview, 3.26.12). However, the outward appearance of his style of dress and way of speaking does strategically place him in the role of hip hopper to those around him, compared to their roles as outsiders. By mere contrast he is defining himself as notably "other," proudly taking the position in a non-dominant social category.

Like Bonus' description of his activities, when the participants talked about "who" they are, they tended to talk about ideas of what "real hip hop" is and how it looks and feels in its various iterations. In the exchange below, Flow distinguished what he considered "real" rap from what he considered mere "entertainment." He described differences between what I identified as "rhythmic talk" and his idea of rap, which he felt typically involved urban problems. In the following account, he illuminated concepts of both authenticity and identity. The identity that he exposed is inevitably that of the observer, the outsider, because he did not hail from the urban streets of America or the tenements of Berlin. He imposed a notable distance between his own upbringing and the possibility of being an authentic hip hopper. He drew the distinction of this apparent dichotomy in comparing "entertainment" rap with his notion of authentic rap, and positioned himself as inauthentic, thus identifying himself as a mere observer despite his affinity for, participation in, or knowledge of the genre.

First he indexed the musical style of Austrian artist Falco, who was popular in the 80s. His rap is based mainly on stories and the musical style is comparable to pop music, unlike the sounds that Flow called "American hip hop." He also referred to a German hip hop group called Fanta Vier, which is short for Fantastischen Vier, or in English, the Fantastic Four. They are considered rap by most standards, but their style is more whimsical and does not take a social or political stance.

F: It's difficult to explain, but, yeah, there are like a kind of music where the people are talking to a beat, but it's not called hip hop or rap, it's just traditional stuff. And if you start thinking about those things, those music genres are very similar.

J: Yeah, it is...very similar. A lot of jazz has that too, in the U.S., the talking over music. But it's not exactly rap, but it's rhythmic talk.

F: Or like Falco, Falco isn't a rapper, and my parents are also having a music when they are just speaking, but it's not rap.

J: Rhythmically?

F: Yeah.

J: So, what would you say that the roots of hip hop in Europe are? Do you think that it's coming from this music you're talking about? Or do you think that they borrowed it from the U.S.?

F: I think mainly they took it from the U.S. But it developed from, out of a completely different situation. I think. Because I think the first German rappers were like Fanta Vier or like, yeah, but, the topics aren't problems or like that, it's more entertainment.

J: That's a good way of putting it. It is entertainment.

F: First there wasn't the American hip hop—like I call it—first it was the entertainment thing. But, it's just my point of view, so.

J: So, for German kid who wants to start rapping, German speaking kid, Austrian or…and he talks about making his music and keepin' it real, what do you think he means by that. Do you think it depends on where you come from? What's real? Is where you come from?

F: I think um, it would be ridiculous if I did rap about a bad neighborhood…well, I don't know how I would, if I did rap, I wouldn't know how I could keep it real, because, I like

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to keep it real. Because I like to listen to it. For example, I would have to do

entertainment or stuff like this. It's difficult to explain…

(Interview, 3.8.12)

While Flow attempted to make a distinction that is "difficult to explain," he did offer enough

examples to make his point clear. What is "difficult to explain" is his conception of himself as existing

somehow outside of authentic hip hop practice and participation. On the one hand, he had previously taken

on the role in a very demonstrative way, meaning he personified hip hop through dress and his beliefs that

hip hoppers were "gang bangers" who engaged in criminal behaviors. He believed that there is a direct

relationship between hip hop and street life—be it in the U.S. or any other urban center—and that his

having grown up in the mountains surrounding Innsbruck preclude him from authentic participation (Field

notes, 6.19.12). Given these parameters, Flow felt that as a hip hopper, he would take on the guise of

"entertainment" rather than meaningful, weighted messages based solely on street life. He also spoke of the

language often found in hip hop music being explicit and counter-culture (3.8.12). His analysis

acknowledged the eventual influence of American hip hop on the German street music scene, as he

discussed later in that interview:

F: Afterwards, those street rappers developed in Germany. Like Kool Savas, who was also

       called the king of rap in Germany or Europe, he's one of the best and he started very early

       and it was a disaster because he was using bad language.

(Interview, 3.8.12)

It seems that the use of "bad language" in German rap was a stark contrast to what audiences had

come to expect of German hip hop to that point. In this way, Flow appeared to attribute the use of bad

language to an American influence and therefore thought it represented a hallmark of hip hop authenticity. In fact, he attributed much of the legitimation of German hip hop to including much of American "bad language". He had previously noted that he thinks it communicates a certain sense of authenticity to their lyrics (Field notes, 9.23.12). This does not mean that Flow believed that only American hip hop was legitimate; rather, he attributed authenticity to urban influence, struggle, and weight of message (Field notes, 4.14.13). He mentioned that, in fact, there can be a stigma in German rap if one is perceived as attempting to imitate or reproduce American rap which typically takes the form of gangsta rap (Interview, 3.8.12). Gangsta rap tends to include bragging about how invincible one is, and is hallmarked by explicit language and criminal activity.

In a participant-recorded video log, Flow discussed this briefly while driving his car on his way home from a tattoo shop where he had just added a new piece to his collection. He flipped through several songs before settling on one to which he was whispering the rap along with the song. The song mentioned Obama and an English derogatory term for a woman. Suddenly the scenery changed and he was passing through what looked like a wooded neighborhood. The houses were surrounded by grass and trees. Flow appeared to be very familiar with these roads as every turn seemed patterned and routine as he drove. Another song started that, like the others, used a code mix of German and American Rap language: for example, "...du bist Scheisse, Ich balle mit dem Rifle," meaning "you are shit, I ball (English use for "I'm down with") the rifle (English use). It seemed obvious that Flow liked the beat of this song based on his head and shoulder movement, which kept time with the music and mimicked what is also called head nodding in American slang. Also "full clip" was detectable in the lyrics, alluding to English terminology for a full dispenser of bullets or ammunition.

Based on the view out the driver side window, the car was rather high in altitude given the distance from the valley below and the mountains standing tall on the other side of the valley. Flow reached his destination, and as he parked the car he messed around with his radio and the camera, saying, "so now I am at home, maybe you recognized that some words those German rappers use are English like rifle, or yeah, stuff like that" (self-recorded video, 10.30.12). The frequency of the use of American hip hop

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language may contribute to Flow's reports that he did not feel that he lived an authentic hip hop life as the influence of American rap dominates the music that he listened to. Even in cases where German language hip hop does not directly import the hip hop language used in American rap, German rap tends to employ the same register of language – street language. As Flow grew up in the mountain town that he called "home," he seems to have sequestered his participation in "authentic" hip hop, despite the commitment he showed to the genre throughout the study and years before.

Not only did Flow refer to bad language as an American influence, but he frequently alluded to "problems" or struggles as being a sign of real rap music. He expressed some doubt as to the authenticity of his own lived experiences as worthy of being real hip hop. In fact, he would classify the expression of his participation as a less compelling form of "entertainment." He interpreted his privilege and education as not aligned with what he called the "weight of the message" inherent in his interpretation of American rap music. Without an urgent message denoting problems of some imagined urban life, Flow seemed to discredit other entertainers such as "rappers" like Falco and Fantastischen Vier (Interview, 3.8.12). The distinction he proffered was that "people can rap, but it doesn't mean it's hip hop" (Field notes, 4.14.13).

In locating himself somewhere between his conception of himself as an Innsbrucker and the hubris of an American hip hop personality, Flow finds his sense of authenticity in his willingness to legitimate his practices within the framework of his Austrian "self." He does not feel that he is an authentic hip hopper because of his background and diverse interests. However, he devotes much of his time in and out of school to hip hop music, video, and graffiti. He finds an identity that is reconciled in his mind as hybrid and uniquely his own. For instance, his self-recorded video demonstrates his confidence in the purposefulness with which he shot the videos – a glimpse of his artistic sensibilities and extensive art training. In the video described below, he shows his willingness to bring the viewer into his hip hop life within the comforts of his home Austrian context: his home in the mountains outside of Innsbruck city.

Flow chose to begin his collection of hip hop video narratives with a close up shot of an image of a black outline drawing of a wildly smiling and maniacally gazing court jester or trickster, framed by ornate patterns with faded blues and reds in the background. He then, without speaking, clicked a button and the

image was swiped off to the right, revealing a computer screen that listed song titles and other details. He scrolled until he found one and clicked it to play. The title on the screen was Der Chef (The Boss), a song by a famous German artist called Sido of whom Flow spoke repeatedly in interviews. Looking at the character he had highlighted in his opening shot, and the choice of song, "The Boss," this video opening appears to be very strategically positioned. It boasts of his proud individuality and mild but certainly commanding tendencies.

After the opening of the song, the music shifted, he turned down the volume, and panned across his bedroom while he narrated, "So, this is my bedroom, where I do everything, of course sleep." He focused on his twin bed with its messy duvet and pillows, and a backdrop hanging fuchsia fabric that highlighted a concentric circle pattern with delicate repeated shapes, including elephants and flowers, making it seem like a scarf from a South Asian culture. It could have easily been purchased online or at a tobacco shop, but Flow traveled extensively with his parents on tour and may have picked this up on one of his excursions. He then focused on the corner of the room, which featured weightlifting equipment and a punching bag, about which all he said was "train." He then focused back on the desk to a large white paper with a black outline drawing of an eagle head, with a ribbon encircling its head and orchids dripping downward onto a pocket watch, about which he said, "and draw stuff." This was followed by "and listen to music" with a lifting of the gaze back up to his computer screen, "all the time."

He paused then stated, "This is my library on iTunes, everything is hip hop, rap, German rap" all the while scrolling very quickly down through his catalogue, "and American rap, but also the Doors and things like that." He widened his focus and said, "so, this is the first impression of my hip hop room and my style of living hip hop." He abruptly ended the shot after that statement (Participant-recorded video, 4.2012). Flow demonstrates a kind of confusion in reconciling his identity as a hip hopper. Rather than take on the title of "hip hopper" as he once did, he demonstrated his Austrian life and a quite different conception of himself and his "style of living hip hop" (Participant-recorded video, 4.2012). His freedom from this title allowed him certain liberties that other participants did not take.

Sohne and Flow spoke of trying on different hip hop identities as they developed their understanding of "being hip hop" over "buying hip hop" (Field notes, 5.1.13). As is evident above, Flow and his "style of living hip hop" shifted away from products to process. Sohne and Flow both admitted to donning the prevailing hip hop fashion when they first caught on to American hip hop music. They both spoke of wearing baggy jeans and t-shirts, baseball caps, oversized sneakers, and heavy jewelry as ways of identifying themselves to others and delineating what they thought was "real" hip hop behavior (Interview, 3.7.12). By taking on this style, they communicated an identity of non-conformity and urbanism, both departures from their views of a bucolic status-quo that permeated Innsbruck's villages and towns, in particular, Innsbruck as a "Kuhdorf" (*cow town*) as compared to Berlin (Interview,6.14.12). However, Sohne indicated, "I don't think I look like hip hop anymore" and both Sohne and Flow agreed that they still own those clothes, but have developed more independent ways of dressing that do not belong to any groups, as Flow explored more fully elsewhere (Interview, 3.7.12). Neither of the participants demonstrate outward affiliations to hip hop despite their personal interest in the genre. This shift led the two to recognize that looking hip hop does not actually mean you "are" hip hop, but that you have become a consumer of hip hop cultural goods. Now, both wear unassuming clothing that reflect more mainstream culture such as fitted jeans and button down shirts and sweaters (Field notes, 4.12.12).

To illustrate this difference, Bonus made a strong distinction between what is perhaps best represented by *being* hip hop and *buying* hip hop. His style is contrasted sharply, as despite his views on "being" hip hop, he certainly reflected the outward style of a hip hopper, meaning that he wore baggy jeans, oversized t-shirts, and sneakers, with headphones wrapped around his neck at all times. He did feel passionately about the leap one takes when he or she shifts from superficial evidence to deep-rooted belief systems. In fact, during an interview he requested clarification of a question I had asked by replying, "be hip hop, or hear hip hop?" This response illuminates the differences between those who consume the social products of global hip hop and those who integrate a worldview that is commensurate with the overall vision of the Hip Hop Nation (Interview, 6.14.12). I asked Bonus to further explore this idea.

J: You said there is a difference between hearing hip hop and being hip hop. Can you

         explain that?

B: Yes, when you *be* hip hop, you have something to do with one of the parts of hip hop,

         there are many parts, breakdance, deejaying, rapping, also other dances. The unterschied

         - what means unterschied?

J: Difference

B: Is that when you *are* hip hop, you understand…things completely different than other

         person do.

