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Black Youth and Politics Project

Hip Hop and the Media



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A review of the major theoretical arguments and important empirical findings relating to the influence of hip hop and other relevant media on the development of youth politics, particularly among U.S. African American communities. This essay also suggests potential survey questions designed to measure what specific media young African Americans are choosing and why, and in what ways these youth are being impacted politically by these forms.

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Hip Hop and the Media

Introduction

Almost every text on hip hop culture begins with a narrative of origin. These histories typically announce that hip hop started in the late 1970s in the South Bronx, NY. Commercial recording information generally follows next; with the 1979 single “Rappers Delight” by the Sugar Hill Gang proclaimed as the first hip hop release.¹ And finally, some statement of impact or importance commences the author’s study.

This paper seeks to identify the political currents in hip hop broadly, and rap music in particular. The aforementioned “biographical” information for hip hop is relevant if only for its sheer irrelevance to hip hop’s contemporary existence. First, it is important to note that 2004 marks the 25th anniversary of commercial hip hop. Therefore it is necessary to contextualize hip hop’s various shifts and transmutations to the present day. Instrumental in this effort is an understanding that hip hop is no longer, *exclusively* a culture of “the streets.” Therefore any serious study of the impact of hip hop culture today must take into account its presence as a national, mass-mediated and multi-mediated entity.

Hip Hop's influence can be measured inside of the following five major outlets: Television, Film, Radio, Magazines and the Internet.

Hip Hop's influence can be measured inside of the following five major outlets: Television, Film, Radio, Magazines and the Internet.² While much of the research on hip hop focuses on rap music and, increasingly, music video and therefore limits its scope to analyses of rap recordings and television programming, each of these five forms of media are in fact central. Hip hop magazines such as *The Source*, *Vibe* and *XXL* are equally important to understanding the manner in which the culture affects young audiences as are television programs such as BET's *Rap City* and *Uncut* or MTV's *Total Request Live*. Additionally, youth tune into hip hop on a daily basis in a variety of different ways, not just by watching television. How much radio and what specific radio programs do youth listen to? This is an important question given the predominance of "urban" radio formats in major cities and surrounding suburbs across the nation. And lastly, given that we know today's generation is increasingly attracted to the Internet, what specific websites are

¹ Although, Nelson George identifies "King Tim III (The Personality Jock)" by The Fatback Band as the first rap record. Nelson George, *Buppies, B-Boys, Baps, & Bohos: Notes on A Post-Soul Black Culture*, Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001, 16.

² By attending to these five media we will also address a sample of hip hop advertising which includes print ads, commercials, radio spots, internet pop ups, etc. While this leaves out "street" advertisements such as bus banners (which has recently been an important locus of attention with the Akademicks clothing line, "Read Books, Get Brain" campaign) and billboards (which alcohol companies, as is evidenced by Hennessy's Rakim advertisements, have traditionally used to target inner city neighborhoods with hip hop themed advertisements) many of these same advertisements are reproduced in print ads inside of hip hop publications (as has been the case with the Akademicks and the Hennessy ads in the December 2004 *Vibe* Magazine issue). *Vibe* (December 2004), 63, 35.

sound off on political themes as diverse as Black Nationalism, nihilism and rape.

Research on hip hop and politics typically center around three themes: political or “message rap” music, associations between hip hop and black (particularly male) criminality and violence, and the impact of rap music and music video on the sexual norms and behaviors of black youth.

Originally authored by rap groups such as Public Enemy, Poor Righteous Teachers and N.W.A., political rap is said to encompass the following three subthemes: cultural nationalist rap, Islamic nationalist rap and gangsta rap.⁴ Today, political rap has resurged among artists such as Mos Def, Nas, Dead Prez and Common. Additionally, “neo-soul” artists with trans-affiliations in hip hop culture such as Erykah Badu and Jill Scott also assume the responsibility of recycling political messages (back) onto hip hop audiences. Most scholars on political rap, including Tricia Rose, Robin D. G. Kelley and Mark Anthony Neal, argue that rap music is a form of “infrapolitics” where “oppositional transcripts, or the ‘unofficial truths’ are developed, refined and rehearsed.”⁵ Cultural nationalist rappers engage themes of pan-Africanism and Black militancy that are direct holdovers from

⁴ See Ernest Allen Jr., “Making The Strong Survive: The Contours and Contradictions of Message Rap” in *Droppin’ Science: Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture*, ed. William Eric Perkins Jr. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 159-191.

