“IT’S BIGGER THAN HIP HOP”:

POPULAR RAP MUSIC AND THE POLITICS OF THE HIP HOP GENERATION

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

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Presented by Derek J. Evans

A candidate for the degree of Master of Arts,

And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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…to Madilyn.

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ABSTRACT

A number of authors and supporters of hip hop culture have suggested that rap music has the potential to serve as a vehicle for the next stage of the Civil Rights Movement. However, the extent to which rap music has addressed political issues important to post-Civil Rights Black Americans, or the “Hip Hop Generation”, has gone unexamined. This study attempts to do that by first determining which political issues are most important to this group and, then, analyzing the extent to which the most popular rap songs – those heard by the largest audiences – have addressed those issues. Results show that popular rap music in its first years as a popular musical form and in present years fails to address these political issues to any significant degree, though in past years popular rap music addressed these themes with *slightly* greater frequency. Suggestions are given for why this decrease occurred and for why there exists such a dearth of political rap music in all of the years from which songs were sampled. Lastly, the implications of the widespread existence of rap that does not address issues important to the Hip Hop Generation are provided.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

"Black music has been a collective cry of discontent for as long as there have been situations and conditions in need of change"

- Mary Ellison (1989, p. 145)

The sons and daughters of the Black Americans that struggled through the turmoil and celebrated the triumphs of the Civil Rights era must, today, navigate a radically different social landscape than that which their parents faced 40 and 50 years earlier. While, on paper, members of the Civil Rights generation were granted the same legal and human rights that White Americans had enjoyed for centuries, members of the next generation – what Bakari Kitwana has labeled the "Hip Hop Generation" – grew up to see that many goals of the Civil Rights movement never came to fruition. Other goals materialized, only to be stripped away. The Hip Hop Generation was forced to grapple with new social and political realities that negatively and disproportionately affected its members. Out with the old, in with the old…same shit, different decade. These changing realities provided fertile ground for the creation of cultural forms to emerge and mature into forces that could face the realities head on. It has been suggested that hip hop culture is one such form. What follows is an examination of the most popular facet of that subculture...rap music. My aim is to determine the extent to which rap has addressed the pressing political issues that have been a product of this new social world.

Since the Sugarhill Gang released the first successful rap record in 1979, there has been no shortage of rap music releases addressing issues of great political importance to members of the Hip Hop Generation. During recorded rap's infancy in the early 1980s,

songs like “How We Gonna Make the Black Nation Rise” (Brother D & The Collective Effort), “The Breaks” and “Hard Times” (both by Kurtis Blow) were released, all addressing political issues related to housing, education, and poverty. In 1982, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious 5 released “The Message”, a political song that painted a very bleak picture of the New York ghettos out of which rap emerged, to both critical and commercial success. This opened doors for artists like Public Enemy and KRS-One, artists who have been revered for spreading “the message” during the earlier years of rap’s entrance into the mainstream market.

By the late 1980s, rappers and scholars alike began to suggest that the dissemination of this type of rap music had the potential to make known to the society at large the new political concerns of the post-Civil Rights generations. Rapper KRS-One and J-Dee (from the group Da Lench Mob) have both remarked in interviews that rap is the “last voice” of Black people in America (Toop 2000, p. xix & 197). Public Enemy frontman Chuck D has noted time and again that rap is the “Black CNN” (Chuck D 2000, p. 256), suggesting that rap was one of few ways that “people from all over could get informed about Black life” in urban America.

As early as the mid 1980s – before rap music was commercially successful on a wide scale - researchers, intellectuals and even politicians began to recognize the political potential of rap music and, especially, the larger hip hop subculture within which rap emerged. Cultural critic Steven Hager likened rap to the 1960s counter culture, suggesting it had the potential to “infiltrate and subvert the mass media” with new values and ideas” (1984, p. 96). Tricia Rose (1994), one of the first writers to engage with hip hop culture academically, argues that rap gives a voice to Blacks from the margins of

urban America and provides alternative interpretations of social events occurring around them. Allen asserts that political rap music may "offer a vision of a new and more just way of life" to those without direct experience of the urban poor's social realities (1996, p. 160). More recently, politician George Martinez (District Leader in Brooklyn, New York and the first "Hip Hop" elected official) went so far as to say that the larger hip hop culture, including rap music, could serve as the "engine and cultural vehicle for the *next* phase of the civil and human rights movements" (Martinez 2004, p. 196). And surely, these artists and scholars recognize the importance of the myriad informal collectives and formal organizations – from KRS-One's Stop the Violence Movement (which worked in tandem with the National Urban League in the late 1980s), to new-millenium mini-movements like Russell Simmons' Hip Hop Summit Action Network, to even more recent campaigns like "Rap the Vote" and P. Diddy's "Vote Or Die" – all of which aim to educate and raise political awareness in the name of hip hop culture and rap music.