         (Interview, 6.14.12)

Bonus indicated that he went through a kind of transformation upon contact with the ideologies embedded in hip hop music and other aspects of hip hop practices. In juxtaposing how hip hoppers understand the world and how "other person[s] do" he was not only staking claim to his hip hop identity, but he was expanding this membership to include other hip hoppers who, as such, must therefore share a common worldview. Here Bonus described a kind of kinship that seems to permeate the hip hop culture, its knowledge, and its ways of striving to achieve authentic behaviors. Authenticity, in this sense, is agreed upon, reinforced, and shared among members who have the experience to know what is commonly referred to as "keepin' it real". "Keepin' it real" is nomenclature representing the relationship that individuals have with certain commonalities shared by many individuals within a culture, particularly within cultures that demonstrate some sense of behavioral and ideological standards. In hip hop, "keepin' it real" represents an urban attitude where certain experiences are shared across a neighborhood, often underrepresented, and sets a standard of beliefs and activities belonging to people who have lived there. While this mantra is also used to signify positive traditions of a culture or subculture typically aligned with African American traditions, rap music often tends to communicate criminal behaviors as "keepin it real," which in turn has become a mantra for a "by any means necessary" disposition.

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"Keepin' it real" as a construct attracts many global hip hop followers who see American rap as fiercely competitive, a reflection of an ideal that urban life is fast-paced and fraught with struggle for survival. Among the participants, race was often avoided as a topic of conversation, except to show solidarity with black people, warranted or not. In fact, Sohne spoke of his relationship to the only black student in the school who was also in his cohort. In the following excerpt, Bonus and Sohne were engaged in a paired interview based on the discrepancies in their hip hop rap tastes, mainly collectivist (consciousness-raising) vs. individualist (commercial). This piece demonstrates the idea of race and "keepin' it real" attitudes that the participants have about cultural aspects of the rap enterprise and the messages extolled in the differing hip hop scenes in which they participate.

J: Speaking of white and black issues, what do you think about blacks in America from TV or films or...

B: In hip hop or normal..?

J: Normal life.

B: About blacks?

J: Yeah.

B: They are normal peoples like white.

S: I love black people. They are not normal, they, I got very, a few black friends, in my class there's one. Have you seen him?

J: Yeah, of course.

S: Yeah. And he's just like every black man I know, or yeah, they just are, they're just like peace. They don't want to fight. They just cool and chill and it's just the best times you can have. I just love it.

J: Do you think that blacks have a more difficult time than white people?

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B: Today?

J: Yeah.

B: No.

J: What about in the US?

B: I don't know.

J: You've never seen movies or...

B: Yes. 50 years ago maybe. I think it is harder for them. Because all of the things they hear. The songs, they say it every time that blacks are after (behind) the white people. But today, I think black men are not [behind} white men because of this Nazi…so, racism is really verboten.

J: Forbidden.

B: A forbidden thing for everybody. It can also be that you are friendlier to a black man than to a white man because you don't want that he means that you are a racist.

        (Paired-interview, 12.6.12)

        While seeking to explore the personal differences in musical ideologies of the two participants, I stumbled into a discussion of race and their attitudes about authenticity and black people in Austria and in America. It seemed consistent with what I knew of the two: the more "commercial" (individualist) hip hopper, Sohne, would buy into a sense of superficial power and independence found in mainstream rap, while Bonus, a collectivist rap follower, would demonstrate a more nuanced approach to race in his community and elsewhere due to the more politically charged lyrics of collectivist rap. In terms of music, Sohne only listened to American rap as he "respects" the roots of the movement and felt that only artists who came from urban American streets extol true hip hop authority. When asked where he finds "real" rap, he said, "America...in America you can do more, and rap more...It's like the place where it all comes

together with hip hop" (Interview, 3.7.12). This ascribed hegemony of American rap and hip hop culture is transparent when looking at the overall continuity in global hip hop. Further, he explained:

J: So, would underground be more real and pop less real?

S: Yeah, I don't know, when you, as long as you really mean what you are

        rapping, then it's real, but when you just make a song to get money, and it's just for, it's

        not for you, it's just for the fans and it's for the radio, it's not real, that's fake.

        (Interview, 6.14.12)

This stance contrasts with the actual music he listens to, based on my own appraisal and my knowledge of the rap music he appreciates. It is possible that he does not see the commercial and more superficial aspects of the music he prefers. When he criticizes making "a song to get money" and "for the radio," he may not be fully interrogating the sources of the music he buys. However, on the other hand, his interpretations must be respected as he is a dedicated participant in hip hop culture. What may explain this discrepancy is his involvement in dance. In my experience, commercial rap tends to rely more on the beats than the lyrics. In this way, Sohne may find more danceable tracks within the style of rap that glazes over real political issues and portrays blacks as partiers and pleasure seekers. I am not trying to say that that is not true for some people, however for many blacks in America, the reality of economic and political oppression is more pressing. As can be construed from commercial hip hop music, this style of rap tends to communicate a sentiment of capriciousness and freedom that simply does not come through in American policy and government. By selling "the American Dream" to its listeners, commercial rap is selling a vision of dominance and the notion that rap is for partying and garnering the spoils of luxury and one-upmanship.

These attitudes are an integral part of the idea of "real" hip hop, though they are contrasted by the attitudes of the consciousness-raising (collectivist) rap that persists in the underground scene. However, it

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is less meaningful what those practitioners believe inside the U.S. and more so what they communicate on a global level. "Keepin' it real" may not hold the same values in the U.S. as abroad. Despite any discrepancies, authenticity is honored through global practices and worldviews that define the hip hop experience. Given any latitude in worldwide interpretations of "authentic,," the trappings of hip hop culture tend to demonstrate the same aesthetic, philosophic, and practical manifestations no matter how remote the locale. Globalization brought the world hip hop, and transnationalism fostered it.

Flow explored the idea of how "keepin' it real" affected identity and how he had embodied his view of real hip hop in his practices. What is particularly significant about the dialogue that follows is that Flow discussed his hip hop identity as it developed out of an Alpine upbringing, and what that meant about the authenticity of his identity. This presented an example of what was earlier noted as a sincere difficulty in parsing authenticity and identity. Flow's addressing of each concept was layered and complex in weaving the together of the two. He could not discuss his hip hop identity without referring to his image of what is authentic and how he had captured those notions across his development. Flow had a significant hip hop identity throughout his teens, taking on the guise of a "thug" at an earlier stage. This was followed by his realization that hip hop is more of a worldview, a way of being, than just taking on a superficial role according to the dictates of others with generic views of "keepin' it real." He abdicated any "title" and chose instead to integrate those aspects of hip hop that both supported and challenged his development. Therefore, the notion of "keepin' it real" took on an alternate definition and gave him the latitude to live hip hop in ways that were meaningful and aligned with his evolving worldview. Taking this position may appear to relinquish authenticity and create a more nebulous relationship with hip hop ideologies, but it actually encourages independence and a more thoughtful self-concept than before. These tensions are made visible in the excerpt below:

J: You, you live in a house, right? And you have land around you?

F: Yeah.

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J: So, would "keepin' it real" be talking about your experiences, how *you* grew up?

F: Yeah, sure. But, I think the…. the weight of the message is just completely different than other problems. So it's…I think I had a pretty normal childhood, if you see it, if you talk about those things, I don't know how to say it, it's difficult...sorry I don't know how to say it.

J: In German?

F: I don't even know

J: You don't know how to explain it?

F: It's so difficult because you made me think about those things, about the whole hip hop thing, and then my life influences. So, I'm still fighting with myself about how I think actually.

         (Interview, 3.18.12)

Interestingly, Flow made a strong distinction between "the weight of the message" that was communicated in rap that was from the streets versus rap that came from "a pretty normal childhood." In his inability to articulate this discrepancy, it appeared that he could not reconcile "keepin' it real" as personal experience, but instead he attributed it to the struggle, poverty, and violence often rapped about in hip hop. He communicated a hierarchy of "real" hip hop placing the power clearly on the side of American urbanity and devalued those expressions that are local. Below, however, he does express an alternative possibility: that authenticity can be found in local iterations of hip hop as long as it is meaningful. He continued to grapple with how to identify authentic hip hop in music and fashion and how his understandings positioned him within these concepts. Not only does he struggle to find his own place in these matrices, but he also attempts to identify others within the hip hop culture:

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J: So, then, here's the word that comes to mind. "Keepin' it real" is one way of looking at it, but what about "authentic?" Do you think that's the same thing as "keepin' it real?"

F: I think those things are very close together, but there's still a difference…mmm…good question.

J: What makes a song authentic?

F: I think a song is authentic, is when it's, a song with a, it doesn't have to have a message, but it should be… it sounds strange, but it should be made with heart, and yeah, with love for the thing…

J: It's very interesting because one of my questions is um, about the image of hip hop. How do you think people create, how do you identify someone who's hip hop? When you're walking down the street, or meeting people in a club, how do you identify?

F: Well, of course there's several dress codes, I also used to wear baggy pants and New Era baseball caps and even chains. Well, it's ridiculous, but we used to. Well, yeah, you can recognize people by their dress code, and also…well, also by listening to them, how they speak, what their language is...

J: How do you know by the speech? Like what things do you pick up?

F: Well, those words like I told you, like "alter" (*homie*)…

J: About language, um, because to me, you don't look hip hop in the traditional sense. In the commercial sense, in the kind that sells baggy pants, and sells chains...

F: Well, I think there's a difference, because this bling bling stuff and fur coats and, they are just show, but the actual hip hop style, these baggy pants thing, it's since MC Hammer, I think. So, actually, I think that's traditional hip hop clothes, baggy stuff. But if you look at Snoop Dogg or Wiz Kaleefa, they sometimes wear baggy stuff, but they sometimes wear skinny pants like I do. And Converse, and just the baggy shirt or something.

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In fact, Sohne had posted two photos on his Facebook page illustrating the difference in hip hop fashion over time. He described these images:

S: When I was young, rappers looked like this, and you see rappers with the gangsta style. But now, rappers look like this and you see Lil' Wayne with his skinny jeans and pants. Yes, it has changed.

J: So, how do you know if you meet someone if they are a hip hopper or not? If they don't have the baggy gangsta clothes?

S: I don't think you can see that. I don't think you really can see if he, what type of music he listens to.

The forms of evidence they articulated describe a local shift in hip hop fashion as well as the primacy of hip hop language in deeming one authentic. Both concepts represent ideas taken up by hip hoppers around Austria, as demonstrated in video and radio programs (Field notes, 5.12.12). These ideas have been circulated on a global scale; however, hip hoppers are not mistaken that they originated from American hip hop and rap. This points to the notion of *contact* where transformations take place between global and local realities. Pennycook (2007) clarifies this further:

Here is a perfect example of a tension between, on the one hand, the spread of a cultural dictate to

adhere to certain principles of what it means to be authentic, and on the other, a process of

localization that makes such an expression of staying true to oneself dependent on local contexts,

languages, cultures and understandings of the real. (p. 98)

As Pennycook asserts, there are often tensions between more ideological implications of being

"real" versus more regional iterations that blur the boundaries between global and local. Indirectly,

Pennycook describes the struggles that the participants face in negotiating a very localized Innsbruck

interpretation of hip hop in contrast to those American dictates that may be at odds with their local realities.

Pennycook appears to support the idea of "authenticity" being found in these spaces where ideologies come

into contact with localities and their social practices. By "contact," I allude to the conceptualization of

ideological spaces where contact is made and to what takes place when ideas are shared, accommodated, or

rejected. This is referred to as a "contact zone" by Pratt (1991). Contact, as a concept, describes the point

where the unfamiliar is made familiar to the extent that new information and ideas can be accommodated

by the receiver's existing cultural framework. Pratt (1991) describes contact zones as "social spaces where

cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of

power," a dynamic that is made visible when considering the Americanization of hip hop in relation to a

more insular hip hop community in Innsbruck (p. 1).

Despite the hegemony of American hip hop, the participants continued to struggle to draw clean

lines around the idea of "real" hip hop and where it resides. Bonus agreed that "Real rap is, I don't know, it

has the würtzeln (*roots*) in America." However, he clarifies that, "Other people can do it better. The roots

are in America, but hip hop is not only in America" (Interview, 3.26.12). Flow adopted a similar stance in

stating that, "sometimes people say, 'you try to be like an American rapper,' which is a bad thing actually."

He refined his analysis by stating

I think it doesn't have to be authentic, just because it's of…of the American streets. I think

the…yeah, like I said, German rappers are authentic, too. Not all of them, not all of the songs…So

there's, yeah, there's again a big difference between hip hop and hip hop".

(Interview, 3.8.12)

Here Flow illuminates his perception of the divide between authentic and inauthentic. He

distinguished real hip hop by noting that it is not bound by location, but rather dependent upon whether an

artist "has love for the thing" (Interview, 3.8.12). Flow's response indicates that "real" is relative and can

reflect any range of iterations so long as, as Bonus put it, "you mean what you're rapping" (Interview,

3.26.12). Pennycook (2007b) further expands this argument:

for some, African American hip hop is the only real thing and that all other forms are inauthentic

deviations; others insist that hip hop must be a culture of the streets...some insist that to be

authentic one needs to stick to one's 'own' cultural and linguistic domain, to draw on one's own

traditions, to be overtly local; for others, being authentic is a matter of just speaking from the

heart: the expression of one's own feelings[...] yet another position suggests that authenticity is a

question of style and genre, of finding ways to tell a story that resonates with an audience, of

achieving agreement about what matters; and some suggest that any recontextualization of

language and culture renders it authentic anew. (p. 14)

This recontextualization was exactly what could confound the participants

as they struggled to generate understandings that included the global (American in their cases) forces of hip

hop with the local iterations of hip hop that they lived and must have continually justified to their peers.