⁵ Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 99. See also, Robin D. G. Kelly, “Kickin’ Reality, Kickin’ Ballistics: ‘Gangsta Rap’ and Postindustrial Los Angeles,” *Race Rebels: Culture Politics, and the Black Working Class*, (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 194; and Mark Anthony Neal, “Postindustrial Soul,” *What The Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1999) 134-135.

1960s political and cultural arts movements, 1970s Blaxploitation and independent film, and specific African American icons such as Malcolm X, and to a lesser, but still significant, extent, Martin Luther King, Jr. Islamic Nationalist rappers include Orthodox Muslims, members of the Nation of Islam and individuals identifying among The Five Percent Nation of Gods and Earths.⁶ And although “Gangsta Rappers” is a dated term inside of the hip hop industry as of late, one might still connect the street crime narratives and sharp critiques of the criminal justice system that Ice T and Boogie Down Productions fathered to more contemporary rappers such as Scarface or Jay Z.

Gangsta Rap also represents part of a larger focus on hip hop and politics that is popular inside of the media and among scholarly research. Most likely, the prominence of Gangsta Rap in the late 1980s and early 1990s prompted the association between hip hop and violence that contemporary social scientists theorize. (see empirical research section) Hip Hop is often represented as encouraging violence among young African-Americans, particularly males. Specific incidents of violence, such as the 1989 Central Park Rape case in NY, are said to be motivated by particular rap lyrics. As scholar, Houston A. Baker, Jr. notes in his book, *Black Studies, Rap and the Academy*, the New York press conflated the black, male, teenage suspects enjoyment of the rap, “Wild Thing” by Tone Loc with the term “wilding”

⁶ While Orthodox Muslims have been less prominent inside of hip hop culture, our post-9/11 media culture has made it a point to identify rappers both in the U.S. and overseas that identify as such.

which came to represent their alleged behavior in the news media.⁷ Likewise hip hop, more generally, carries a stigma of violence that socializes American society to vilify young, black males. “The folklore of black popular culture,” Michael Eric Dyson notes, “glori[fies] guns, gangs, and the ghetto.”⁸ In turn, the American public projects the images that rappers (and characters from black “ghetto-action” films) adopt, back onto black urban adolescents and young adults.⁹

Additional analyses of violence in rap music and music video involve discussions of sexual violence and cultures of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny in hip hop. Referring specifically to Gangsta Rap, scholars, Johnnetta Betsch Cole and Beverly Guy-Sheftall argue that the “resentment, hostility, and disdain that many young Black men feel toward the police and “the System” have been directed at Black females.”¹⁰ The specific manifestations of sexual violence that have been identified in hip hop culture include objectification and derogatory labeling of women, black hypermasculinity, rampant homophobia, and support of aggressive and criminal sexual behaviors such as trains or gang rape. “Hip hop journalist,”

⁷ Houston A. Baker Jr., *Black Studies, Rap and The Academy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 36-51.

⁸ Michael Eric Dyson, *Holler If You Hear Me: Searching For Tupac Shakur* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2001) 142.

⁹ “Ghetto Action” film is S. Craig Watkins’ term for the genre that includes works such as *Menace II Society*, *Boyz N The Hood* and *Clockers*. See, S. Craig Watkins, “The Ghetto-centric Imagination,” *Representin’: Hip Hop and the Production of Black Cinema* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 212-213.