The aim of my research is to answer questions about the extent to which the assumptions of the above authors might ring true. While a sizable number of popular rap artists have and continue to address political issues important to Black Americans, many have not and do not. Like any form of popular music, themes within rap vary from one song to the next – a single album may feature songs that celebrate sex, drug use, materialism, and violence alongside songs about revolution or police brutality. However, the *degree* to which apolitical rap music has historically been more successful than political rap music has never been examined empirically. I plan to investigate the extent to which commentary about issues important to Black Americans has been broadcast by the "Black CNN" and tuned into by its "viewers". In order to determine if and how the

success of political rap music has changed over time I intend to focus my analysis on the most popular songs of two separate time periods. I will first analyze song lyrics of the top rap songs released during 1989 and 1990 - the first years in which rap was getting a foothold in the market of the mainstream music industry - and then do the same for the most successful songs of 2005 and 2006.

This requires that a clear definition of what constitutes the "political imperatives" of the Hip Hop Generation. As I will later explain, many rap and hip hop scholars have attempted to create exhaustive lists of the different political themes present in rap music. While this is important, I do not intend to test the validity of their claims, nor is my intent to search for new broad political themes. My approach will be the reverse. I intend to first determine what political issues are important to the Hip Hop Generation and, then, see if popular rap music has addressed these issues. In other words, I leave it to the leaders of the Hip Hop Generation to define the parameters of these issues. The contention by Kitwana and others that the post-civil rights generations had failed to create a specific and unique political agenda (one different from that of their parents' generation) spurred the assembly of two National Hip Hop Political Conventions, one in Newark, New Jersey in 2004 and another in Chicago in 2006. These conventions brought together activists, artists, educators, and civic leaders with the expressed aim of clarifying, documenting, and ratifying a Hip Hop Generation political agenda. I will use the points of this agenda to guide my research and analysis.

If those quoted above suggest rap is the "last voice" of Black people, then I am led to wonder what these voices are saying. More specifically, I wonder if the "loudest", most popular voices in rap music are, in fact, providing "alternative interpretations" of

the world around us or "visions…of a more just way of life". If Kitwana (2002) is right and hip hop (including rap music) has muscled ahead of church, school, and family as primary transmitter of culture and values, I am curious as to whether the values being transmitted speak to the political imperatives of the hip hop generation.

This research can contribute to recent discussions about Hip Hop Generation politics, leadership, and the role of popular rap music in both. Its findings can allow Black leaders and leaders within hip hop to assess whether popular rap music is, in fact, a channel that can contribute to post-Civil Rights political movement. This research should be able to show whether popular rap has *ever* provided a platform for Hip Hop Generation politics; knowing whether it has or has not is necessary before one can ask *why* it has or has not. If the research reveals changes in popular rap's success as a political voice, then it can open doors for those who want to answer *why* these changes have occurred. Most importantly, a clear understanding of where politically oriented popular rap music stands today allows for those who put stock into its success to be able to ask what, if anything, needs to be done differently, what, if anything, needs to stay the same, what aspects can be utilized, what aspects can be discarded, etc. This is especially true if popular rap music is *less* political today than in the past. As the hip hop adage goes, "It ain't where you're from, it's where you're at". Nostalgic longings for a hip hop past that was as revolutionary as it was rockin will not contribute to present day political movement. It may, however, provide a blueprint to follow for those who still believe in rap's political potential. Hence, this research isn't just about rap music or the arts found within the subculture from which it emerged. In the words M1 and stic-man from dead prez…it's *bigger* than hip hop.

I too believe that rap is more than music. I too believe it has the potential to move people. I know this, because rap music moved *me.* As a working-class white kid raised in a small Midwestern city with a minority population hovering just above 10 percent, I was seemingly unaffected by anything remotely related to what you might call Hip Hop Generation politics. Not surprisingly, I remember having trouble making sense of the Los Angeles Riots of 1992. Rappers like Ice Cube and Sir Mix-A-Lot, however, helped me make sense of it. While I may not have entirely understood what was going on, I knew a few things for sure…the artists on these records sounded pissed off, they seemed more than a bit unhappy at a lot of white people, and they made all of this known over some seriously funky music. I was hooked.