They practiced the essential elements of hip hop traditions, including graffiti, dance, deejaying, and rap, but

they also noted the disconnect between their "versions" of hip hop—or at least the ways the world perceived them—and those beloved in and beholden to the United States. The conflict was pervasive and challenged the authenticity of their participation.

Turtle, Bonus' closest friend, presented an example of the complexities of this struggle. First, it is necessary to offer some deeper insight into the sociocultural contexts of Innsbruck as the site of these contestations, although a more exhaustive investigation lies beyond the scope of this study. One of the more visible immigrant populations in Innsbruck hails from Turkey. They are typically seen doing domestic, construction, and other forms of physical labor rather than intellectual work, including studies at the university or working in the professional sector. This divide is complicated as it is affected by cultural, religious, linguistic, and economic imbalances. It is significant in that Turks tend to face discrimination and ridicule not only in Innsbruck, but throughout more traditional areas in Austria.. This prejudice not only influences how Turkish individuals are treated among adults, but it trickles down to taint the views that people as young as kindergarten hold of their classmates, as seen on public transportation (Field notes, 11.9.11). Turtle is a Turkish teen in a high school predominantly attended by students with Austrian-born parents, grandparents, and extended families. He represents significant complexities of identity and authenticity in that he must navigate not only what it means to be of Turkish descent in an oppressive society, but also how he has taken hip hop as a substantial component to his self-definition. His style of dress is an overt sign of this affiliation, and the music that he listens to (and creates) when among his peers is exclusively hip hop.

Given these aspects of Turtle's evolving identit(ies), I hearken back to Flow's idea of "struggle" in hip hop - that hip hop is only truly authentic if it is attended by some hardship and projects a social "weight of the message." Turtle, outside of the home, has taken on a fully integrated hip hop persona that gives him a great sense of belonging. He stated, "I love hip hop, it makes me feel good, it's me" (Field notes, 3.11.12). This statement implies that without hip hop, he would be less satisfied with his life - less secure. But, as Bonus asserted, by "being hip hop," it is possible that Turtle is shifting the focus away from his less

desirable social positioning of having Turkish heritage in Innsbruck, and onto a more socially accepted identity as a young hip hop deejay.

Turtle spoke favorably of his times in Turkey, particularly on the "beautiful beaches," and of his family both in Innsbruck and in his homeland (Interview, 10.10.12). But, however pleasant his experiences among his family and in Turkey, the social stratification in Innsbruck is pervasive and affects the views and opinions of local inhabitants. Still, identifying with a global hip hop scene that often represents the underserved and dissociated people of the world inspired Turtle to assert, "it's me." He is able to reconcile his multiple identities as an Austrian, as a Turk, and as an adolescent family member, among others, into a developing hip hop identity through which he is able to be fulfilled. An alliance with the local hip hop community offered him a platform upon which he could experience Innsbruck without the label of being a Turk: he chose the identity of hip hopper which tended to deflect any racially motivated discord, and he was able to gain entry into a more desirable discourse associated with the hip hop movement. He embraced this role, saying that "I can be myself, be me, it's the way I want to be" (Field notes, 12.13.12). Being a hip hopper may have been the escape he needed from being seen first, and sometime only, as an immigrant.

The image of hip hopper is only validated by one's participation in hip hop activities, of which there are many (Interview, 3.26.12). For Turtle this involvement is as a deejay or producer of hip hop music. To produce tracks upon which a rapper can rap, he uses an expensive piece of electronic equipment and a complicated software tool called MPD that helps him bring his ideas to life. He and his best friend Bonus work many days and nights developing these "beats," which he uploads to a website called SoundCloud where they can be shared with the hip hop world. I asked the two young men to video record a tutorial that documents the development of a song from beginning to end. They produced 16 short videos across the span of one evening, working late into the night to illustrate how the software and hardware are used to make hip hop music, including sampling music from other artists, a common practice in hip hop and rap. Below is a composite of those 16 videos, which demonstrate how Turtle had mastered the pertinent vocabulary, musical aesthetic, and equipment and software to become a music producer.

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On a smooth desk surface sat Turtle's pride and joy. It was a black box about the size of a cereal box lying on its side, and it was called an MPD32. The MPD had a grid of 16 large, square buttons, several small knobs, eight sliding bars, and a small electronic screen in one corner. The MPD creates digital music through a program installed on a computer and is one of the most used pieces of equipment in producing hip hop music. Turtle had the task of installing and learning the program, which had a challenging learning curve. He quickly became proficient as he spent all of his time wrapped in music production. In this opening shot Turtle said "here is the toy," indicating how the MPD brought him much pleasure and was something that took up a great deal of his time. The camera panned up to capture the monitor that controls the composition of the individual parts, bringing them together to create a final piece. Turtle explained, "we are looking for some samples" and showed the monitor close up, showing some cover art for albums and links to several songs, then stopped the recording.

The monitor showed an album cover with four black men wearing clothes that resemble the fashion of the 70s, portrayed in faded colors. The men are leaning over a train track all looking in the same direction, apparently looking down track to see when the train would arrive. Turtle had abruptly stopped the previous video when Bonus expressed a very loud and long belch. In this, the following video, Turtle started out by apologizing through laughter at Bonus' "problems with his stomach," which brought lively laughter from both of them. Turtle explained that they were looking for samples online. They would use these small snippets of music that they "borrow" and break them down into individual strands of sound, such as vocals, drums, and instruments.

Bonus rolled a cigarette as the boys took a break. They watched a YouTube clip of two clay figures playing hide and go seek and laughed heartily. Bonus exclaimed, "so ein Scheiss," meaning "that's ridiculous!" Next, Turtle introduced the program as "the best program yet." And, of course, he panned across the desk to show Bonus playing a video game on the other monitor and laughed. "And that's the MPD 32, and here, that's um, the sample" and played a soul track while watching it bump across the sound track on the monitor. The music was soulful and energetic with a female vocalist. "And I want to chop it," meaning he would cut sound bites and rhythms from the complete song to create samples he could use to

assemble his own tracks, in time. "Oh, it takes so long," he remarked, as Bonus laughed in the background, and he yawned indicating that it is late at night.

The next shot was of Turtle working with the program on his laptop, "because his [Bonus's] was too slow." "And, we're trying to chop this sample." He hit play and the rhythm guitar track started to play, which he could also track visually on the sound bar at the bottom of the screen. He was trying to work with one of the tracks and it was going very slowly; "this is normal by Turtle," Bonus noted. They played around with the video recording for a minute, showing the sound track very close up, and laughed. Turtle continued to manipulate the music as Bonus watched and listened and said something in German about going to bed. "Yeah, and here I'm chopping," Turtle replies, and he showed how he used the cursor to isolate a specific sound that he wanted.

Next, Turtle showed the monitor where they were starting to record the way they wanted the samples to be played in the song they were creating. He showed the black box with large gray buttons and introduced it as "kind of [a] controller, it controls the program. And, he can push the buttons," he said as he panned onto Bonus' hands where Bonus was rocking back and forth to the beat as he manipulated the gray buttons like small drum heads for his fingers. "And there comes the sound, that's beautiful." Bonus laughed, playing with the rhythms. They both took turns pounding out beats with their fingers and Turtle said, "that's how we make a beat." The song was a kind of "funk" and "soul" mix as Bonus took his job more seriously, and played a very cohesive sounding song as he smiled into the camera. Turtle concluded, "it's like that," to which Bonus added, "yeah, Julia."

Bonus explained as the camera focused on the monitor where the track was being recorded, "Okay, Julia, we tried some samples and jetzt [now] we record them." There was a kind of metronome sound and they proceeded to try to activate the samples by tapping on the gray keys to record the beat the way they wanted to, adding layer over layer. The monitor was framed by the camera, showing a series of columns with a bright pink bar with dots in horizontal intervals. A vertical line crosses over the horizontal pink bar showing the visual version of the track as it glides over, playing the musical version simultaneously. Turtle said, "yeah, that's what we got, yet." They focused on the bar as it passed along the

columns, then panned over to reveal the album cover of the song they were sampling. It showed two black men in a photo that showed how old it was; it was clearly from the 60s or 70s based on the dress of the two men. Then the camera panned to a close-up shot of the speaker from which the sound was blasting. There was a quick glitch in the beat which caused the two of them to laugh. They then revealed a desk top that was strewn with candy wrappers and leftover food.

Tuttle started by showing the monitor and said, "Okay, here's the second try, Bonus pressed some button..." Bonus countered by insisting, "Turtle pressed the button," as Turtle laughed in the background. He focused on the columns across the monitor and followed the vertical stripe that led the music along what "they got." They panned back over to the album cover and around to Bonus, who smiled to the camera, followed by a shot of Turtle's face as he, too, smiled before focusing again on the monitor. The music played on, featuring a heavy horn section and the sound of a drum kit, at which point Turtle said of the grid on the monitor, "that's a kind of skeleton of the beat. The basic...and...yeah, we're making, we're playing around." The camera panned down to the keyboard and stopped.

The next frame focused on the grid and showed a series of horizontal, brightly colored rectangles representing different aspects of the track they had put together by that time. Turtle zoomed in and started to say, "And we are..." but was interrupted by Bonus asking, "hat es geschaft" [did it work]?" To this Turtle replied "yeah." He went on, "and we are near to the end, we have jetzt [now] three minutes more." Bonus added, "the drums," which Turtle clarified, "yeah, our 'loop'." This term, loop, means a section of music that is played continuously on repeat. As he played the track again, the camera panned over to Bonus who was drawing while listening. He had previously told me he is always drawing, even in school when he should be paying attention (Field notes, 2.2.13). The song continued on as he panned back to the monitor. This time, the song had a vocal track added in about half way through. Bonus was shown again, this time nodding his head to the rhythm. Turtle said, "I forgot, we have to make the drums, to which Bonus added an "aha" which Turtle joined in on. "The ticks," Turtle noted. "We're maxing out." He returned to the monitor to continue working.

A new display covered the monitor. Many dials, buttons, and levers were shown, along with a list of many different percussive sounds from which to choose. "Now we're looking for some drums, for this beat," Turtle explained. He scrolled down through the menu of percussive sounds, seeming familiar with the various sounds as he seemed to be looking for something specific. "These are the snares," he said as he tried out several to demonstrate while he zoomed in on the menu. Turtle placed the camera at table level, peering just above the MPD controller and causing the gray buttons and dials to seem larger than life. In the background, the corner of the room, a giant speaker faced into the room, indicating that music was an integral aspect of what happened there. A giant hand came into the frame, tapping on the gray buttons to create a drum line. The fingers were experimenting with many different combinations of the various sounds and rhythms. The camera was pulled away and refocused onto the monitor where the beats had been recorded. With that recording, Turtle could extract which segments worked best.

Next, the camera framed a close shot of Bonus with headphones on and seated in front of the MPD controller with his eyes closed. The camera then panned over to the monitor. There was a different configuration of what looked like rhythms displayed across the monitor. Turtle explained, "we are making a bass line now, um, it works like that" and pointed to the lower row of buttons, "this is deeper than that," and indicated the higher rows. "It goes, you know" and then sang a scale while touching each key in order from lowest to highest. "Um, he's listening with earphones because he, that is the best," he explained, while panning back over to Bonus. He then showed their progress on the monitor. He zoomed back out and said, "yeah, we're tired now...it takes long."

The camera was trained on the monitor again, with the song playing. There were many more colored rectangles at various levels of the grid, indicating that they had developed many more aspects of the song. With a bit more energy in his voice, Turtle said, "Yeah, that's the finished beat." There was an equalizer showing the beat as the rhythm pulsed on, and Turtle clarified the various pieces and rectangles as the vertical line moved across the screen. "The bass line, the drums, and here is the sample." The various components of the song came together to form a whole concept, and one would have a hard time figuring out whether this was a professional recording or not. Finally, a close shot of the keyboard with the

glowing monitor was framed by the camera. Turtle picked it up and turned it to the two of them standing side by side. "Now we say, goodbye, um...the battery was, uh," Bonus added, "dead," and the two laughed. "Okay then, bye!" Bonus joined in: "bye."

This particular project exhibited the sense of ownership that the two young men had of their own hip hop identities. They had adapted their lifestyles to involve a sense of responsibility to the genre, its practices, and its aesthetic sensibilities. The music they were producing met the criteria for what they find to be "authentic" hip hop sound, based on the music we have shared and what they have identified as "real" hip hop. Particular artists and groups who are familiar to me have helped me to understand what they valued in sound, style, and lyrical content. In recreating these musical styles, they were declaring a commitment to Old School, or collectivist rap, as instruments of its messages. By "instruments" I mean that they were more than mere conduits: they made an artistic imprint of their own on the music, displaying their affinities as well as their own particular worldviews and interpretations. In this way, they entered into transnational practices whereby they contributed to the Hip Hop Nation by reciprocating their own interpretations of hip hop music based on what they had learned from the source of origin.