Kevin Powell asserts that Dr. Dre's *The Chronic*, also a Gangsta Rap recording, became the hip hop industry's "blueprint" for rap music. Powell identifies "senseless gunplay and violence, cursing ad nauseam, the liberal use of self-hating terms like *nigga* and *bitch*, an insatiable appetite for marijuana, liquor, and sex, and an incredible disrespect and disregard for Black women," among *The Chronic*'s dominant themes.¹¹ The sexual attitudes and behaviors offered on *The Chronic* are especially interesting in light of the public admonishing Dr. Dre often receives from Black feminists such as Lisa Jones and Cole and Sheftall for the physical abuse he directed towards black female television host Dee Barnes.¹² And ultimately, *The Chronic* and Dr. Dre himself are most interesting because together they represent the intense contradictions of hip hop culture, while the sexual politics of *The Chronic* are in fact misogynist, and there is certainly expressions of black-on-black homicide and other components of group nihilism, it is still a "political" album because of its biting social commentary and critique of law enforcement (One song in particular, "The Day The Niggaz Took Over", champions the retribution enacted during the Los Angeles Riots).

These examples of cultural, criminal and sexual politics are further explored inside of empirical research on hip hop music and culture.

¹⁰ Johnetta Betsch Cole and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities* (New York: One World, 2003) 186.

¹¹ Kevin Powell, *Who's Gonna Take The Weight?: Manhood, Race and Power in America* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2003), 140.

Important Empirical Research

Empirical research on youth politics and popular culture is divided into studies on the following three relationships: media and racial attitudes, media and substance abuse/violence and media and sex/sexuality.

Empirical research on youth politics and popular culture is divided into studies on the following three relationships: media and racial attitudes, media and violence and media and sex/sexuality.

Important findings in the area of youth and media studies at large reveal the following information. First, the average youth watches approximately three hours of television daily.¹³ Second, a significant amount of TV watching on the part of youth and adolescents is music video programming.¹⁴ In a study that recorded videos on MTV, VHI, CMT (Country Music Television) and BET they reported that these four networks rotate between 400 and 700 videos

¹² See Lisa Jones, *Bulletproof Diva: Tales of Race Sex and Hair* (New York: Anchor Books, 1994), 216 and Cole and Sheftall, 197.

¹³ "Study Links TV to Teen Sexual Activity," *CNN*, 07 September 2004 [journal online]; available from <http://www.cnn.com>; Internet.

¹⁴ Barongan and Hall's subjects reported 14hrs./week and 16hrs./week of music video watching at different points in their study. See Christy Barongan and Gordon C. Nagayama Hall, "The Influence of Misogynous Rap Music on Sexual Aggression Against Women," *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 19, 195-207. And Greeson and Williams reported that 75% of their subjects reported watching music videos at least twice weekly. See Larry Greeson and Rose Ann Williams, "Social Implications of Music Videos for Youth: An Analysis of the Content and Effects of MTV" *Youth and Society* 18:2, 177-189.

daily.¹⁵ Lastly, it has been reported that 70%+ of rap music sales are to White audiences.¹⁶

The Motivational Educational Entertainment Corporation (MEE) conducted a study specifically geared towards young, urban African-Americans and their research produced the following results.¹⁷ The MEE survey indicated Black teens see two or more movies monthly, buy 2-3 rap CDs monthly and watch 3+ hours of television daily. Furthermore, two out of every five youth they surveyed watch 4+ hours of television daily with much of this viewing including DVD and VHS movie rentals.