I would be lying if I said that everything I know I learned from hip hop, but it certainly inform many of my thoughts on a day to day basis. This carries over into my professional life as well. I learn sociological concepts *in terms* of rap music. I use rap music to teach sociological concepts. I have little doubt that rap music has the potential to change the lives of others. As such, my continued research on hip hop and rap music is always done with this in mind. I would love for my research to contribute to another young person becoming "hooked" on rap music. Hopefully, this research is a step in that direction.

Chapter 2 – Review Of Literature

In order to understand rap music's role as a transmitter of social criticism it is necessary to couch it within the larger history of Black cultural critique through the use of music. The reasons for both listening and playing music – its personal and social functions – differ from one place to the next, one time to the next, and from one group to the next. For Blacks in America (or any other group anywhere else in the world) music is not used *solely* as a means of providing social critique and/or the communication of political ideas. As such, in the first section of the following review of literature I provide an outline of important academic perspectives on a number of uses – political and apolitical – of music within different societies.

The second section consists of a discussion of the social uses of Black music in America. Special attention is paid to those genres of Black music that function as a mode of social and political critique. It is important to emphasize here that I do not attempt to write a history of Black music or a history of political Black music. I merely review the ways in which Black music has attempted to challenge American society and Black experiences within it.

In the final section of this chapter, I touch on the creation and maintenance of hip hop culture and rap music and the way social, structural and political factors have helped to shape both. This will include an exploration of how these factors have influenced the worldviews of members of the Hip Hop Generation.

Functions of Music

Many scholars have attempted to develop exhaustive lists of the various ways music is used and of the functions it serves. Some have focused more on the "social use" aspect of music, highlighting who uses what music, when, and for what reason(s). Mussulman (1974), for example, describes the way music is used in contemporary America, noting the roles it plays in ceremony, entertainment, religion, and the dissemination of "propaganda". Hargreaves and North (1999) argue that research carried out by music psychologists has focused more narrowly on the *cognitive* and *emotional* (and, in turn, physical) effects of listening to music, but suggest that this has been done at the expense of more detailed examinations of music's *social* functions.

Hargreaves and North respond with their own social psychological argument. They believe that the cognitive and affective responses to music cannot be understood outside of the interaction with the social contexts within which these responses emerge. This approach allows for further explanation of "why" music is used by different people at different times. It also emphasizes "how" music works to successfully satisfy "social uses" for which it is employed. It contributes to understandings of *how* music functions for different people in different social contexts.

At the individual level, for example, music is used as a means to alter mood. It can be used as entertainment - as a means of escape from social stresses – and is successful in doing so because of the cognitive and physical responses that it elicits. Research has shown its ability to alleviate pain and optimize mood, even influencing customer behavior in shopping settings. Hargreaves and North stress that these uses are

all (socially) situated and that taste is "mediated by the immediate listening environment" (1999, p. 80).

At the meso level, music can contribute to group identity formation and maintenance as listeners use style and genre to both align themselves with those who have similar tastes in music and separate themselves from those who do not. In essence, listeners not only use music as one focal point around which they create their individual identities, but music functions at a more interpersonal level in terms of how it *maintains* group relationships. Social group boundaries become visible (or are strengthened) when different subcultures or even racial or ethnic groups take a form of popular music as "their own" (see also Pratt 1990, p. 5).

In addition to the social-psychological functions of music noted above, a number of scholars have focused on the social use of "political" music. Denisoff, in the years following the surge of popular protests songs that appeared on the Top 40 radio charts during the Vietnam War, attempted to outline the properties of protest songs during that era. He focuses more narrowly on "propaganda songs" or songs "designated to communicate social, political, economic, ideological concepts, or a total ideology, to the listener" (1983, p. 2). These "songs of persuasion", he argues, function to accomplish six primary goals.

