

AAAS 135b:
GLOBAL HIP-HOP

Wed 6:30-9:20 pm
Mandel G03
Spring 2012

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office hours: by appointment

DESCRIPTION

Examining how hip-hop travels and is embraced, represented, and transformed in various locales around the world, this course approaches hip-hop as itself constituted by international flows and as a product and set of practices that circulate globally in complex ways, cast variously as American, African-American, and/or black, and recast through the cultural logics of the new spaces it enters, the soundscapes it permeates.

A host of questions arise when we consider hip-hop's global scope and significance: What does the genre in its various forms (audio, video, sartorial, gestural) carry beyond the US? What do people bring to it in new local contexts? How are US notions of race and nation mediated by hip-hop's global reach? Why do some global (which is to say, local) hip-hop scenes fasten onto the genre's well-rehearsed focus on place, community, and righteous opposition to structural and representational forms of violence, while others appear more enamored with slick portrayals of hustler archetypes, cool machismo, and ruggedly individualist, conspicuous consumption? How can hip-hop circulate in such contradictory forms? In what ways do hip-hop scenes differ from North to South America, West to East Africa, Europe to Asia? What threads unite them?

In pursuit of such questions, we will read across the emerging literature on global hip-hop as we explore the growing resources available via the internet, where websites and blogs, MySpace and YouTube and the like have facilitated a further efflorescence of international (and peer-to-peer) exchanges around hip-hop.

Beginning with its multicultural and transnational roots in the United States, we will consider a number of case studies of hip-hop around the world as well as closely related (and sometimes antagonistic) musical and cultural phenomena. Our survey will take us to the Caribbean and Brazil, East Asia and the Middle East, Europe and the South Pacific, including a sustained study of hip-hop in North, East, South and West Africa.

MATERIALS

Throughout the semester we will be consulting selected articles and chapters from books, journals, and the web (via LATTE) in addition to the following collections of essays (available at the campus bookstore):

Basu, Dipannita and Sidney J. Lemelle, eds. *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture*. London; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2006.

Mitchell, Tony, ed. *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001.

Saucier, P. Khalil, ed. *Native Tongues: An African Hip-hop Reader*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011.

REQUIREMENTS

40% **2 short papers:** produce a 2-3 page response (500-1000 words) to the issues or articles in question. #1 due by 9pm (via email) on **January 22**, #2 due by 5pm on **May 2**. Please include your text in the body of the email rather than attaching a document.

60% **3 YouTube readings / blog-posts:** produce a 2-3 paragraph (200-400 word) explication and interpretation of a rap video (or any other germane video text), making reference to at least one class reading. Post your text, along with a link to or embed of the video, to the appropriate LATTE page by 12am on the day of the class in question. #1 is due by **February 29**; #2 by **March 28**; and #3 by **April 25**.

There is no final exam in this class.

CALENDAR

January 18: Introduction, Review of Syllabus

Short paper #1: Framing Global Hip-hop Having reviewed the three introductions to the volumes we'll be consulting this semester, with what precision can one frame hip-hop in its global scope? In what ways, at this juncture, is it possible to generalize about global hip-hop at all? What does the exchange between Aidi and Chen Lo (see below) reveal about the dangers of too easily romanticizing hip-hop's contemporary circulation in the wider world?

Aidi, Hishaam. "Leveraging Hip Hop in US Foreign Policy." *Illume*, 21 Nov 2011.
<<http://www.illumemagazine.com/zine/articleDetail.php?Leveraging-Hip-hop-in-US-Foreign-Policy-13861>>

Chen Lo. "Response to 'Leveraging hip hop in US foreign policy'."
<<http://lofrequencymusic.com/?p=651>>

See also:

Aidi, Hishaam. "The Grand (Hip-hop) Chessboard." *Middle East Report* (Fall 2011): 25-39.

Send your paper to wmarshal@brandeis.edu **by 9pm on Sunday, January 22**.

January 25: USA & JA

Kenner, Rob. "Dancehall," In *The Vibe History of Hip-hop*, ed. Alan Light, 350-7. New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999.

Marshall, Wayne. "Follow Me Now: The Zigzagging Zunguzung Meme" <<http://wayneandwax.com/?p=137>>.

Patterson, Orlando. "Ecumenical America: Global Culture and the American Cosmos." *World Policy Journal* 11(2): 103-17 (1994).