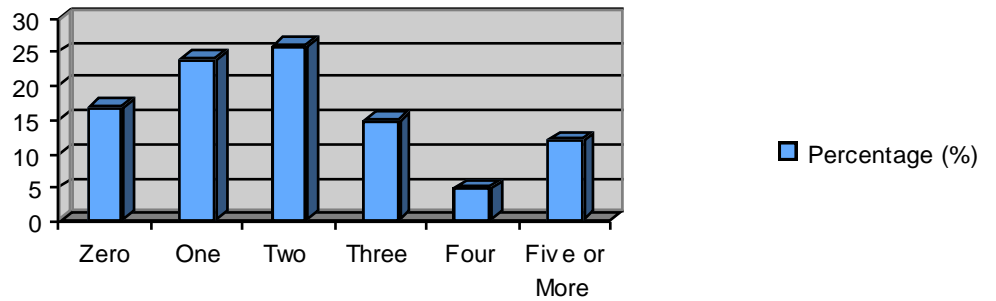
Three in every 10 black youth listen to the radio 4+ hours daily. An additional 17% listen to the radio for 3+ hours. 76% of the youth they surveyed indicated that BET was their favorite music video channel versus 10% of the respondents who reported that it was MTV. 41% of the youth expressed that UPN was their favorite network channel, followed by FOX (24%) and the WB (19%). 32% of the youth indicated that HBO was their favorite “non- music video” cable channel.

¹⁵ Robert H. Durant, Ellen S. Rome, Michael Rich, Elizabeth Allred, Jean Evans and Elizabeth R. Woods, “Tobacco and Alcohol Use Behaviors Portrayed in Music Videos: A Content Analysis” *American Journal of Public Health* 87:7, 1131-1135.

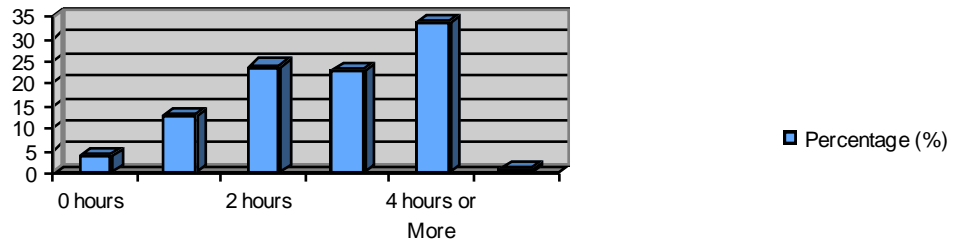
¹⁶ Mischa E. Thompson and R. Khari Brown, “Whites and Rap Music: Is It Really All Bad?” *Perspectives*, 97-105.

¹⁷ MEE (Motivational Educational Entertainment), *This Is My Reality: The Price of Sex, An Inside Look at Black Urban Youth Sexuality and the Role of Media*, (Philadelphia: MEE Productions, 2004.)

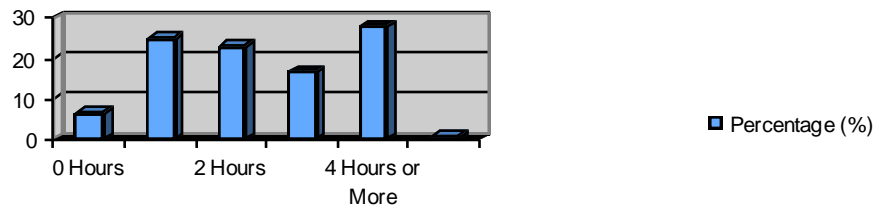
African American Youth and Music
How many times a month do you purchase CDs or Cassettes?



African American Youth and Television
How many hours of television do you watch per day?



African American Youth and Radio
How many hours of radio do you listen to each day?



Reprinted from, MEE (Motivational Educational Entertainment), *This Is My Reality: The Price of Sex, An Inside Look at Black Urban Youth Sexuality and the Role of Media*, (Philadelphia: MEE Productions, 2004.)

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80% of the participants indicated that they had a TV at home, and 95% reported that they have a DVD/VCR also.¹⁸

In the 1993-94 National Black Politics Survey (1,206 African American respondents, age 18 or older), 52% of respondents reported having listened to rap within the last year.¹⁹ Urban residents, males, and wealthier and more educated respondents were more likely to listen to rap music. And most importantly, young African Americans were found to be significantly more likely to listen to hip hop than older African Americans. Within the year prior to the study, 72% of their respondents reported having seen a black movie, 81% said they had read a black magazine, 78% said they had listened to a black news program on radio and 72% had watched a black TV program on cable.