As I argued earlier in this thesis, globalization tends to work unidirectionally as listeners are mere subjects of an external, dominant force. In the case of Turtle and Bonus, they were receiving the information and allowing it to be internalized and recontextualized to reflect their own experiences and talents. In doing so, they were constructing social identities that were reflective of both external and internal resources. They were performing the vision they shared of authentic hip hop aesthetics, but through their very particular positionalities as Innsbruckers. They established social identities that allowed them to take ownership over the hip hop practices and worldviews that they had developed in a transnational context, believing that their interpretations were valid and worthy of production to be contributed in the international forum of SoundCloud via the internet. Their sense of agency can be seen in their motivations to "remix" hip hop sensibilities to be submitted to the Hip Hop Nation as a mouthpiece of Austrian hip hop. As Bonus attested, a hip hop identity can only be forged through practices, participation over consumerism:

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"Es ist egal ob er des macht oder das" [It doesn't matter whether he does this or that] if he *does* hip hop, he *is* hip hop (Interview, 3.26.12).

Collectivist and Individualist Ideologies and Social Identity

When considering the affinities the participants share for hip hop and its social products and practices, it is also important to consider the underlying ideologies that attend hip hop culture. Like most artistic, political, and social movements, conflicts arise within groups that may seem to cohere on the surface, but demonstrate some dissonance upon a closer look. The participants highlight one central divide that has been difficult to reconcile, and that is consistent with a broader social conflict that has historically affected the United States: the relationship between collectivism and individualism. As a prominent world leader, the United States is able to disseminate both contradictory messages through world media and politics. Hip hop brings this tension into relief through a multimedia cultural movement. Alim (2002) speaks of well-known collectivist rapper, Guru, noting that "his rhymes, as it has been said of all rap lyrics, constituted more than just a resistance discourse; they created a context where issues of identity and in-group solidarity took center stage (Spady & Eure, 1991). The participants were able to identify and compare elements of this conflict through two main attitudes that they experienced and with which they must grapple.

My previous discussions have used certain terms to describe the two most prominent types of hip hop. The participants described the collectivist rap used in our discussions as being "old-school," "underground," "independent," or "consciousness-raising," while individualist rap is called "new-school," "commercial," or "mainstream." They also refer to the differences between "east coast" and "west coast" rap as representing these opposing attitudes. As mentioned earlier, despite these contradictory approaches, hip hop is generally interpreted as one consistent idea and this is to some extent true when considering the concept of the Hip Hop Nation (Alim, 2002). However, the Hip Hop Nation tends to represent the whole of

hip hop across time and space, and therefore subsumes all related beliefs, practices, and products. This includes the various factions of hip hop and attempts to unify them to encompass a holistic sensibility.

The participants often discussed this rift and tended to position themselves somewhere along the matrix of collectivism and individualism. The ways that they define their involvement with their communities and the experiences they share as hip hoppers clearly mirror the definition of "collectivism" put forth by scholars such as Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier (2002). They explain:

> According to Schwarz (1990), collectivist societies are communal societies characterized by diffuse and mutual obligations and expectations based on ascribed statuses. In these societies, social units with common fate, common goals, and common values are centralized; the personal is simply a component of the social (p. 5).

In support of the "old-school," collectivist spirit, Bonus describes the connectedness that is shared among graffiti crews, and the broader connectedness to collectivist communities in hip hop:

> H: No, it's one community, it's "vernetzt" [*enmeshed*], all people get together and draw and spray, it's family, in prinzip [*in principle*].
>
> J: How do you, how did this family grow, how did it...
>
> H: Yeah, at first it's alone, you have no one. Then you get up and up, and more than… keine ahnung [*whatever, no idea*]. You meet other people who do it and you "rutsch immer mehr hinein" [*inch continuously further inside*].
>
> J: You get further in the circle.
>
> H: Immer mehr in das szene [*always further into the scene*].
>
> (Interview, 3.26.12)

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Bonus positioned himself as "vernetzt" (*enmeshed*) in his community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991),

highlighting a significant value often discussed when talking about hip hop ideologies: collectivism. While

Bonus did not use this exact terminology, he is talking about one of the original tenets of hip hop.

Historically, hip hop was meant to unite a primarily American black population as a means of challenging

oppression and fighting against the entrapments of urban life. As a burgeoning form of entertainment, hip

hop communicated a message of solidarity and pride, of taking care of one another and creating

possibilities.

Bonus uses the term "family" to explain the feeling of camaraderie that hip hop offers him. As

mentioned earlier and discussed below, hip hop is comprised of four main art forms including rap, dance,

music mixing (or deejaying), and graffiti. In this excerpt, Bonus describes the unity of the Hip Hop Nation

and the mutual respect that he feels hip hoppers should have for one another:

> Hip hop is, it has verschiedene unterteilungen [*various components*], different parts, and, yes, we
>
> are all together, wir sind alle eigentlich [*we are all essentially*], when you see a hip hopper, it is
>
> egal ob er des macht oder das [*it doesn't matter if he does this or that*] (Interview, 3.26.12).

This spirit does persist in the hip hop world; however, it was forced further underground by growing

capitalist pressures. Selling hip hop became an imperative that was mitigated by the corporate

entertainment industry that wagered this new musical genre would be lucrative. Industry moguls began to

draw focus away from collectivism and solidarity and shifted energy into solo artists, facilitating the

aggression that comes with heightened competition (Rose, 2008). This new paradigm is what prompted

Bonus' statement that "hip hop is dead" (interview, 12.6.12). This statement communicates less an

indictment of a waning position within popular culture, and more of a significant departure from previous

hip hop attitudes toward its more individualist iterations.

The content of rap changed with it. No longer were songs oriented toward community empowerment and the rejuvenation of impoverished areas. To be sure, the new wave of individualism did not ignore the dire circumstances of the ghetto; however, it took another tack. The admonishments of an economically and socially oppressed community shifted the focus away from solidarity to an "I got mine" attitude that endorsed making quick money, often through drug dealing and the slim chance of a career in the corporate music industry. Turtle declared simply, "it went from good, like positive rap to something aggressive and about being the big dog" (Field notes, 2.2.12). Seen through such a frame, there is very little concern for one's community and almost overnight, hip hop suddenly represented danger and opportunism (Rose, 2008). The disparity of these two philosophies polarized the rap community and can be seen in the positioning of the participants in this study.

Clearly, Bonus' reaction to this discrepancy calls attention to a clear distinction between collectivism and individualism by declaring the "death" of hip hop somewhere around the late 1990s (Interview, 12.6.12). This sentiment is shared by another participant, Turtle, who shared several of his favorite hip hop artists and groups and in doing so, exposed an extensive knowledge of underground "consciousness-raising" rap groups. He attested that "I mostly listen to rap from the eighties and nineties, that is when the good rap is…that is when rap was pure" (Field notes, 10.15.12). When asked why he felt that way, he said the musical talent was more unified behind positive messages and clarified that contemporary rap music is all about "putting other people down" and "saying I'm the best" (Field notes, 10.15.12). When I tried to discover how much of the social messages of eighties and nineties rap Turtle comprehended linguistically, he admitted that he often looked up the lyrics online and translated them from English to German, and noted that he is aware of the differences between the two main rap movements. He communicated a deep appreciation for "old-school" and did extensive research on his favorite artists to influence and encourage his own burgeoning identity as a novice hip hop deejay.

During his own interviews, Flow made it clear in several instances that he listens to different styles of rap for different purposes (Interview, 2.26.12). As we discussed the contrasts he saw between collectivist and individualist rap, he shared that:

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Of course there's also a social message…[But] for example, the mainstream hip hop nowadays is more about having stuff. The future of hip hop…I think I've…I've already said it, maybe in a slightly different way. It's getting more extreme, like the difference between mainstream and…old school hip hop. It's just getting bigger" (Interview, 6.13.12).

Flow describes here a lack of "meaning" in new-school rap. He claimed that this new rap focused on "having" and "not thinking," which made it attractive to listeners who didn't want to be burdened with worry or responsibility to others. He specifically spoke about the process by which an underground rapper becomes mainstream and the loss of integrity that tends to accompany it. He illustrated his point with a German rap star named Sido and his self-made label called AggroBerlin. He spoke of Sido's fierce independence that was noticed, commodified, and purchased by Sony. At that point, he went mainstream and corporate, losing all semblance of himself to his followers. In these cases, it appears to be financial backing that takes precedence over style and content. Flow indicated that this dynamic has the tendency to pull crews apart and pit them against one another for dominance. He described Sido's experience in this process and his unique circumstance:

Like Sido, he had his own label. He made his own music, he was allowed, of course, to use bad language in his songs and he could sell it because it was his label. And then, like they, owned Germany for like 8 years, and then anyhow, AggroBerlin ended and Sido got an assignment with Sony and it was different. It was different, he changed completely. His appearance changed and his rap changed and I think that's not a good thing. Now, he recognized this himself and now he's doing his own thing again. Which I think is a good thing that not many rappers do. (Interview, 2.26.12).

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Flow indicates that Sido was able to reflect on the tremendous sacrifice he was making in pursuit of the extreme financial gain to be had with Sony, and made the unusual choice to abandon it and go "back to his roots." Here, Flow tells Sido's story of collectivist and independent AggroBerlin's temptation toward commercialism and the reckoning that caused him to relinquish his position in order to regain his creative freedom and independence. Flow has followed many rap artists who experience the shift from independent to commercial, though he noted that once they make the commercial turn, they tend not to turn back.

Flow and Macko, both friends, did not always appreciate the messages and styles of underground or independent rap. They both went through a "phase" of preferring a style in commercial rap called "gangsta rap." It may appear to be counterintuitive to consider the violence and crime bragged about in "gangsta rap" as commercial, but the entertainment industry has shown the world that criminality and violence are draws to audiences whether in popular music, films, or books. They tend to speak to the rise of the individual by social Darwinism, selling the notion that fierce competition is the rule and that one must kill or be killed as a matter of fact in certain contexts. The following participant-recorded vignette includes a discussion of ways that German rap has adopted the American gangsta rap attitude. It also reveals how English hip hop language is so commonly incorporated into German rap. All five of the participants reveal that German rap has an overwhelming tendency toward braggadocio and threatening language, and that more often than not they borrow the language directly from American rap. In this segment, Flow was driving home after having received an additional tattoo and made musical selections according to the mood he had throughout the drive. His choices included music from the UK as well, though Flow explained that it is not hip hop in the traditional sense. It ends with two examples of how German rap has the tendency to be more gangsta style and lays bare the specific ways that American hip hop language makes its way into the genre.

Flow balanced and secured the video camera on the passenger seat or inside door. He had a more serious expression as he buckled his seat belt, checked his mirrors, and said, "my arm is still hurting" from the tattoo he just got on his right inside forearm. He pulled out into traffic, watching the cars around him as

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they moved about and he made his way into the activity. He reached forward and turned up the music that was playing. It had a kind of hip hop/house sound to it and he just drove on in the stream of cars until his camera got knocked over, tilting the subsequent images. He turned his head far to the left to see over his shoulder and revealing what was my favorite of his tattoos: a simple life-size image of a paperclip behind his right ear, made visible by his buzzed haircut. The store fronts came in and out of view as he moved down the road with this high energy music squealing through the speakers.

This is one of those instances where Bonus would make the distinction between "rap" and "hip hop." This was clearly rap, but laid over an almost disco track and indeed, not hip hop. However, it was well suited to this bright, sunny, and clear warm day in downtown Innsbruck. The buildings shone white in front of a brilliant blue sky; they look like they were built hundreds of years ago but are in good repair. Suddenly, there was a clearing between the buildings, which revealed a magnificent white range of mountains with forests at the base, climbing toward the summit. Innsbruck is settled in a narrow valley encircled by these rugged mountain ranges where every peak has a name and a story to tell. The Innsbruckers know them all. The buildings turned to houses with yellow stucco and clay colored roof tiles. Suddenly, Flow stopped the song and clicked for another dance track with a British sounding accented male voice doing the typical hype speech to get bodies on the dance floor. Meanwhile, the car entered a smaller town with a lower scale of shopping offerings and more modest buildings, though as Flow passed through intersections, the camera still caught straight path to the mountains over his left arm, which seemed to be the arm he used for most of his driving. Unless, of course, he was keeping his right arm down to provide a clearer shot for the camera.

He decided to end his silence and narrated, "So now I'm actually listening to Dizzy Rascal who is a rapper from the UK, from London. And he's working with UK Garage Sounds, also Dubb Step, I really like that kind of hip hop and rap." Then he paused, clicked the music off and said, "I'll play another song." He clicked through his iPod until he found what he was looking for, but noted, "I have so many songs on my iPod which I have connected to the radio. It's quite annoying looking for the songs while I'm driving." The music became even more frenetic, with Dizzy Rascal chanting aggressively over the fast paced

rhythms. "But it works," Flow said through a satisfied grin. The contrast of Flow's typical calm and steady demeanor was sharp against the style of music he was playing. There seemed to be a gulf between the music in the car and the scenery outside the car.