First, these songs are or can be used to *gain outside support* for a particular social or political movement. Their lyrics usually point to discontent, or what he terms "problem-situations". Denisoff does not make clear what this means, but notes that these problem-situations "run the spectrum of human grievances over low wages, through the

entire economic structure of a society, to… internecine ideological warfare" (Denisoff 1983, p. 3) in the larger social system, which has the ability to garner external empathy and, in turn, support from those previously unaware of these issues. Songs of persuasion can also *reinforce the values* of those who actively support a particular movement or ideology and serve as a rallying point around which members of an organization or movement can bond, creating a sense of *solidarity* and *cohesion* among those who share a worldview that is also reflected in the song itself. We often see songs function in this way in interactive setting like rallies, picket lines, political protests, and the like. Fourth, the song can be used to *recruit* non-participant listeners. Fifth, persuasion songs can be used to *promote a course of action* and suggested solutions for different social goals; often times these songs suggest simply *joining* the movement as a course of action, without specifying any further direction.. Lastly, the song can *appeal emotionally* to audiences by painting a picture of societal problems in emotional terms. These six functions are not, of course, mutually exclusive and many occur alongside each other.

Rosenthal (2001) sought to examine the use of music more specifically within social movements and his arguments about the function of such music mirrors aspects of those put forth by Denisoff quite closely. Rosenthal, in essence, collapses the *value reinforcement* and *solidarity* functions suggested by Denisoff into a single function of "servicing the committed". Music, he argues, can reinforce the ideas shared by those already involved in a collective movement, which results in a stronger commitment to each other and the movement itself. Denisoff and Rosenthal both argue that music can be used to gain outside support. Denisoff, however, does not state explicitly *how* outside support is gained, only that it *is* (or can be) gained. We are left to make a connection

between this recruitment and emotional appeal functions. Rosenthal makes this connection for us arguing that music's function of "educating the uneducated" (changing ideas) is what allows for music's function of "recruitment" (changing behavior) to take place. Both, however, note that it is harder to find empirical evidence for the "education" function because such claims are often made by authors who *intend* for their music to function this way instead of by listeners who state explicitly that a song changed their behavior. Rosenthal later uses interview data to show that movement members, at the very least, *claim* that political music played a part in their movement activities through education, reinforcement, mobilization, etc.. Finally, he examines music's ability to *mobilize* individuals into action, to get those who simply identify with the movement to move toward concrete action, and to get those already active in the movement to be *more* active.

But not all authors on the subject focus on how political music can function to meet *particular* ends. For example, Pratt (1990) chose to examine the way political music can potentially function as different *types of political behavior*. He argues, for example, that in some cases music is *purposive*, created with the intention of influencing or attempting to influence the ideas or behaviors of others. *Effective* dimensions of music influence the ideas and behavior of others, but here the intention to elicit different responses is absent. This shows his recognition of the subjective nature of meaning-making among members of an audience. Once a song is made public it is "set free" and any listener has the ability to interpret it in any number of ways, regardless the creator's intentions.

In addition to viewing music as political behavior, Pratt argues that music can be categorized along a continuum of *expressive* and *instrumental* uses that meet the needs of individuals and groups. On the expressive end, Pratt recognizes that music has the ability to convey meaning through, say, its lyrical content. More importantly, that the music itself is being played at all is meaningful to both the creator and the audience. Both create meaning by understanding the existence of the music within a particular context. Blues singers, for example, are typically aware of the association of particular sounds of "the blues" with particular lyrical content commonly found within the genre. Thus, many choose to express themselves by playing "the blues" *because* they identify. Pratt suggests that we can see the expressive functions of the blues in the act of simply listening to music from that genre, especially when audiences are aware of its history (in the same way that the artists themselves may be). That they would choose to listen to a particular type of music, one that they associate with the creator's historical use of the genre to express pain and sorrow, could be an expressive act in and of itself.

Pratt's discussion of music's function as *instrumental* behavior seems, to me, a tad problematic. He notes that the expression of music "may be utilized instrumentally as an explicit form of political action designed to move publics" (Pratt 1990, p. 8). However, he does not expand on the explanation of music as *instrumental* and, more importantly he doesn't address the issue that this explanation seems very similar to his explanation of the *purposive* dimensions of the use of music. While there can be overlap between these different functions – music can be expressive, effective, *and* purposive, Pratt's claim that music's purposive function is seen in its ability to influence behavior or

ideas and his claim that music's instrumental function is seen in its utilization to move publics doesn't seem to me to be all that different.