Research studying the impact of media on racial attitudes has looked specifically at the effects of rap music on both white and black audiences. Most findings indicate that whites that listen to rap music have been found to be less racist, and more liberal than other whites.²⁰ Although, as has been the case for their black peers, whites who listen to violent rap are reported to be

¹⁸ The percentage reported for the participants who indicated having a TV in their home is likely erroneous. Not only does it not make sense that 95% of their participants have a DVD/VCR but only 80% have a TV, but also Nielson Medis Research has indicated that 98% of homes have TV sets. See C. Lynn Sarsoli, Michelle V. Porsche, and Deborah L. Tolman, "He Left her for the Alien?: Girls, television and sex." (prepublication draft).

¹⁹ Michael Dawson, Ronald Brown and James S. Jackson, NATIONAL BLACK POLITICS STUDY, 1993 [Computer file]. ICPSR version. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago/Detroit, MI: Wayne State University/Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, [producers], 1994. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 1998.

²⁰ Thompson and Brown, 97.

more likely to stereotype and discriminate against blacks.²¹ Whites who listen to rap however are generally found to be empathetic to black struggles and it is conjectured by some researchers that exposure to rap music among white audiences may one day push them to support race-based policies such as Affirmative Action and increased employment for Blacks.²² Also it is found that these white audiences have developed a higher cynicism towards U.S. race relations and reportedly also have a greater amount of black associates.²³

Melissa Harris-Lacewell's *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* offers research findings that relate to the connection between media and racial attitudes, and she focuses specifically among African Americans and rap music.²⁴ Her studies were designed to assess "black media knowledge" and "hip hop knowledge" Furthermore, Harris-Lacewell related the level of "black media" and "hip hop knowledge" to her primary interests in measuring feminist and conservative politics. Whereas black media knowledge prompted students to be more open to both feminist and conservative messages, high hip hop knowledge interacted with the respondents to reduce the levels of pro-feminism and to bolster anti-conservatism. Finally, findings from the National Black Politics Survey indicated that Black media in general suggests a strong positive relationship

²² Thompson and Brown, 101.

²³ Thompson and Brown, 99.

²⁴ Melissa Victoria Harris-Lacewell, *Barbershops, Bibles and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004).

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 with expressions of black linked fate, as well as sex linked fate for both men
 and women.

Table 3.6
 Effects of Rap Music on Core Beliefs

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Coefficient</i>	<i>SE</i>
Black linked fate	0.001	0.01
Women linked fate (women)	-0.02	0.02
Women linked fate (men)	0.002	0.02
Attitude toward whites	-0.04**	0.01
Black self-reliance	0.02	0.03
Bootstrap philosophy	0.01	0.03
Coalition with nonwhites	0.03	0.03

Source: 1993-94 National Black Politics Survey
Note: Model is estimated using a covariance structure analysis using maximum likelihood estimation. The package is Statistical Analysis Software (SAS), Procedure CALIS.
 ** $p < or = .05$

Reprinted from, Melissa Victoria Harris-Lacewell, *Barbershops, Bibles and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004).

One study on the impact of both rap and heavy metal songs on the moods of college students asserted an interesting connection between research on racial attitudes and media and work on violence and media.²⁵ In this study of principally white students, rap music was found to arouse anger. One

²⁵ See Mary Ballard and Steven Coates, "The Immediate Effects of Homocidal, Suicidal and Nonviolent Heavy Metal and Rap Songs on the Moods of College Students," *Youth and Society*, 27:2, 148-168.

possible suggestion for why this was the case was that rap music may expose the subconscious racism of white audiences, particularly due to rap's categorization by society as an African American musical genre.

Other research on the association between media and violence gets linked with substance abuse. According to Durant and colleagues, youth role models, including musicians, and also actors and athletes, significantly impact their decisions about health risks and “problem behaviors.”²⁶ When these role models are witnessed, particularly in music videos, consuming drugs and alcohol, especially in sexual or erotic scenes, the drugs and alcohol they are abusing is seen as “desirable” to adolescents. MTV was found to have the highest percentage of videos with smoking related behaviors followed by VH1, BET, and CMT respectively. Rap music videos had the highest rate of smoking behaviors of any music genre however. And lastly, the greatest amounts of videos with alcohol behaviors were found on BET and MTV.