February 1: Puerto Rico & Cuba

Marshall, Wayne. "From Música Negra to Reggaeton Latino." In *Reading Reggaeton*, 19-76 (Duke University Press).

Pacini-Hernández, Deborah and Reebee Garofalo. "Hip Hop in Havana: Rap, Race and National Identity in Contemporary Cuba." *Journal for Popular Music Studies*, 2000: 1-41.

Baker, Geoffrey. 2005. "¡Hip hop, Revolución! Nationalizing Rap in Cuba." *Ethnomusicology* 49, no. 3: 368-402.

See also:

Flores, Juan. 2004. "Creolité in the 'Hood: Diaspora as Source and Challenge." *Centro* 16, no. 2 (Fall): 283-289.

Wunderlich, Annelise. "Cuban Hip-hop: Making Space for New Voices of Dissent." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 167-79.

Baker, Geoffrey. 2006. "La Habana que no conoces: Cuban rap and the social construction of urban space." *Ethnomusicology Forum* 15, no. 2: 215-46.

February 8: Brazil

Sansone, Livio. "The Localization of Global Funk in Bahia and Rio." In *Brazilian Popular Music & Globalization*, 135-60. London: Routledge, 2002.

Yúdice, George. "The Funkification of Rio." In *Microphone Fiends*, 193-220. London: Routledge, 1994.

Behague, Gerard. "Rap, Reggae, Rock, or Samba: The Local and the Global in Brazilian Popular Music (1985-95)." *Latin American Music Review* 27, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2006): 79-90.

February 15: UK

Hesmondhalgh, David and Caspar Melville. "Urban Breakbeat Culture: Repercussions of Hip-Hop in the UK." In *Global Noise*, 86-110.

Frere-Jones, Sasha. "True Grime." (*New Yorker*), 21 March 2005.
<http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/03/21/050321crmu_music>

Sharma, Sanjay. "Noisy Asians or 'Asian Noise'?" In *Disorienting Rhythms: The Politics of the New Asian Dance Music*, ed. Sharma, Hutnyk, and Sharma, 32-57. London: Zed Books, 1996.

February 22: No Class – Midterm Recess

February 29: Germany

Pennay, Mark. "Rap in Germany: The Birth of a Genre." In *Global Noise*, 111-134.

Rollefson, J. Griffeth. "Musical (African) Americanization in the New Europe: The Case of Aggro Berlin." In *Crosscurrents: American and European Music in Interaction, 1900-2000*, eds. Oja, Rathert, and Shreffler. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2012.

Brown, Timothy S. "'Keeping it Real' in a Different 'Hood: (African-) Americanization and Hip-hop in Germany." In *Vinyl Ain't Final*, 137-50.

// **Note:** First YouTube post due by or before this date //

March 7: South Africa

Warner, Remi. "Colouring the Cape Problem Space: A Hip-Hop Identity of Passions." In *Native Tongues*, 105-44.

Magubane, Zine. "Globalization and Gangster Rap: Hip Hop in the Post-Apartheid City." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 208-29.

Mhlambi, Thokozani. "'Kwaitofabulous': The Story of a South African Urban Genre." *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa* (2004): 116-27.

Steingo, Gavin. "South African Music After Apartheid: Kwaito, the "Party Politic," and the Appropriation of Gold as a Sign of Success." *Popular Music and Society* 28:2: 333-57 (July 2005).

See also:

Ariefdien, Shaheen & Marlon Burgess. "Putting Two Heads Together: A Cross-Generational Conversation about Hip-Hop in a Changing South Africa." In *Native Tongues*, 219-52.

Salkind, Micah. "Kwaito Culture and the Body: Nonpolitics in a Black Atlantic Context." *postamble* 5(1): 1-12 (2009).

March 14: Cape Verde (& diaspora)

Seiber, Tim. "Popular Music and Cultural Identity in the Cape Verdean Post-Colonial Diaspora." *Etnografica* IX(1): 123-148 (2005).

Saucier, P. Khalil. "Hip-hop Culture in Red, Black, and Green." In *Native Tongues*, xiii-xx.

Perry, Mark D. "Global Black Self-Fashionings: Hip-hop as Diasporic Space." *Identities* 15(6): 635-64 (2008).