But as the music changed, so did the architecture. The buildings took a more dramatic shift to the postmodern and appeared to be a nouveau version of an Innsbruck apartment block. Most telling, the buildings became fewer and further apart from one another, and the car was clearly driving uphill with a more prominent and dramatic backdrop of snow-covered mountains with undulated tree lines. In fact, the grade was rather steep: there were many more trees lining the road than buildings at that point. Flow reached out to click his iPod, and suddenly the music shifted. He explained, "This is German rap, Favorit is the rapper." The music started out with heavy strings creating a sort of classical style which soon led to vocals from a soft-spoken rap artist. Flow quipped, "one of my favorites," and laughed at the likeness of "my favorites" to the rapper's name - despite the different spellings. Favorit's lyrics are an unusual blend of German and American Rap slang, and the now silhouette of Flow mouthed the words that followed: "Die, mother fucker, yeah du bist tot [you are dead]!" This code mixing is common among German rap artists and is an ongoing indexing of the supremacy of Urban American street language as authentic rap music [5:00].

The car steadily climbed uphill as Flow's shadowed face continued to mouth the lyrics to the song by Favorit. There were no longer buildings of any type outside his driver's side window, just the thin trunks of tall pine trees. Abruptly there was snow covering the ground and clumped in the trees, on the rocks and the fields. All the while, we heard the sound of Favorit spitting out German lyrics peppered with American rap symbols like "AK-47." Suddenly, despite his earlier professions to have quit smoking, Flow pulled out a cigarette with the swiftness of much practice and lit it with his car lighter, which he held in place until his cigarette was properly lit. He inhaled deeply, then turned to the camera and said, "Hey, Julia, I quit smoking but, uh, after tattooing, I need a cigarette." He laughed and turned back to the road with a mischievous smile, showing his white teeth. He also clicked to another song, and another. He stopped the music and said, "It's actually my habit, rapping while I'm listening to the music I like, so. I remember most

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of the songs, pretty quickly. I think that's because I like it." He kept clicking until he found a favorite that also sounded rather classical, but this time with a harpsichord.

Flow spent a period of his youth imitating a gangsta rapper based on some of the company he kept and the kinds of activities in which they participated. The music described above was a powerful influence behind their identities as gang members. This music was also a driving force behind a peer group Flow and Macko had identified with in the nearly invisible illegal gun and drug trade in Innsbruck. After a particular interview, Flow wanted to share with me that like many people, he believed that this style of rap music does, in fact, incite or encourage violence among its listeners, particularly adolescents (Field notes, 6.13.12). The two were able to recognize the dangers of continuing to affiliate with this group and they eventually broke contact with them. Still self-identified hip hoppers, they, like Sido, took the turn away from commercialized "gangsta rap" and began to find meaning in the collectivist rap of "old-school" and "underground" hip hop.

Mainly due to his participation in both genres Flow felt free to move about the hip hop genre, including international rap music, and he appreciated both collectivist and individualist rap. He did not face the pressure to build an identity that was tied to a particular school of hip hop, or to support and reinforce it through declarations of a given allegiance. Each video he recorded included a visual representation of his activities which included in-class work, studying at home, going out with friends, sharing time with friends at home, driving in his car to and from school, taking his dog to rescue training, and driving home after having received a new tattoo. All of these activities were framed by the particular and markedly varied songs he chose to help him narrate these events. Not only did the songs play an integral role in his participation in these activities, but for the most part he verbally identified the music and the purposes that it served. For example, in an interview he stated that he liked to listen to more aggressive (individualist) music while he was lifting weights and boxing training. We discussed:

J: Why do you think that hip hop is so powerful? I mean, it's definitely probably the most

        listened to music.

F: Well, um, I used to be in each group of music once, I was very into rock, things like

        nirvana, or the doors, or the who, all the time old things, and I listened to Slip Knot and

        Ramstein, and all sorts of music, but I ended up at hip hop, so it really caught me and I

        think it's so powerful because, I have many emotions when I listen to hip hop, sad stuff,

        but also happy things, or for example when I do my training—myself, not with my dog—

        I like to listen to all kinds of gangsta rap, or hard stuff. So it's like, for each mood, I have

        my hip hop stuff and I think it's not possible in any other genre of music.

        (Interview, 2.26.12).

        He further demonstrated this in one of his participant-recorded videos in which he recorded

himself working out, highlighting the aggressive style of rap that

he used to sustain motivation during his weight training and boxing practice (Participant-recorded video,

4.2012). At the start of this video Flow emerged from behind the camera, which was trained on his boxing

body bag. He wore a black t-shirt and black shorts, took a moment to stretch his upper body, and went

straight to the bag. He was listening to Sido, a German rapper who works in a very aggressive fashion, a

kind of German gangsta rap. The music pulsed quickly behind an angry voice and built in intensity as the

song progressed. Flow stepped to the bag and unleashed on it with forceful hits to the torso and quicker

moves toward the face. He had clearly been training with this bag for some time based on his proficiency

and very well-directed force. He continued on with hit after hit, undoubtedly inflicting great damage on his

imaginary opponent. He used his knees to damage the torso with swiftness and aggression. His boxing style

was relentless: no breaks, just pummel after pummel, much like the music he was listening to. At one point

he wiggled his fingers, the first sign that he was feeling any exertion from his training. He stopped for a

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moment to take a drink of water, walked toward the camera, showed his knuckles, and turned it off (Participant-recorded video, 4.2012).

Given the contrast between Flow's boxing music and the styles of rap that he listened to during other, calmer events, his declaration that he listens to a variety of rap for a variety of "emotions" makes sense (Interview, 2.26.12). In Flow's participant-recorded videos, on three different occasions he was socializing in a very relaxed fashion with a friend or friends, listening to a particular song that was often played on the radio in Innsbruck and had a very popular music video. The song was very relaxed and spoke (in German) about a beautiful young woman whom the rapper was trying to impress and woo to some point. This song was clearly mainstream rap due to its constant presence on the radio; however, Flow found contexts in which the song was appropriate (i.e. relaxing or "chilling" with this friends). Across the videos, Flow was able to maneuver and manipulate the music to suit his purposes and overcome stereotypes of certain "schools" of rap and hip hop and some of the constraints that they impose. By declaring that he was not a hip hopper anymore, he freed himself and actually broadened his repertoire of musical tastes and styles. This being the case, he both defied and cemented his role as a hip hopper.

To illustrate the conflicts that arise between individualist and collectivist rap hip hoppers, I return to the discussion that transpired between Bonus and Sohne. I specifically arranged for the two to meet as I knew they represented the two main orientations I describe in this dissertation. They met at the school where they were both in attendance, in the room I typically reserved for interviews. I provided pizza, hoping to lower their affective boundaries and encourage civility. Bonus was hulking in his seat, dressed from head to toe in hip hop gear: baggy pants, a baggy t-shirt with a graffiti style logo, a skullcap, and headphones wrapped around his neck. Sohne, on the other hand, was not as overtly "hip hop": he wore a fitted t-shirt, comfortable fitting jeans, and plain sneakers. The nature of this meeting was a bit different than a typical interview. I simply made a few choice statements and allowed them to react. The first statement was as follows:

J: Okay, what about this one...and I've heard people say this before. "Hip hop is dead."

B: Yes.

J: What do you think about that?

B: Biggie is dead. Who's also dead, Old Dirty is dead. Guru is dead, Big L is dead. Nas rocks on, a Tribe Called Quest is back, I don't know, that's um a really komisch [funny], it's really strange hip hop today because, 20 years ago there was many much more rappers than today.

J: Really, you think so?

B: Yes, mm. more good rappers.

S: I would call it old school is dead.

B: Yeah.

S: It's just like, I more listen to the new hip hop and I can tell you it's not dead, and I think I would call it just Old School.

B: But the new hip hop is not hip hop, I think it's rap. That's not real hip hop.

J: Well, how can you rap and it's not real hip hop.

B: Yeah, you can also rap on a schlager [folk song] and it's not hip hop. Everything goes. But, yeah, I think the music I listen to is called Alternative and it's nearly dead.

J: So there aren't new artists coming out.

B: Yeah, I also told you about Samy Delux is going crazy.

J: I haven't listened yet, but I will.

B: You listen to it, it's bullshit.

J: Is it Herr Sorge [Mr. Worry]?

B: Herr Sorge.

J: It's an interesting name, too.

(Interview, 12.6.12)

Bonus established his affiliation with "Old School" or collectivist hip hop very directly by asserting that the genre 20 years ago was superior to what was being produced at the time of the interview. He felt certain about this enough to agree that "hip hop is dead" and that the new hip hop is not hip hop, but simply rap. As was clarified by Bonus, an artist can rap in any genre of music, but it doesn't mean that it is necessarily hip hop. In response to Bonus' assertions, Sohne positioned himself as a "New School" or individualist rap follower, declaring that it is not hip hop that was dead; rather, it was simply "Old School" that was dead. He mentioned once that he had nearly 2.000 songs on his iPod, almost all of which were hip hop (Field notes, 5.21.12). While he admitted to having "Old School" songs on it, his references were limited compared to the newer artists he had downloaded. There are new artists who are aligned with collectivist sentiments, though they are few, and they tend to work in opposition to the individualist ideologies. Bonus' best friend, Turtle, shared these feelings about the death of hip hop, saying they are taking up music production that is also aligned with collectivist styles (Field notes, 11.10.12).

While Bonus and Turtle position themselves firmly among the artists creating the Old School of the eighties and nineties, both Flow and Macko shuttle back and forth between the visceral attraction to "gangsta" and the consciousness and social-mindedness of collectivist hip hop. As Macko stated, collective rap "tells a story" and is more personal and relatable (Interview, 6.14.12). Flow saw the value in both and listened to a wide range of hip hop styles for specific purposes such as socializing, physical training, studying, and driving. In doing so, he is indicating a kind of confidence that allows him to see the collectivist/individualist dichotomy as something more nuanced and far less polarized than it appears.

Chapter 5: Language and Literacy

The Purpose of this Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to report my findings on how the participants in this study use language and literacy to craft desirable hip hop identities. In order to do this, I borrow from several scholars in language and literacy studies, particularly the field of sociolinguistics, including Gumperz (2008), Hymes (1974), Saville-Troike (1982), Johnstone (2000) and Becker (1985). I also engage print literacies, as explored by Heath and Street (2008). All these scholars share an understanding that language is crucial in social identity formation given the practical, social, and ideological influences that language and social identity exert on one another. I take it as axiomatic that language and culture are impossible to extract from one another (Agar, 1996).

Language and Literacy as Framing the Construction of Hip Hop Social Identities

This study deals with how various demonstrations of hip hop affinities include not only participation in any number of established practices, but also the accompanying linguistic distinctions. Language has an influence on the ways the world is experienced and constructed by speakers (Duranti, 2008), and as Hymes (1966) notes, language provides a means for reflexivity. He states that:

[N]ot only the ways in which linguistic structure may influence our experience of the world but also the ways in which cultural patterns, for example, specific cultural activities, can influence language use and determine the functions of language in social life. This second type of linguistic relativity draws attention to the uses of language and the cultural values associated with such uses. (p. 15)

 So, while Flow and Sohne were identifying themselves with hip hop through clothing, jewelry, and particular shoes and caps, their identifications were only valid when they were perceived as hip hop by others. Each of the participants in this study participated in hip hop activities, and therefore used hip hop terms that apply to their artistic pursuits. Overall, though, the majority of the participants either did not demonstrate or purposefully avoided use of this particular language to me. However, Bonus often made direct references to hip hop language—and accompanying behaviors, as will be described below.

Bonus' involvement in the Innsbruck graffiti scene was facilitated, and in fact enhanced, by his use of what he calls "graffiti language." I will focus this portion of the chapter on this graffiti language and how Bonus used it to aid him in creating an acceptable hip hop identity. The markers of his hip hop identity are multiple and satisfied several different aspects of belonging; here I focus on his use of linguistic codes and behaviors to achieve his goals of membership in a typically secretive and ardently rule-governed subculture.

One of the elements of graffiti culture that necessitates extreme secrecy is the illegality of the graffiti works themselves. For the most part, graffiti pieces are sprayed (or "written") in the obscurity of night. The consequences of being discovered by the authorities in Innsbruck are expensive fines, probation, and eventual incarceration (Field notes, 4.15.12). Bonus reported that more metropolitan cities in Europe have exclusively dedicated divisions of police that specialize in targeting local crews, their visual language, and the habits they practice (Interview, 5.23.13). Due to these punitive risks, graffiti artists have a

specialized language that they use to communicate egregious behaviors among groups (or "crews") and specific plans they have to execute works, also called "piecing" (Field notes, 4.15.12). Gumperz (2008) points out that "[t]hieves' argots, gang jargons, and the like" are developed as a means of safeguarding illicit activities and establishing in- and out-group boundaries" (p. 48). He also notes that these languages are constantly shifting and evolving as certain vocabulary enters public consciousness and no longer secures their illegal practices or identities.

As Bonus demonstrated, the integrity of graffiti language depends on the diligence of its speakers. My initial encounters with him were cryptic at best and his true involvement in "das Szene" (*the scene*) became evident only after his trust in my motives had been established (Interview, 3.26.12). Gumperz (2008) describes this responsibility as "language loyalty" and he elaborates the difficulties this can bring to research, indicating that "it is private knowledge to be kept from outsiders, an attitude which often makes it difficult for casual investigators to collect reliable information on language" (pp. 48-49). The attitudes and postures taken by Bonus during our first interview demonstrate his belonging to his community, and the language loyalty he enacts to disrupt my understandings of his engagement in what he much later deemed graffiti language. During our first interview, which was a brief ten minutes due to his reluctance to participate, I asked him directly if he ever used what I called "hip hop language." His response was as follows:

> B: With my "homies", keine ahnung (*I have no idea*), I can speak in
>
> another way than […] with other people.
>
> J: Now, do you use English slang, or German slang?
>
> B: German.
>
> J: German.
>
> B: I don't know any person who use English slang by us.