Brendan I. Koerner in “Rapper Raise Your Snifters,” attributed the rising sales of Cognac liquor to the popularity of Busta Rhymes' single “Pass The Courvoisier” and other rap songs that promoted its usage.²⁷ Also, Cognac climbed 13.8 percent from 2001 to 2003, according to Adams Beverage Group. Findings of this variety reveal an interesting relationship between advertising and hip hop, even when the corporation is receiving free publicity,

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and the impact that particular brand marketing may have on the behaviors of
youth.

In addition to connections between rap music and substance abuse, rap is also linked with other “aggressive” behaviors. Exposure to rap music, which is subconsciously linked to black people and violence, is said to cause aggressive thoughts.²⁸ Most of the research on media and violence focuses on television viewing more broadly. Television has been shown to produce a number of psychological effects on youth audiences, particularly violent television. Dixon and Brooks argue that violent television “desensitizes” viewers to real incidents of violence, and prompts them to learn aggressive behaviors and to have an increased fear of victimization.²⁹

Sexual violence and other deviant sexual attitudes and behaviors are studied by social scientists as an additional form of violence that rap music and other media introduce to youth. As compared to the other two “political” categories of media relationships, the impact that television, rap music and film has on youth sexual conduct is more often studied, and with a greater degree of scrutiny. However, two of the most blatant holes in media research warrant the attention of our particular study. First, media research is not often differentiated on the basis of gender, and second, like almost all studies of

²⁶ Robert H. Durant, Ellen S. Rome, Michael Rich, Elizabeth Allred, Jean Evans and Elizabeth R. Woods, “Tobacco and Alcohol Use Behaviors Portrayed in Music Videos: A Content Analysis,” *American Journal of Public Health* 87:7, 1131-1135

²⁷ Brendan I. Koerner, “Rappers Raise Your Snifters,” *The New York Times*, 29 August 2004.

²⁸ Travis L. Dixon and TaKeshia Brooks, “Rap Music and Rap Audiences: Controversial Themes, Psychological Effects and Political Resistance,” *Perspectives* 106-116.

youth, African American samples within these studies are not often significant.

A good deal of research has linked the media, and in some cases rap specifically, with increased sexual activity in young people. The RAND Corporation, found that youth who watch programming with a high sexual content are more likely than their peers to engage in oral sex and other sexual activities short of intercourse.³⁰ The study also found that shows where sex was discussed but not shown had an equal impact on youth as the more explicit shows where sex is actually depicted. These findings are especially significant given that two-thirds of the programs on television contain sexual content, from milder forms such as jokes and innuendos to displaying intercourse and other sexual activity.

More television exposure and “deeper viewer involvement” has been shown to have a relationship to youth’s perception that men are “sex driven creatures” and women are sexual objects.³¹ Likewise, frequent television viewing relates to an increased expectation that peers were “experienced” sexually.

Music video exposure in particular has been shown to have a significant impact on young people’s sexual politics. This is particularly important for our target demographic because sexual themes and content

²⁹ Dixon and Brooks, 108.

Table 2 - Unadjusted and Adjusted Analyses Measuring the Association Between Exposure to Rap Music Videos and Adolescent’s Health at 12-Month Follow-Up: Birmingham, Ala, 1999-2000.

Adolescents’ Health ^a	Bivariate Analyses			Multivariate Analyses		
	High Exposure	Low Exposure	PR ^b (90% CI)	P	OR ^c (90% CI)	P
Sexual Behavior						
Had multiple sexual partners	19.3	11.0	1.8 (1.1, 2.8)	.02	2.0 (1.1, 3.4)	.02
Never used condoms	14.8	13.7	1.1 (1.0, 1.3)	.74	1.4 (0.7, 1.8)	.80
STD						
Acquired a new STD	41.9	33.0	1.3 (1.0, 1.7)	.08	1.6 (1.1, 2.3)	.04

Note. PR - Prevalence Ratio, CI – Confidence Ratio, OR – Odds Ratio, STD – Sexually Transmitted Disease.