While the above discussions are useful in illuminating the potential political functions of music, it is Pratt's more narrow discussion of music's ideological uses that best clarifies the scope of the present study. Pratt argues that music messages fall somewhere along a left/right ideological continuum. On the right end of this continuum, we find *conservative/hegemonic* music used to support the maintenance of the status quo, "the existing relations and distribution of power and values in a society" and the "existing and established traditions, institutions, and 'way of life'" (Pratt 1990, p. 9). On the other end of this continuum we find *emancipatory* music that is used to "challenge dominant institutions" (Pratt 1990, p. 14). I must note that, based on Pratt's explanation of music's ideological uses and his explanation of music as political behavior, we can see that music can be both conservative/hegemonic *and* political in nature. For example, songs with patriotic themes support tradition while at the same time are *effective* in that they can influence the ideas and behaviors of audiences listening to them. As I stated earlier, my aim is to examine the extent to which popular rap music addresses political issues that are important to the Hip Hop Generation. Because, as you will see later, these issues challenge dominant understandings of the social and political order, it should be understood that the focus of my research is on *emancipatory* political rap music.

Black Music as a Reflection of Black Life

To the poor, I pour it on in metaphors

Not Bluffin', it's nothin' we ain't did before.

- Public Enemy "Prophets of Rage"

In *Black Noise* (1994), Tricia Rose opens the chapter on the politics of Black cultural expression with a brief examination of the above Public Enemy song lyric. While some have suggested that rap music is the "last" (only remaining) voice of Black people in America, as "arguably the most significant form of counterhegemonic art in the black community over the last 20 years" (Neal 1999, p. 136) it is also the "last" (most recent) voice of Blacks in America. By no means, however, is it the first. Rose points out that the lyrical passage "It's nothin' we ain't did before" is a recognition by Public Enemy rapper Chuck D of the "long history of black cultural subversion and social critique in music and performance" (Rose 1994, p. 99) – resistance that emerged as a response to the similar social situation of generations of Blacks living in a white supremacist society.

While it might be inaccurate to suggest that the past subordinate social location of Blacks in America is the same as their current subordinate social location, it would be equally inaccurate to suggest that they are not comparable. No doubt there have been huge transformations in both how race is understood and in racial politics over the last couple centuries, but as Winant (2004) explains, these changes have been marked with, at worst, the same goal of domination and, at least, the same resulting racial inequalities. Centuries of slavery gave way to abolition and emancipation …and Jim Crow disempowerment. Decades of sharecropping, "separate but equal" (or rather "separate"), and mass lynchings gave way to the "great migration" of Southern Blacks to the to

prosperous industrial North…and the creation of largely black urban ghettos. White racism weakened during the post-World War II "racial break" – described by Winant as "the most significant challenge to white supremacy that had been mounted since the rise of Europe a half-millennium earlier" – as anticolonial and antiracist movements strengthened and worldwide demographic shifts led to a browning and yellowing of US citizens, both of which set the stage for the Civil Rights movement. Yet, Winant argues, the Civil Rights movement took a number of "accomodationist" stances by 1) failing to push for more sweeping policy that would actually transform the social structure of race and racism and 2) accepting that the movement's antagonists only acceded to some of the more "moderate" movement demands.

So, while understandings of race and racial politics changed drastically, the underlying objective of domination remained intact. Scott (1990) is not only mindful of the ability of subordinate groups to resist domination in indirect ways, but also suggests that this resistance may share similar characteristics over time so long as larger social structure also shares similar characteristics. He notes, "To the degree structures of domination can be demonstrated to operate in comparable ways, they will (other things equal) elicit reactions and patterns of resistance that are also broadly comparable." (Scott 1990, p. xi).

What one can expect, then, is that the critical and subversive musical performances of Blacks living in America will also be comparable in a number of ways. Given the past and present subordinate social location of Black Americans, producers of social critiques from within this population have had to be mindful of the setting in which these performances are carried out. Or as Jones puts it...

> "The most expressive Negro music of any given period will be an exact reflection of what the Negro himself is. It will be a portrait of the Negro in America at that particular time. Who he thinks he is, what he thinks America or the world to be, given the circumstances, prejudices, and delights of that particular America. Negro music and Negro life in America were always the result of a reaction to, and an adaptation of, whatever America Negroes were given or could secure for themselves." (Jones 1963, p. 137)

It is also important to note that, historically, direct verbal or performative attacks by Blacks against more powerful dominant groups could have proven unwise and reckless, likely resulting in swift punishment for those who outwardly dissent. Shortly, I will provide examples that direct challenges to white supremacy are met with "punishment" even today.