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J: Okay…

B: No.

According to this data, Bonus does not use American-inflected hip hop language within his community, nor does anyone he knows. He asserts that the only "slang" he uses is in German, therefore deflecting any notions that he had integrated American inflected hip hop language into his repertoire. This deflection proved to be of particular interest as the interviews transpired over time. His deflection was completely asserted by his final and indisputable "no." I might add, however, that the expression on his face was without a doubt smirking, daring, and unquestionably evasive. During the first interview he postured against my questioning, portraying an image of a "standard" user of German and therefore protecting himself and his cohort by insisting that not only does *he* not, but that he doesn't know "any person" who uses American-inflected hip hop language. Saville-Troike (1982) emphasizes an intent to "be secretive, or to deceive" (p. 79). Gumperz (2008) refers to these responses as "group boundary maintaining mechanisms, whose linguistic characteristics are the result of informal group consensus" (p. 48).

While these agreements may be "informal", they are often very rigidly maintained by group members. This is particularly evident in the shift in attitudes that arose over time during interviews and observations, whereby Bonus directly instructed me on the hidden meanings of several marked terms used within his community. Saville-Troike (1982) clarifies that "the unmarked is more neutral, more normal, or more expected," whereas "markedness […] identifies language forms as belonging to a particular variety" (p. 71). In several instances, Bonus made concerted efforts to reveal the meaning of certain marked lexical items or expressions in what he consistently reinforced as "graffiti language" (Interview, 5.23.13). The following transcription comes from an interview over one year after our first interview. After I made many requests that he show me some of his "pieces," he finally led me to an underpass near the high school where there were several pieces covering the walls. He pointed to one of them along the way and stated:

B: That's no burner.

J: No burner? Is that what you call it?

B: Yeah, a burner is something, yeah…it's in the graffiti…*language*. A burner is

       something…you, you stay before it and [gasps].

J: Yeah, like Berlin.

B: But, that's…yes, yes!

J: Burner, burner, burner, burner…

B: Yeah…that was great!

       When Bonus stated, "yeah…it's in the graffiti…language," he held up his fingers to make

quotation marks in the air, designating this speech as being something like a language with similar patterns

and rules. He seems to have recognized the necessarily shifting nature of graffiti language which may have

caused him to hesitate to make such a fixed determination, a notion supported by Hymes (2008) who

asserts that language is constantly in flux. However, given the unstable considerations of any language,

Bonus chose this word to describe this specialized speech of his cohort, delineating and legitimizing his use

of stylized terminology, and literally placing visual and ideological boundaries around the concept he was

trying to communicate to an outsider like myself. In making these clarifications, he indicated his facility

with this additional "language" and that he is able to make practical applications of either language given

the nature of the topic. Saville-Troike (1982) describes the importance of a "topic," stating,

       Topic is often a primary determinant of language choice in multilingual contexts; bilinguals have often

       learned about some topics through the medium of one language and other topics through the medium

       of the second, and thus may only know the vocabulary to discuss a topic in one of their languages, or

       feel it is more 'natural' to use one language for a particular topic. (p. 53)

Topic is clearly a determinant in language choice for Bonus. It emphasizes the broader sociolinguistic notion that language cannot be extricated from the social and cultural circumstances involved with it. In the instances where Bonus instructed me on the language choices of his graffiti speech community, both topic and context influenced his use of vocabulary and style. He consistently used graffiti language to describe most accurately certain aesthetic elements of pieces, the creation of pieces, or certain common behaviors he observed in his own and other crews. In this example, previously established vocabulary such as "piece," which is a painted work, did not need clarification. However, he clearly meant to describe the perpetrator who is the subject of his frustration.

B: I draw something, um, one month ago, and this shit toy went two weeks later over my
        piece.

J: Was it good?

B: Yeah. And mine, I think mine was very much better.

J: Yeah.

B: When I call something "toy", then he's not good.

J: Okay.

B: It's graffiti language.

J: Toy?

B: Yes.

Choosing "toy" to describe the other artist was topic-specific and was brought to bear on the dynamics of our relationship in that time and space. He could have easily employed another derogatory

term in English or German; however, using "toy" described not only the competing artist's unsavory character, but also his or her particular identity as a graffiti artist who is considered to be less talented or inexperienced. In this example Bonus clarifies again that he was using "graffiti language," making it clear that he is using the term "toy" in an alternate manner than the common English definition of the word. He alluded to the tacit rules associated with the graffiti culture by expressing that it is imperative when painting over another piece that the new work is superior. This exposes the hip hop institution of "battling" - a broader term used to describe a valuation of hierarchy within many hip hop practices and the concomitant pressures to compete for notoriety and bragging rights (field notes, 2.5.12). These guiding principles are further illuminated in the following excerpt, where the concept is given a specific title in the graffiti lexicon: "crossing."

B: The *Ochs* [ox] Crew. This is a crew. OP's in it, and Cyber's in it. They cross me…they, they go over my piece.

J: Oh, no.

B: Those mother fuckers. And they are shit, okay? No, one of them is good. And so, I came on the next day and cross them.

J: (laugh)

B: Yes, what's the point of them?   I don't think they, they can cross me…because when you cross someone, you…uh, when you go over something you have to be much better.

The term "cross" itself is not at all exceptional, compared to Bonus' agility within three languages: German, English, and graffiti language. He transcended the often assumed boundaries imposed on languages and maneuvered seamlessly among them, creating layers of meaning that he was himself inventing as topics and contexts changed. This feat is not exclusive to Bonus or his cohort. Rather, through the acts of creative languaging (discussed earlier) practiced by explorers of any discourse, Bonus was able

to communicate in his particular speech, using those terms that defined and were defined by his own

multiple and context-dependent selves. By Bonus' own admission, "the difference is that when you *are* hip

hop…you…you understand the things completely different than the other person do" (Interview, 5.31.12).

This supports the idea that his hip hop language created a lens through which he could apprehend the

multiple contexts he traversed, and allowed him to participate in the hip hop culture more meaningfully

than he could without the corresponding language to frame his experiences. In this way, his language

simultaneously defined and was defined by his engagement in hip hop culture.

Finally, it is also worth noting that it required months of working together before Bonus would

reveal this sophisticated manipulation of overlapping systems, exposing terms that are diligently protected

from outsiders. Language loyalty is an appropriate indicator of Bonus' worldview(s) as a graffiti artist and

an adolescent immersed in a self-selected hip hop community. He stated very directly throughout several

interviews and observations that what is most aligned with his personal beliefs is the idea of a collective

community that shares ideas and responsibilities, and provides a scaffold for personal growth and group

empowerment (Field notes, 5.24.12). These needs, and many more, allowed and encouraged Bonus to be

actively protective of his community and preserve their languages and behaviors despite pressures from

outsiders such as myself.

To explore the linguistic aspect of this study further, I turn now to the primacy of adolescent

literacy in hip hop discourse. One aspect of adolescent out-of-school writing about which there is

comparatively little literacy research is graffiti writing. Contemporary research in adolescent literacy often

reveals out-of-school literacies that are aligned with traditional modalities, including now commonplace

areas involving digital and social media. However, many teens fall outside of these highly visible aspects of

literacy to include more subversive forms of print use. Often, more countercultural practices do not fit

neatly into conventional genres, and leave non-conformist teens overlooked and underrepresented. Graffiti

writing, to this point, falls into this category. Critical reframing of what is often perceived as blatant

vandalism may reveal a population of writers who perform compelling aesthetic and textual acts to produce

ideological forms of communication in print. Gatto (2013) notes that "[c]ritical literacy focuses on the

construction of social relations, identity, knowledges and power through text (Luke & Woods, 2009). Critical literacy positions students…as active participants in writing and reading the world (Freire, 1994)" (p. 242).

From a literacy standpoint, I seek to draw connections between those global hip hop tropes and conventions and the ways that individuals accept and resist them in searching for their own valid practices. This speaks to the notion of authenticity, which is an abiding concern in the hip hop community. More broadly, authenticity is a marker of prestige and authority which many followers of both historical and contemporary trends seek in order to stake some claim in their particular genres. In this study, authenticity involves the relationships the participant creates between an arbitrary yet revered global hip hop authority and the ways that he does or does not enable those ideologies within his local practices. "It is through meaning-making and communication of those meanings that design affords students opportunities for voice and agency. The design of a new text within a critical literacy framework offers a dynamic process consisting of 'subjective self-interest and transformation'" (Kalantzis & Cope, 2008, p. 203, as cited in Gatto, 2013, p. 242).

In my conversations with Bonus, we often discussed "pieces" that he wished to share with me, particularly representatives of the work of other crews that he knew in Innsbruck. Discussing these pieces centralized the writing and gave us ways to analyze their aesthetic and textual meanings. On occasion, we would meet outside and pass by other graffiti writers' works, which in turn became topics for discussion and evaluation (Field notes, 4.30.12, 2.12.13). Often he highlighted stories related to the pieces as he was entrenched deeply enough into Innsbruck's graffiti scene to recognize the visual markers incorporated into the pieces, indexing the writers who composed them and their roles within the community. These activities are indicative of particular ways that Heath (1982) breaks down a literacy event. She outlines an event as being comprised of *production, reception,* and *response*. An event dictates that text must be produced by the writer and then taken up and made central by a reader or readers, and finally elicit some form of response by the reader. In this way, literacy is co-constructed and shared in an event. The event is, therefore, an observable activity that may be perceived and elicits a reaction.

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Two anecdotes effectively illustrate the relationship of Bonus' graffiti writing and the criteria advanced by Heath regarding literacy events and practices. While this relationship may be self-explanatory to some, it may be necessary to make it more explicit considering the centrality of literacy to participating in certain hip hop activities. In the first anecdote, Bonus talked about a particular habit he developed as a writer. He noted that after he would compose a graffiti text in a public space during the night, in the following days he enjoyed visiting the site and hiding in the shadows or out of sight. There he waited to see if passersby would react to the piece and if so, what types of comments or discussions it would inspire. Clearly this illustrates the cycle Heath offers involving production, reception, and response. Bonus was seeking to engage the "reader" in a true model of this communication as he awaited not only a reaction, but a sign of response to complete his own personal goals.

A second anecdote became clear to both of us simultaneously as we were viewing a relatively new piece he had composed in an underpass. Along this underpass were several pieces by different writers. As we were discussing the various pieces, we both noticed that there were lavender-painted footprints appearing to "walk" on the ground along the pavement. The footprints followed along the wall of painted pieces and walked to a standing position facing Bonus' piece, and stopped there. This was clearly a "response" of admiration to the work he created, though aptly the artist chose to respond not verbally but through a visual modality. One could argue that the two pieces (the graffiti and the painted footsteps) were in a semiotic conversation with one another. This clearly illustrates what Heath conceptualizes as a literacy event, and further illustrates that these pieces are dialogic in nature, co-constructed and contingent upon one another.

In looking at literacy as co-constructed events where knowledge is shared and generated, it is critical to acknowledge the social embeddedness of an event, indexing broader attitudes and expectations of what literacy is and means. These attitudes and expectations signal what Barton (2007) and Street (2013) refer to as *literacy practices*. Barton states that practices are "common patterns in using reading and writing in a particular situation… [and are] the social practices associated with the written word" (2007, pp. 36-37). Literacy practices implicate socially specific belief systems and expose how texts are dialogic (Bakhtin,

1981) and therefore represent those systems. While events are observable, practices are not. Practices are inferred through events. They indicate how and why literacy takes shape in societies, and in fact they capture the evolving meanings attached to various literacies chronotopically.

Considering the examples above, Bonus was enacting graffiti according to the tacit rules of protest, aesthetics, and competition (among others) discovered in hip hop ideologies. He made visible the multiple meanings of the Hip Hop Nation, therefore implicating those practices. Like most graffiti writers throughout the Hip Hop Nation, Bonus possessed a series of "black books." The black book is a notebook of some form wherein the artist composes sketches of potential future pieces and any other phrases, ideas, and ruminations that are related to the goings on of living a hip hop lifestyle. Bonus often wrote in this black book during his school classes, thus performing a hip hop identity and concomitant practices in a location not sanctioned for hip hop activities. In doing so, he was not only practicing and planning his writing activities, but also enacting the element of resistance, a central aspect of hip hop ideals. Thus, Bonus was performing hip hop literacy with each moment that he composed in this space. The black book itself is a literate artifact that compels the writer to engage with the page and thus perform literacy, as it reflects the standards and vision representing broader hip hop ideologies.