^aAdolescent Health Behaviors and STD incidence were assessed over a 12-month follow-up period.

^bAdolescents having less exposure to rap music videos were the referent for computing PRs.

^cOrs are adjusted by parental monitoring and adolescents’ employment status.

Adapted and reprinted from, Gina M. Wingood, Ralph J. DiClemente, Jay M. Berhardt, Kathy Harrington, Susan L. Davies, Alyssa Robillard and Edward W. Hook, III, “A Prospective Study of Exposure to Rap Music Videos and African American Female Adolescents’ Health,” *American Journal of Public Health*, 93:3, 438.

Other, rarer, studies on the relationship between media and sexual attitudes and behaviors focus their attention specifically on black youth. The aforementioned MEE study is one such example. When probed, MEE survey respondents, both males and females, agree that high sexual content, including ‘explicit sex’ dominates broadcast and cable TV and music videos. These

³⁴ Gina M. Wingood, Ralph J. DiClemente, Jay M. Berhardt, Kathy Harrington, Susan L. Davies, Alyssa Robillard and Edward W. Hook, III, “A Prospective Study of Exposure to Rap Music Videos and African American Female Adolescents’ Health,” *American Journal of Public Health*, 93:3, 437-440.

hop. The only subject area that I regret not being able to address, (because of limits set for number of questions) with my survey recommendations is purchasing power inside hip hop culture. This could have been accomplished with questions regarding how much hip hop music/publications/films you buy, versus borrow, bootleg, rent, etc., and questions regarding whether rappers, music videos, print advertisements, etc. encourage youth to buy particular clothing, jewelry, alcohol/drugs, etc.

The following items are being submitted for recommendation:

Hip Hop Media Prompt:

Hip Hop culture was originally defined by journalists, scholars and the artists themselves to incorporate rapping, DJing, graffiti, and break dancing. As hip hop has grown into a multi-million dollar industry, the culture has broadened to incorporate magazines, film, music video, radio and other media, including hip hop websites. The following questions reflect this shift.

- On a four point scale, 1 (do not identify with at all) 4 (strongly identify with), Do you identify with hip hop culture?³⁵
- On a six point scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), hip hop media impacts my attitudes and behaviors?
- Are you a hip hop artist?

³⁵ L. Monique Ward used a similar question to ask youth if they “identified” with pre-selected TV characters.

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- If so, what type of hip hop artist are you? _____
 - MC/emcee?
 - Breakdancer?
 - Graffiti Writer?
 - DJ?
 - Videographer/Filmographer?
 - Video Model?
 - Other? _____
- On a six point scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), hip hop lyrics are politically empowering?
- On a six point scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), hip hop videos are politically empowering?
- On a six point scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), hip hop lyrics are sexually empowering?
- On a six point scale, 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), hip hop videos are sexually empowering?
- On a five point-Likert scale, 1 (strongly dislike) 5 (strongly like) what are your overall impressions of rap music?³⁶
- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never listen/or not this year) and 4 (listen daily) how often do you listen to rap music?³⁷
 - Who are your favorite three rap artists/groups?³⁸

³⁶ Barongan and Hall use this question for specific rap songs that they played in an experimental study.

³⁷ The National Black Politics Survey gets at this question in a completely different way: "Have you in the past week: Listened to rap music? Listened to a black news program on the radio? Read a black magazine like Ebony, Essence, Emerge (E-MERGE), Black Enterprise or Jet? And for movies: Have you in the past year?: Gone to a movie like Boyz N the Hood or Malcolm X made by a black director such as Spike Lee? L. Monique Ward used this five point scale however to measure frequency of sitcom and soap opera viewing, however my terminology, "not this year" has replaced "not this season" and my phrase "daily" has replaced "yearly."

