

Hip-Hop

What is Hip-Hop?

Hip-Hop

- A black thing?
- An urban thing?
- A white thing?
- A global thing?

Hip-Hop Movies

- *Beat Street* (1984)
- *Wild Style* (1980s)
- *Brown Sugar* (2002)

Hip-Hop Books

- Tricia Rose (1994) *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*
- Adam Sexton (1995) *Rap on Rap: Straight-Up Talk on Hip-Hop Culture*
- Nelson George (1998) *Hip-Hop America*
- Bakari Kitwana (2002) *The Hip-Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis of African American Culture*
- Murray Forman & Mark Anthony Neal, eds. (2004) *That's the Joint: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*

Definition of Hip-Hop

Hip-hop originally referred to three urban art forms:
emceeing, including deejaying and scratching).

A Pioneer: Bakari Kitwana's Description

... hip-hop culture, the youth-oriented lifestyle (of those born between 1965 and 1984) that birthed rap music. The definition of hip-hop culture expanded to include graffiti, breakdancing, deejaying, emceeing, beatboxing.

KRS-One: Essence of Hip-Hop

... we are advocating that hip-hop is not just a music, it is an attitude, it is an awareness, it is a way to view the world. So, rap music is something we do, but hip-hop is something we live.

Discussing the Origins of Hip-Hop

What examples of rap, dancing, and graffiti can you mention throughout human history?

What specific factors might have produced hip-hop in the South Bronx of New York City and in Los Angeles during the 1970s?

Roots and History of Hip-Hop

- Graffiti goes back to the cavemen. Music and dance are also from the beginning.
- The roots of rap can be traced back to Africa and the love young Africans have for verbal challenge, rhyme, and rhythm.
- African American history includes rich examples of verbal banter (back and forth).

Historical Background

- Rap slowly emerged as a reaction against disco, using African/Caribbean beats and the power of poetic call-and-response chants
- West coast trio The Watts Prophets formed in the late 1960s, produced “Rappin’ Black in a White World” in 1971

Historical Setting

- The South Bronx, impoverished (poor neighborhood), divided by the Bronx Expressway, which separates the poor from the very poor
- Hunger for dance and artistic expression
- Coming together of musical styles and innovations

Early Rap

Afrika Bambaataa (Asim) and his Zulu Nation (a collection of DJs, breakers, graffiti artists, and friends)

DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell, the pioneer)

Grandmaster Flash (Joseph Sadler), Herc's helper, and Grand Wizard Theodore developed mixing, the break, and scratching

Run DMC

- Takes Old School Rap to *Golden Age*
- Called “The Beatles of rap music”
- “Rap began in the Bronx, but was perfected in Queens.”
- Noted for their loose Adidas-brand shoes, thumpin’ beats, and high-energy shows, Run DMC is the first rap group to go platinum, to receive an Emmy.
- Neighborhood friends: Jam Master Jay (Jason Mizell), Run (Joseph Simmons), & DMC (Darryl McDaniels). Sadly, Jam Master Jay was shot to death in Oct 2002.

Stages of Hip-Hop

Old School Hip-Hop (1970-1986)

DJ Kool Herc and others just mentioned

Golden Age of Hip-Hop (1986-1993)

Run DMC, Public Enemy

Rap spreads globally (globality)

Modern Era of Gangsta Rap (1993-present)

Wu-Tang Clan, Nas, Busta Rhymes, et al.

Tupac Shakur, Notorious B.I.G.

Tendencies of diversification, mixes

Positive and Negative Aspects

Positive aspects: creative artistry, dynamic, illustrates real life problems, expressing real hurts, adapted into many cultures...

Negative critiques:

- promotes thug life
- glorification of *bad*
example: bling and body parts
- deal with its disrespect for women, others, and self