In terms of the more practical aspects of Bonus' graffiti practices, he discussed the visibility of his writing in Innsbruck. His views were reflective of the beliefs and meanings associated with graffiti writing worldwide, but lived in his home city. In Innsbruck, there are many spaces where graffiti is legal. These exceptions were provided in order to prevent widespread graffiti on visible public spaces. Bonus addressed the presence of the legal walls throughout Innsbruck by claiming that "nobody sees the legal walls." His sentiment, like most graffiti writers', spoke to one of the basic fundamental intentions of graffiti: be seen. The placement of these legal spaces was usually the underpasses of bridges. Granted, these spaces are abundant. However, though style and form are indeed major foci of graffiti, its thrust is resistance through visibility of works and public access to provocative messages. Areas of high visibility were often illegal spaces, including popular sites involving some element of danger or physical/legal risk, such as train tracks as well as the trains themselves, and walls in high-traffic areas.

Risk is a motivating element in the graffiti scene and artists gain additional credibility for having mastered such spaces. However, Bonus explained that these illegal spaces were often restored within a matter of days, prompting some hesitation in the artists and the execution of their goals (Field notes, 6.15.12). Inevitably, graffiti works are ultimately painted over, either by a business owner or municipal authority or by another artist in the form of a "cross out." On this impermanence, Bonus acknowledged that "you must go over it…it's changing every time…you know that it is das Szene (*the scene*)" (Interview, 5.31.12). The scene, according to Bonus, involves certain rules and expectations. Primarily, one must anticipate and accept the ephemeral nature of the genre, as Bonus discussed. In this way, the literacy practices that graffiti most reflect are those of newspapers or periodicals where the content is always under various stages of erasure. The iterative nature of graffiti attracts writers who, as Bonus stated, "live for the adrenaline" (Field notes, 6.12.12). Tapping into the commitment of a graffiti writer, this is clearly a driving force behind his or her persistent motivation and attachment to this community.

Participation in the graffiti community, as stated above, requires certain adherence to unofficial rules and expectations. Bonus instructed me on the various styles of script that he has captured through a number of examples he photographed with his phone (Field notes, 6.12.12). He also pointed out certain characteristics to look for as I move throughout the city and view graffiti on my own (Field notes, 5.3.13). He was a scholar of hip hop, working diligently to stay current on trends and the evolving aesthetic sensibilities. He explained that a mood or feeling is attached to certain standard writing (painted texts) styles worldwide. He studied these styles and practiced incessantly to be able to imitate them and use them in communicative ways. He explained that the text can take on different meanings depending on the artistic mode used to express it (Field notes, 5.3.13). Mastering the standard styles is a rite of passage that invites other writers, including Bonus, to show "respect," which is the ultimate compliment in the hip hop milieu. The condition that one must admire the aesthetic qualities of a piece is secondary to the appreciation of skill, creativity, and execution of a piece that gains "respect." Respect is valued by writers because it leads to "fame," or the increasingly heightened reputation of a graffiti writer, which Bonus also described as "going 'up and up'" (Interview, 3.26.12). These definitions are accepted graffiti language throughout the

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Hip Hop Nation - terms he discovered through his online participation with hip hop sites, message boards, and videos.

Chapter 6: Outro

The structure of a hip hop album is analogous to a well-written essay. A well-crafted essay has a strong introduction, a compelling body, and a solid conclusion. Hip hop usurped this structure to frame their works in much the same way. Often, a hip hop album will begin with an "intro," which may not be remarkable. The intro is often a spoken word element or a piece that is more of a commentary than song. This often sets the tone of the album and offers the listener a few ideas to contemplate as they listen to the following pieces. However, again borrowing from literary devices, a hip hop album often has a conclusion, or (taking off from *in*tro) a final piece called an "*out*ro." I began this dissertation with my own informal narrative style work, or intro, and I finish with a similar style of concluding remarks, or outro, in this section. That is, I frame the dissertation with a voice that reflects my own experiences working with these teens, including the timbre of hip hop as a heuristic.

Uncovering the ideologies that lie beneath the surface of a global hip hop culture rested on the daring and trust of the five young men in this study. Their willingness to question their sometimes unconscious choices and what those choices provided them revealed the conflicts and complexities that make up their shifting identities, how they are constructed, and the worldviews they use to make those decisions. My assessments of these processes revealed patterns leading to five generalized tenets that affect not only the participants, but trends that contribute to understanding the social identity construction of adolescents.

First, the participants perform their identities in highly localized settings, taking on or refusing those local elements that support their own understandings of themselves. With this local knowledge and its particularity, they are also confronted with global forces that make contact with their existing schemata and call into question how they wish to define themselves. This global/local contact brings about a necessary transformation of creating new possibilities for these adolescents. These possibilities are instrumental in developing or constructing social identities that best represent the idealized versions of themselves, as they participate in discourses and communities that they favor.

The global and local forces associated with hip hop and other aspects of popular culture create both favorable and unfavorable opportunities for the participants. In engaging these choices, they imagine an idealized version of, in these cases, hip hoppers: what one looks like, feels like, and thinks like. They then take their idealized images and perform them iteratively (cf. Butler, 1991). They may shift identities depending on the contexts in which they find themselves and the roles they must perform in varied circumstances. In this way, social identities are multiple and shifting and make considerable accommodations. Failure to make accommodations is often viewed as resistance and an unwillingness or unpreparedness for functioning in a given discourse. The participants agreed that their desirable identities as hip hoppers were not appropriate for all the contexts in their lives, and that they sometimes made modifications to their performances to respect the expectations of a given context, or to purposefully resist others.

Taking into account this range of possibilities, performing a discourse either to belong or to resist, the participants made choices that offered them the most power over their varying situations. Adolescents can negotiate power in increasingly sophisticated ways throughout their development. When Flow and Macko donned gangsta clothing and ran with the group of teen drug and gun dealers, they felt that it gave them more power to perform that more threatening identity (Field notes, 3.8.12). They began to see that that identity brought with it great trouble involving school and family. Their hip hop gangsta identities became less desirable and they each began to reconceptualize and idealize themselves as hip hoppers, and to perform more flexible identities. In their cases, power was not always found in asserting a static identity,

but rather in the ability to negotiate power as necessary in multiple situations. Bonus—often given to resistance, as seen in his graffiti work—found it necessary to perform "student" when meeting with teachers, giving him more power in that context than if he enforced his hip hop identity exclusively (Interview, 10.8.12).

However, Bonus did use his authority as a hip hopper when meeting Sohne for a paired interview. He used his physical size and his assertiveness in intimidating ways when discussing with Sohne areas of music and the status of current hip hop trends of which Sohne was, in my estimation, an expert. As was mentioned earlier, Bonus accused new music of being rap but not hip hop, and stated that "real" hip hop was "dead" (Interview, 12.6.12). Further, he exaggerated his reaction to Sohne's lack of knowledge of rapper Q Tip. As the interviewer, I sensed the power imbalance and intervened:

B: Q Tip has an original voice.

J: No kidding. [To Sohne] Do you know Q Tip's voice?

S: [Shakes head]

B: [Loudly] You don't know Q Tip?

S: [Shakes head]

J: [To Sohne] He's got this special voice...it's kind of funny sounding.

B: Yeah, it's not the cliché voice.

       (Interview, 12.6.12)

Bonus also boasted about the MPD programming that he was using with Turtle as a way of asserting his authenticity as a hip hopper, one with special knowledge of creating local hip hop music.

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J: You played two for me the last time you were here (of the songs).

B: Yeah, but they was not good.

J: Oh. They're better now?

B: Yes, but I have to aendern [alter], change the speed a little bit, because there is too much
        different beats, parts, and I want to get the one ** [inaudible] first.

J: [To Sohne] He, well his friend, has an MPD and they are putting together some tracks.

S: [Softly] Nice.

B: You know what MPD is?

S: [Nods, softly adds] Yeah.

B: [Whisper] Okay.

        (Interview, 12.6.12)

Whether or not Sohne did, in fact, know what an MPD was, Bonus' level of intimidation may have been

overwhelming, causing Sohne to quietly agree to avoid his own sense of authenticity being called into

question again. Hip hoppers, like other insular communities, function with hierarchies in place. As Bonus

stated earlier, when he entered the graffiti community he was "alone," left to prove himself and develop his

own credibility. With some credibility, he was able to move "up and up" to the station he now has within

the group (Interview, 3.26.12). Power functioned as a manner for organizing his crew.

        Perceived or asserted "authenticity" often carries with it a measure of power over a given

situation. Authenticity, in this study, is validated only by the ways that the participants interpret and support

it. In hip hop, authenticity is often gauged by the dictates of the Hip Hop Nation, which itself is an entity

that exists only as an ephemeral agreement among the practitioners of hip hop and its various enactments.

How these participants value their participation in hip hop activities depends on their ability to compare

them to the aesthetic and ideological frameworks that they have learned in their own informal research. In this way, these comparisons again allow the participants to idealize and perform more authentic identities. Under the auspices of authenticity comes a perceived right to some authority, and with authority comes power. These participants were navigating, sometimes unconsciously, these overlapping aspects of their identities. The vast complexities of social identity construction can, however, be simplified by the notion of desiring authenticity. These adolescents sought "credibility" or "street cred," a concept of significant value in the hip hop community. This notion is key in all aspects of the Hip Hop Nation and practitioners go to great lengths to secure the respect of others by the honorific "street cred." In the cases of these participants, they are concerned that their practices may be less credible because they are not American, black, or from an urban setting (Field notes, 2.26.12). But authenticity, according to Flow, can be justified as long as one has "love for the thing" (Interview, 3.8.12).

Authenticity helps hip hoppers define their positionality among the many aesthetic choices and worldviews. Among these, two positions have tended to dominate the history of the Hip Hop Nation: collectivism and individualism. The participants in this study had positioned themselves along a continuum between the two, quite oppositional, camps. To clarify, collectivism is the hallmark of the onus of hip hop. It reflects the political, economic, and social activist stance that hip hop took from the onset. Hip hop began as a social movement. Its birth was an urban uplifting, a call to solidarity and economic growth. Education was reinforced as a means toward these goals, and community was seen as the support needed to foster them. Two of the participants placed their interests firmly in this ideology. The music and activities they practiced were about the betterment of a community, about the lifting up of like-minded individuals. These forms of hip hop music and the accompanying elements, such as dance and graffiti, became a lucrative enterprise as hip hop began to draw wider audiences. In its explosion on the music scene, the corporate music industry began to take notice of hip hop's energy and popularity. They realized the financial potential of the new genre and literally began to buy up individual rappers for their profit. This gave rise to the individualist rap that has dominated mainstream hip hop for decades. Industry moguls revamped the purpose of hip hop. From collectivism to individualism, industries were responsible for pitting artists

against artists, reflecting the social paradigm of individualism and the attitude of "dog eat dog." The popularity of rap artists became dependent on how aggressive and overtly threatening they could be toward one another.

The participants tend to align themselves with a particular side of this polarity. Two of the participants do, however, admit to having had some experience with both, despite their later shifts toward collectivism. As a supporter of New School, Mainstream, and Commercial rap, Sohne spoke of the vitality of the rap scene given this predisposition (Interview, 12.6.12). Bonus and Turtle placed themselves firmly on the collectivist side, while Flow and Macko have had meaningful experiences with both sides, and both of those sides continue to play instrumental roles in their hip hop lives (Field notes, 10.4.12).

In Chapter 1, I began by discussing the beginnings of hip hop. It's 36 years after the Sugar Hill Gang experience. My own enthusiasm about hip hop created a bond between myself and the young people in this study. I often found myself saying, "Yes, I totally get it!" This emic perspective developed into a trusting connection that allowed the participants to share honest feelings and the details of sometimes illegal adventures, like menacing the cops during mandatory urine tests after having been caught smoking marijuana, spray painting cop cars in the middle of the night, and all of the other illicit activities I promised I wouldn't share in my write up. So, I didn't. Using ethnographic methods allowed me to get involved in the participants' lives from the inside. I taught at their schools, I knew their friends, I knew their teachers, and I knew their hallways and routines. I think I became a sounding board against which they would project their hip hop selves, knowing that I would be captivated. They knew that the "yes, I totally get it!" was genuine and that I encouraged their enthusiasm. Our meetings often included pulling out cell phones from pockets to share the perfect song with me, offering me a matching headphone to put up to one ear to hear the beat that really said what they felt, the flows that took them temporarily into oblivion as we both sat there and listened, attached by a black wire. Or they came into the room, flung their backpacks to the far corner, and sat down with a "you won't believe this!" smirk on their faces. They seemed to need these interviews as much as I did. Was it Innsbruck and its surrounding villages that gave them nowhere to expose their countercultural worldviews? Was it that I was American and they longed to experience what

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they felt was hip hop "authenticity"? Was it that I let them exert their power over the monotony of their localities, the questioning of purpose in the midst of bucolic harmony? Or was it simply being a questioning teen with nowhere to test his discord?

First, I tend to think that Innsbruck's limitations did have something to do with it. Based on Bonus' remark that he lived in a Kuhdorf (cow town), the villages surrounding the more city-like town of Innsbruck offered very little in the way of modern activity. In fact, each of the five of the participants lived outside of Innsbruck, in villages tucked away in mountain valleys with little more than nature as inspiration. Bonus' trip to Berlin realigned his vision of his future. He came back buzzing and without the right English words to explain his transformation. Being chased and grabbed by a graffiti cop along the Berlin train tracks, pulling away and running for freedom: it didn't get more "real" than that for him.