The Changing Same

An examination of Black music throughout American history should illuminate a number parallels between different styles, parallels that exist because of similarities in the social realities of Blacks throughout American history. It is important to understand that as a group, Blacks in America have not at any point in time been stripped entirely of their human agency. At the same time, though, they have never been entirely shielded from surveillance and control of dominant elites. While differences in power are much less pronounced today than they were centuries ago, these differences have waxed and waned during different historical periods. What we will likely see is that these changes in power relations have directly influenced the nature of critical political discourse, even as it pertains to the use of music.

The earliest Black music in America had its roots in West African worksongs and religious music. This music, of course, took on decidedly different forms once Blacks were brought to America. Both types were suppressed by White slave owners and "after a

time changed into other forms that weren't forbidden in contexts that were contemporary" (Jones 1963 p. 20). The music of the first generations of slaves was influenced by European secular and religious culture and, because Whites prevented slaves from practicing most of their musical traditions, this European/African "hybrid" music served as the immediate predecessors of the Black music of later generations of slaves, including the spirituals and early rural blues.

Black music would undergo even more transformations from these earliest distinctly American forms on through to the 1960s when Jones (1970) explained his concept of "The Changing Same". He argued that while the styles and sounds of Black music evolved in response to transformations in the social world, including changes in the way those in power have dominated racial minorities many "Africanisms" – African customs, philosophies, and ideas brought to America with the first generation of slaves – survived as new musics borrowed elements from older ones and made them their own (Jones 1970, Ch. 5). There aren't "new" Black styles of music. Rather, Black music changes as the Black reality changes, a reflection of the "consistent attitudes within changed contexts" of Blacks in America (Jones 1963 p. 153).

In antebellum America, music served as a way for slaves to find solace and comfort during and after working in the fields, but also served a number of the emancipatory and political functions discussed earlier. The slave folk songs and spirituals – what DuBois (1995) called "sorrow songs" and described as "the most beautiful expression of human experience this side the seas" (DuBois 1995, p. 265) were "the first cultural form of both resistance and affirmation of identity by oppressed blacks in U.S. history" (Pratt 1990, p. 53; see also Jones 1963 p. 42). Pratt remarks:

> "The spirituals suggest music may function in a profoundly utopian way, seeking to transcend the existing order. Where there are no formally organized ways of creating alternatives, music is that space, that realm of freedom only in concrete historical-sociological transformations" (Pratt 1990, p. 59).

The slave spirituals as "utopian statements" are unique on a number of levels. Slaves were typically kept from engaging in any sort of independent activity, individually or as a group, outside of those permitted by their masters. For example, the slaves, stripped of their native religions, were only allowed to openly follow Christianity, albeit a very narrow interpretation which seemed to condone the social standing of both master and slave and justify the treatment of the latter by the former. Of course, beyond the earshot of their masters, resting in their quarters during the evenings or on weekends, slaves created and communicated freely discourse where they could be openly critical of this version of the spiritual and social order.

Again, this does not mean that such social critique was not shared in the face of the powerful. The slaves used music as one way of responding to the control imposed upon them. Directly under the noses of the overseers, slaves would sing religious/Christian songs that could be interpreted as showing reverence for and submission to the God of the dominant culture, a God that seems to advocate (or at least turn a blind eye) to their plight – "proof that their socialization efforts were having desired effects" (Neal 1999, p. 38). In reality, however, they were often singing about escape to the North (my home [the North] is over Jordan [the Ohio River]!), sharing information about the Underground Railroad, revolting against and/or killing their masters, or gaining true salvation/freedom with the help of a God that was more likely to punish those who inflicted so much misery upon them. (Ellison 1989, p. 49-52). These

calls of resistance were camouflaged through the creation of “metaphoric landscapes” and use of “mystified language” (Neal 1999, p. 2), but did not only use language and the spoken word to convey messages. Neal further explains that the meanings of these songs were not simply transmitted through the narrative content of the song, but via the tonal qualities of the words themselves:

> “Denied access to the predominant instrument(s) of rhythmic (human) expression, the vocal quality of the first and second generations of Africans in the United States begin to mimic the very diversity of tones and colors that were inherent in African polyrhythms of the past. The practice of polytonal expression or polytonality, in which complex and varying meanings were conveyed via vocal tones, represents a unique process that is emblematic of the African-American experience.” (Neal 1999, p. 38).