³⁸ Sarsoli, Porsche and Tolman had their sample complete an open-ended question which asked who was their favorite television character. Of course their sample only included 136 girls and even with this small sample, 30 different female characters were named.

- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never read/or not this year) and 4 (read monthly) how often do you read hip hop magazines?
 - What hip hop magazine do you most often read?
- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never listen/or not this year) and 4 (listen daily) how often do you listen to hip hop radio?
 - What is your favorite radio station?
- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never surf/or not this year) and 4 (surf daily) how often do you visit hip hop websites?
 - What is your favorite hip hop website?
- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch weekly) how often do you watch hip hop themed film/video?
 - What is your favorite hip hop films/videos?
- On a five point-Likert Scale, 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily) how often do you watch music video programming?
 - What is your favorite music video programming?
- Which of the following music video programming do you watch? BET's *Rap City*? 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily). BET's *106 and Park*? 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily) BET's *Uncut*? 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily). MTV's *Total Request Live*? 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily). MTV's *Jams*? 0 (never watch/or not this year) and 4 (watch daily).³⁹
- Which of the following hip hop publications do you read? *The Source*? 0 (never read/or not this year) and 4 (read monthly). *VIBE*? 0 (never read/or not this year) and 4 (read monthly) *XXL*? 0 (never read/or not this year) and 4 (read monthly).

³⁹ I have deliberately avoided elsewhere including specific examples of media; however, I wanted to include this as an example for how I can potentially avoid so many open-ended question. The problem is, I don't think the appropriate work has been done to predict "popular" media in all of these areas, and additionally I think its much more interesting to see what our respondents reply to the open ended setup.



- Which of the following hip hop websites do you surf?
Ohhla.com? 0 (never surf/or not this year) and 4 (surf weekly).
Okayplayer.com? 0 (never surf/or not this year) and 4 (surf weekly)
BET.com? 0 (never surf/or not this year) and 4 (surf weekly).
- Do you perceive rap music and music videos to contain (1) no references to sex, (2) present but minor references to sex (incidental), (3) moderate levels of sex, (4) sex a significant or major part of rap music and videos?⁴⁰
- Do you perceive rap music and music videos to contain (1) no references to violence, (2) present but minor references to violence (incidental), (3) moderate levels of violence, (4) violence a significant or major part of rap music and videos?
- Do you perceive rap music and music videos to contain (1) no references to politics, (2) present but minor references to politics (incidental), (3) moderate levels of politics, (4) politics a significant or major part of rap music and videos?
- Now let's talk about your feelings towards some hip hop artists and other people who are in the hip hop industry these days.

I'll read the name of a person and I will ask you to rate that person on a thermometer that runs from 0 degrees to 100 degrees . Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward that person or group. Ratings between 0 degrees and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel too favorable and are cool toward that person. You may use any number from 0 to 100 to tell me how favorable or unfavorable your feelings are for each person.

Our first person is Jay Z. How would you rate him using this thermometer?⁴¹

- Nas
- Snoop Dogg

⁴⁰ This question was taken from the Durant study, however it has been modified to incorporate the word "sex" as opposed to "sexuality." And it is later modified in the following two instances to supplement "sexuality" and "sex" for violence and politics.

⁴¹ This question was taken from the National Black Election Study, however it has been modified to incorporate hip hop personalities .

- Kanye West
- Outkast
- G Unit
- Eminem
- Mos Def
- The Roots
- Russell Simmons
- P Diddy
- Erykah Badu
- Mary J. Blidge
- Ludacris
- Busta Rhymes
- Eve
- Big Tigger (from BET's *Rap City*)
- Free (from BET's *106 and Park*)
- A.J. (from BET's *106 and Park*)
- Kim Osorio (Editor in Chief from *The Source*)
- Elliott Wilson (Editor in Chief from *XXL*)
- Mimi Valdés (Editor in Chief from *VIBE*)
- Melyssa Ford
- Ki Toy
- Ja Rule
- Fabolous
- Terror Squad