Finding meaningful ways to express the kinds of intellectual shifts that take place during one's teenage years can cause certain forms of rebellion, especially when the context does not match one's evolving worldviews. In the cases of these participants, they discussed their homes as situated in tiny villages surrounding Innsbruck, settled into narrow valleys or perched on mountainsides. They complained about the mediocrity of the status quo in those villages and seemed to find no worthwhile purpose for local pursuits in their overly and overtly traditional towns. I speculate that their purposes were discovered in the multiplicity of options available in urban settings, drawing them closer to the ideologies of a hip hop lifestyle where possibilities include a full spectrum of beliefs and multiple strata of involvement. Exploring the internet and television media introduced them to a source of power they could capitalize on in their local contexts, expanding their sense of agency in their changing worlds.

Hip hop is also highly governed for those adolescents who are seeking or lost. There are certain expectations and guidelines that define what hip hop is and how one can participate authentically; these guidelines are generally set by the Hip Hop Nation. For teens experiencing differentials in power and intellectual shifts, there is an easily recognized structure in place to offer them the kind of security they need to be confident in their choices. So, rather counterintuitively, hip hop is safe and predictable. We

know what we are seeing when we see hip hop, and ironically that is comforting, in a sometimes disquieting way.

The identities that the participants were cultivating in these locations were, given the *tracht*—or traditional culture—countercultural. To further complicate this conflict, one participant, Turtle, is a Turkish immigrant living in a small village outside of Innsbruck where there is a notorious anti-immigrant tendency. I know this having lived in Austria for two years, and having gleaned valuable knowledge from my colleagues, students, and friends from both Austria and Turkey. There is, in fact, very little effort made to hide the anti-Turkish sentiment among local Austrians. As a Turk in an insular village outside of Innsbruck, Turtle sought to develop an identity that was more meaningful to him than that of the limited expectations of an "immigrant." In order to deflect his immigrant status, I wondered if Turtle found refuge in being hip hop. He was able to walk through the streets and be recognized as a hip hopper rather than a Turk. His practices supported his desires. He purchased expensive deejay equipment and worked tirelessly to live up to the authentic life of a deejay. He was friends with other hip hoppers and devoted himself to the music with the tenacity of an outsider trying to get in. To be clear, he did not forsake his family, but he lived a full life with them on certain terms that he could manipulate depending on his circumstance. Living hip hop allowed him to create distance between him and his heritage when necessary, and embrace his heritage when desired. Given the authority of the Hip Hop Nation, Turtle was able to align himself with the expectations of being hip hop with authenticity equaling that of his peers from more dominant discourses.

This again touches on the issue of authenticity. Authentic hip hop, according to the expectations of the participants, is that standard held by the dictates of the Hip Hop Nation that guides the activities of hip hoppers worldwide. I define authenticity according to those beliefs held by the participants rather than by the more argumentative analysis found in the pertinent literature. For the purposes of this study, authenticity is relative to the needs of the young men who practice those ideologies and activities as part of the Hip Hop Nation. In hip hop, there are two essential aspects of hip hop life that are vital: authenticity, and respect. Both are nearly inextricable. A hip hopper's performance, whether it be dance, graffiti, language, or any of the other markers, is gauged as "real" or authentic and ideally yields the highest

accolade: respect. Gaining respect means that a hip hopper is meeting all of the standards of authenticity, and in many cases shows the exceptional innovation of the artist who brings hip hop onto the next plateau.

Interestingly, all of the participants believed that authenticity in hip hop came from the American streets. Flow, in fact, argued that his own experiences growing up in the mountains were not authentic enough to be considered hip hop in the traditional sense. He spoke of not having had the precursory "struggle" necessary to be a true hip hopper. This contradicted his view that all hip hop is authentic when "you have love for the thing," given that he found pleasure in hip hop from all parts of the world. So, he seemed to have two visions of authenticity: one that stemmed from his belief in intent and passion as in his own social development, and one that he appropriated from the Hip Hop Nation that enforced the romanticized, Americanized version of street credibility. The way he lived out his own experiences day to day, he believed in the relativity of authenticity and felt confident in the choices he made and the activities he followed. However, when it came to hip hop authenticity, he seemed to find himself somewhere outside looking in. As he said, he did not consider himself hip hop despite the fact that he listened to hip hop more than any other genre of music, and practiced his particular style of graffiti. He claimed that being hip hop was a whole lifestyle, a lifestyle that he could not live out in the mountains of Austria. Somehow he could not match his competing visions of authenticity. He did extensive research on world hip hop. He often sent me links to hip hop videos out of South Africa and Vietnam, to name a couple places. He found these iterations of hip hop to be valid and worthwhile as hip hop expressions. His contradictions are complex and at odds with one another, but appear to satisfy his developing understanding of himself and his world in and out of hip hop.

As Flow developed, he had honed his talent for inquiry and studied nearly everything he could pack into a day. He was brilliant, easily one of the smartest teenagers I had ever known. He approached his hip hop with the same inquisitiveness and tenacity. His passion, though, was in training his dog to be a mountain rescue dog, and he took courses in first aid and rescue himself. While I hold high regard for these activities, all of his teachers and I were deeply concerned and disappointed when he dropped out of school to find his purpose. The school faculty all tried to reach out to him and he never returned those calls or

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offered an adequate explanation. As a teacher and friend, I also reached out to him, and he did reply and told me that he just felt that school was a waste of time and he wanted to focus on his rescue training. Given his independent spirit, this is no real surprise. When he was in a classroom setting, I felt his discomfort, like he was playing school but not very convincingly. His mind was always caught up in other wonderings, and that school building was just too small to contain the expanse of his imagination. He was an enormous force, and what worried me is that he focused only on those items that entertained him, which suited him well, as he would be the first to admit that a traditional job would slowly numb his mind and spirit. He didn't like to be challenged by authority, but he liked to challenge himself. So, he took on tasks like learning French in order to read French philosophy without translation. He studied music and went for day-long hikes. And the truth is, none of these interests were taught in school. So, the most logical thing to do was to drop out, stop wasting time, ignore empty facts, discover his purpose, and cultivate his own future. It worried me, but I could follow his own particular logic.

Flow, like others, also undertook self-motivated studies in hip hop language. He spoke English with near fluency, unusual for students his age in school. He applied his appreciation for hip hop to learning the terms and grammar found in lyrics. He admitted, along with other participants, that following hip hop music supported his learning of English. In particular, Macko claimed to have a strong hold on hip hop language and said that it benefitted him in his school English learning. However, this learning is reciprocal in that having school knowledge of English also influenced his understanding and access to song lyrics and underground argots.

The Hip Hop Nation projects certain ideas about text and symbols, language and literacy, all of which was accessed by the participants in this study using de-territorialized transnational media. Language is a particularly effective way to show an affinity for an imagined community (such as the Hip Hop Nation). For hip hop, each domain (breakdancing, graffiti, deejaying, and emceeing or rapping) has developed its own linguistic code, though there is a great deal of shared language for hip hop practices more generally. Learning the language specific to a domain may bring hip hoppers closer to the ideal social identity they are seeking. This language is vital in securing acceptance to a desired discourse. However, a

lexicon is only a fraction of this acceptance: the grammar and conventions of use are equally valued. Speaking in any register requires that people not only understand the terms being heard: to appear authentic, they must also know how to construct that language in real time with fluency and ease. Authenticity is a goal for the participants in this study, and therefore they seek to master hip hop language not only to appear hip hop, but to understand the relevant terms used to instruct their chosen hip hop practices. Terms that are hip hop are not always generalizable. The term "drop," for instance, has specific purposes for specific practices. Drop in hip hop dance refers to a specific style of dance move. Drop in deejaying means to construct an original and highly dramatic beat within a set. Drop in the industry means to release an album or cut. Understanding the language within its necessary context adds a level of sophistication to the user and helps to validate his or her legitimacy.

As mentioned above, the Hip Hop Nation also supports various literacy practices that range from written rap lyrics, to online research, to artistic interpretations of texts known as graffiti. The facility that a participant has while accessing online hip hop sites is quite complicated. These sites are not only for the most part in English, they also employ the hip hop language that users are internalizing as they learn about the various aspects of the culture. They download music, they access videos and lyrics, and they learn graffiti techniques and the semiotic standards of graffiti that are globally employed. Even when distanced by geographical spaces, in internet spaces the participants make contact with these ideologies and are able to make integrative shifts in order to achieve a new, more informed understanding of language and literacy behaviors and beliefs in the Hip Hop Nation. For three of the participants in this study, graffiti is an integral aspect of their identities. Graffiti is a complicated and arduous craft that requires not only great practice and skill training, but also a graphic understanding of what various styles and symbols mean within a textual representation. These systems are highly stylized and have meaning only to other graffiti writers who can "read" this language. Tagging is an example of how to decipher these systems. Each writer has a particular manner of signing his or her name, and the lettering involved is considered a matter of high art in the graffiti community. Bonus designed two tags for me: one of my name, as a sort of acceptance into his community, as well as his own tag, the one that he used around town to mark his territory. I was thrilled, of

course, to have one of my own, but made sure he knew that I knew this was a solemn accolade. It was a privilege. And tagging for Macko was the subject of part of his self-recorded video, where he demonstrated his own tag as he sprayed it onto several locations in underpasses throughout the city. Allowing me to effectively identify both of them as writers throughout Innsbruck brought me deeper into the fold, and I was emboldened by their trust in me.

Alongside the elements of language and literacy in the development of hip hop identities, the participants represented here were also confronted with another aspect of becoming hip hop: the tension between collectivism and individualism. This tension involves a societal critique that asks its citizens to position themselves in either a collectivist ideology or that of individualists. This often subconscious conflict finds its way to the surface in the hip hop genre. While hip hop has many faces, there are two prevailing attitudes that clash across the scene, requiring its participants to posture one ideology over another. These two orientations are known as "old school" and "mainstream" hip hop, though there are other names by which they are called (e.g. underground/commercial). The essence of "old school" reflects the origins of hip hop, which started as a social movement expressed through visual and performing arts. Education, solidarity, and railing against social and economic oppression are the mainstays of "old school." These issues are clearly aligned with collectivist spirit that asks people to work together against an oppressive society, depend on one another, and support an egalitarian community. However, due to the exploding popularity and commercial success of hip hop, it became the target of industry exploitation. Suddenly artists were pitted against artists, and the motivation shifted to one out-earning the next and satisfying the industry's needs. This affected the music tremendously and it was quickly "mainstreamed" for massive profit. The music became centered around ego and individual success over community needs. In brief, collectivist rap is centered on resistance to a hostile society requiring solidarity, education, and discipline, while individualist rap is focused on the self over others, individual achievement, and merit.

A micro-scale version of the social conflict between collectivism and individualism is articulated by the participants in this study. They pointed to their preferences for "old school" or "mainstream" hip hop as a contradiction in worldviews. They were loyal to hip hop, and therefore respected all "schools" as being

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legitimate, but they were clear about which they preferred and what were the motivations behind each. In fact two of the participants, Macko and Flow, were involved in hip hop at young ages and appreciated the braggadocio and aggression of individualist rap. As they matured and developed a civic sense, they shifted their appreciation to the collectivist artists. These responses evince the effect that even implicit messages of hip hop discourses take shape in different ways in the construction of social identities. How the participants situate themselves amid discrepant ideologies is visible in the choices they make toward understanding and being understood.

From my conversations with the young men in my study, it seems as if they are still seeking truth about their beliefs, and find power and focus in hip hop culture. Why hip hop? I know from my own hip hop experience that it is the energy, the ferocity, the raw confidence associated with hip hop; what Bonus called the "flash of electricity that hits my body when I hear it" (Field notes, 6. 12.13). It's the surge of forceful ideas pulsing through iconic beats. I know from our hours spent together that the music, the practices, the attitude had consumed each of them. When Bonus urged me to change my flight home in order to attend a European hip hop festival featuring many of our shared favorite performers, he saw in me my old hip hop self. He, with bright paint on his fingertips, was the one to assure me, "you're never too old to be hip hop." Funny. He's obviously never been a grown-up. But, I guess he's right, only it's different now. Now, I am on the other side, what Alim (2006) calls a "hiphopographer." Now I take my passion and knowledge and I filter it through a study to bring other hip hoppers' lives to the fore - with some insight.

The study reported here began by addressing the research problem of understanding and theorizing the construction of social identity in the current context of globalization and transnationalism. To address this problem, the study focused on five young men in Innsbruck, Austria, who were self-described "hip hoppers." As discussed earlier, hip hop is more than a musical style; it is a complex, diverse, and sometimes contradictory social and cultural movement and ideology that is both global and local. It lies at the nexus of globalization and transnationalism, playing itself out in diverse ways in local settings globally. Its history is one that involves a tension between collectivism and individualism as well as a tension around what is "authentic." It is within this complex context that the young men in this study were constructing

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social identities for themselves. For the young people in the study, crafting their social identities required them to engage in activities and make choices outside of the dominant and established social institutions of Innsbruck (e.g., school and law). These social identities were continuously evolving and multiple; they reflected the particular social and cultural issues of the local contexts in which they lived their lives and the global contexts of the Hip Hop Nation.

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