The use of the disguised messages found in the spirituals was one way that the slaves could create an additional social space wherein they had the power to denounce their oppression in the immediate presence of their oppressors, “take as much control over their living and working conditions as possible”, and “spur…their determination to keep their spirits free from demeaning domination” (Ellison 1989, p. 49). Slaves also had to be active in creating these spaces, a process Scott describes as the “work of negation” (Scott 1990, p. 108). This example of human agency set the stage for the development of social spaces like the jook-joint and honky-tonk (and later, I would argue, the earliest hip-hop park and club jams) which “re-created the covert social spaces” that “afforded safety, sustenance, and subversion among the Black masses in the Deep South”. For decades thereafter, the music that emerged from these locations of the Black Public Sphere became “integral to the formation of narratives of social and political resistance to the African-American Diaspora” (Neal 1999, p. 2)

Neal (1999) explains the process by which the breakdown of slavery and "emancipation" of Blacks created the conditions for the emergence of a Black Public Sphere that included social sites where emancipatory music could flourish. With the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War came a new legal status for Blacks in America, one that offered them "full" rights. While Blacks were emancipated on paper, their social status changed little. They continued to be denied access to white social spaces, from public schools to places of business, and were often threatened with or experienced physical violence when they attempted to enter them. Out of necessity came the creation of covert, yet social, Black Public Spaces to counter this constraint and provide alternatives to the isolation that came with it (Neal 1999, p. 4).

A few of these more notable spaces where Blacks could find support could be found within institutions where music was at the forefront of the social experience. For example, Neal (1999) suggests that the Black church was the "quintessential institution" around which the Black Public Sphere emerged before and after the Civil War (see also Jones 1963 p. 48). While Black slaves were critical of the brand of Christianity being forced upon them by their White owners, many did accept some of its basic tenets – namely, the promise of eternal damnation for the(ir) wicked (masters) and the promise of eternal salvation for the righteous (slaves) – because they coincided with a version of American democracy that they sought, one where "all 'men'" were created and treated equal. While the slaves were covertly singing about freedom from white domination, the formation of the Black church after the Civil War allowed for a site where Blacks could openly sing the same songs (and openly critique American "democracy" as well) and "escape, momentarily, from a subhuman existence" (Miller & Skipper, Jr. 1968, p. 30).

Neal (1999) remarks that there were divisions within the newly emerging Black Public Sphere. He contends that the Black church "privileged the sensibilities of the liberal bourgeois" and functioned as the "formalized and public expression of African-American political and social sensibilities" (Neal 1999, p. 6). Jones (1963) argues that this schism became wider in the post-bellum South, a time when, he claims, "the Negro…stood further away from the mainstream of American society than at any other time" (Jones 1963, p. 59). Not only did Blacks continue to be segregated from Whites as a result of Reconstruction and Jim Crow, but lower-class Blacks grew further away from many middle- and upper-class Blacks attempting to assimilate into the larger White society. The status of the Black church as the definitive site of the Black public sphere diminished as the larger population of lower-class Blacks resisted bourgeois criticism and authority and attempted to create social sites that privileged working and lower class sensibilities, hidden from both the Black church and the larger White public sphere. What emerged were informal and "underground" jook-joints, honky-tonks, and after-hours clubs – spaces where musicians refrained from imitating the music of the Black church, which itself had begun to imitate European musical forms, and instead borrowed more readily from the African call-and-response and shouts creating an early version of what we today know as the blues (Jones 1963, Ch. 5; see also Pratt 1990, Ch 4).

Soon after "Emancipation" gave poor Southern Blacks the "freedom" to compete economically with poor Whites, Jim Crow stacked the deck against them. Many Blacks were forced to travel across the South in search of work, often times alone, navigating the social terrain as an individual as opposed to part of a slave collective. Being required to participate in a (Western) social reality that demands individuals look inward, Jones

(1963) argues, directly influenced the focus of Black secular music to change from that which highlighted the "exploits of the social unit" to that which drew attention to "the life of the individual and his individual trials and successes on the earth" (Jones 1963, p. 66). Coupled with the increased leisure time of many post-slavery Blacks and the growing use of instruments like the guitar and harmonica, the blues increased in popularity over the course of the latter decades of the 19th century. In addition, primitive jazz or "instrumental blues" became popular as Blacks began mastering European instruments like brass horns and the piano.