See also:

Patterson, Tiffany Ruby and Robin D. G. Kelley. "Unfinished Migrations: Reflections on the African Diaspora and the Making of the Modern World." *African Studies Review* 43, no. 1 (2000): 11-45.

March 21: East Africa

Lemelle, Sidney J. "'Ni wapi Tunakwenda': Hip Hop Culture and the Children of Arusha." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 230-54.

Perullo, Alex. "Hooligans and Heroes: Youth Identity and Hip-hop in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania." *Africa Today* 51, no. 4: 75-101 (2005).

Thompson, Katrina Daly. "Bongo Flava, Hip-hop and 'Local Maasai Flavors': Interviews with X Plastaz." In *Native Tongues*, 253-97.

See also:

Mose, Caroline. "Jua Cali-Justice: Navigating the 'Mainstream- Underground' Dichotomy in Kenyan Hip-hop Culture." In *Native Tongues*, 69-104.

March 28: West Africa

Shepler, Susan. "Youth Music and Politics in Post-war Sierra Leone." *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 48, no. 4 (2010): 627-642.

Tucker, Boima. "Everyday Activities: Hipco & Liberia's Cultural Revolution." *Cluster Mag* (2011). <<http://www.theclustermag.com/blog/?p=1368>>

_____. "50/50, non-exclusive." *Cluster Mag* (2012): <<http://www.theclustermag.com/blog/?p=2370>>

// **Note:** Second YouTube post due by or before this date //

April 4: North Africa / France / Middle East

Helenon, Veronique. "Africa on Their Mind: Rap, Blackness, and Citizenship in France." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 151-66.

Rollefson, J. Griffith. "Le Cauchemar de la France: Blackara's Postcolonial Hip-hop Critique in the City of Light." In *Native Tongues*, 179-216.

Swedenburg, Ted. "Islamic Hip-hop vs. Islamophobia." In *Global Noise*, 57-85.

McDonald, David A. "Carrying Words Like Weapons: Hip-Hop and the Poetics of Palestinian Identities in Israel." *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology* 7/2 (2004): 116-130.

See also:

Prevos, Andre J. M. "Postcolonial Popular Music in France: Rap Music and Hip-Hop Culture in the 1980s & 1990s." In *Global Noise*, 39-56.

Meghelli, Samir. "Interview with Youcef (Intik)." In *Tha Global Cipa: Hip Hop Culture and Consciousness*, ed. by James G. Spady, H. Samy Alim, and Samir Meghelli, 656-67. Philadelphia: Black History Museum Publishers, 2006.

April 11: No Class – Passover / Spring Recess

April 18: Japan

Condry, Ian. "A History of Japanese Hip-hop." In *Global Noise*, 222-47.

Fink, Rhiannon. "Negotiating Ethnicity and Authenticity in Tokyo's Club Harlem." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 200-07.

Wood, Joe. "The Yellow Negro." *Transition* 73: 40-67.

April 25: Australia & the South Pacific

Maxwell, Ian. "Sydney Stylee: Hip-Hop Down Under Comin' Up." In *Global Noise*, 259-79.

Mitchell, Tony. "Kia Kaha! (Be Strong!): Maori and Pacific Islander Hip-hop in Aotearoa-New Zealand." In *Global Noise*, 280-305.

Henderson, April K. "Dancing Between Islands: Hip Hop and the Samoan Diaspora." In *The Vinyl Ain't Final*, 180-199.

// Note: Third YouTube post due by or before this date //

Final Assignment

May 2 (via email, by 5pm): Short paper #2

Short paper #2: Re-framing Global Hip-hop Having had a semester to reflect on the various shapes hip-hop takes around the world, use this opportunity to attempt, once more, to take on the task of making sense of global hip-hop.

Given the chance, how would *YOU* introduce a novice to the subject?

For this second short paper, write a brief foreword or introduction of your own to an imaginary book about global hip-hop—or about hip-hop in a particular place outside the USA. (You might find it useful, in preparation, to review the front matter from the 3 collections we read this semester, noting how each author approaches the challenge.)

Obviously, you can only scratch the surface in 2-3 pages, but that's what a good introduction does. Think about what's important and what's cliché; think about what's obvious and what is not; finally, be precise (give examples!) and concise.

Send your paper to wmarshal@brandeis.edu **by 5pm on Wednesday, May 2.**