Early blues and jazz soon became popular in Southern cities, but it too was transformed as a result of control from above. In New Orleans, for example, light-skinned Black "Creoles" were allowed to play jazz-like instrumental tunes (with a decidedly heavy European influence) and entertain in public spaces even before Emancipation. Shortly before the turn of the century, however, de jure segregation put a number of these entertainers, many of which who were working for whites, out of work. Blacks were divided – again – along class/status lines and these early instrumental performers separated themselves from the growing number of blues performers that were beginning to play in the urban saloons and jook-joints. While divided, Jim Crow now required that both groups be in close physical proximity to each other (and away from whites), which led to the formation of more modern jazz as the European-sounding "instrumental blues" blended with classic blues.

This class schism continued even as newly developed Black public spaces began to emerge in cities of the urban North – first Chicago and, later, cities like Saint Louis, Kansas City and New York. "The 'space' that the city provided", Jones explains "was not

only horizontal; it could make strata, and disparities grew within the group itself" (Jones 1963, p. 121). When poorer Southern Blacks migrated in the early 20th century, they brought with them the same blues and "dirty" jazz that was met with disapproval by the Southern Black bourgeois and lighter skinned musicians. The response by the emerging middle-class of Northern Blacks was similarly unwelcoming. The separation of this segment of the Black Public Sphere allowed Blacks to continue their critiques of the social world, though changes in their social realities resulted in changes to the objects of criticism. Where "country blues" criticized inequitable treatment by slave owners and landlords, the "urban blues" brought to light issues concerning unemployment and ghetto living conditions (Ellison 1989, p. 3).

During the first decades of 1900s, what became known as the "classic blues" had flourished (albeit underground) in the Northern cities, spurred in part because of the attractive mobility narratives found within. By the 1920s, blues and, especially, its Europeanized offshoots like jazz and ragtime had become increasingly popular, helping to spur the development of the recorded music industry which, in turn, helped propel the radio industry as white businessmen began to realize the commercial potential of narrowcasting to niche Black markets and Black-culture voyeurs (Neal, 1999). George (1988) notes that during the "Roaring Twenties" and throughout the span of the Interwar Period, jazz and "white jazz", or swing, became so popular among Whites that they were actually seen by their fans as "white music". It didn't hurt that much of the earliest recorded jazz came from white bands. Most, however, considered it "race music" and despite its increasing popularity it was met with still more criticism from above. White cultural critics especially and Whites more generally branded jazz as "vulgar, filthy, and

suggestive". Black elites, ever aware of the images of blackness made visible to whites, agreed and felt that such displays by Black jazz performers "hindered the advancement of the race" (George, 1988 p. 8).

The Great Depression and World War II put a halt to the success of "race" recordings (and, indeed, much of all recorded music), but relative prosperity following the war put radios in a large number of lower-class Black homes allowing popular Black music – now repackaged as "rhythm & blues" – to thrive as this segment of the population gained access to the most current releases. Initially, R&B remained "underground"…popular, but still outside of the larger commercial market for swing music which, by now, had "submerged all the most impressive acquisitions from Afro-American musical tradition" (Jones 1963, p. 181). Following in the footsteps of the shout singers of decades past, R&B artists, in part because of the increasing use of electric instruments, were as loud and as harsh as ever. Repulsed by the increasingly watered-down (white) sound of swing and other popular Black genres, artists began producing music "that had more than an accidental implication of social upheaval associated with it" (Jones 1963, p. 188).

Bebop (and hard-bop, a further deviation from mainstream Black music), for example, took on a "willfully harsh" and "anti-assimilationist" sound – it was "at a certain level of consideration, a reaction by young musicians against the sterility and formality of Swing as it moved to become a formal part of the mainstream American culture (Jones 1970, p. 16). Bebop and R&B musicians were "reclaiming the critical edge of black communal expressions from the arms of mass consumer culture" and "recreating the vitality of the covert spaces of the rural South and 20th century urban North" as they

toured the Chitlin' Circuit, a network of venues that provided the only outlet for Black musicians playing this brash new sound. A product of the now-large Black urban underclass, bebop was an expression of "objective cynicism" toward an America in which they played an integral part (economically and, more recently, militarily), but in which they were still second class citizens, unable even to use their relatively greater wealth to "buy…a way out of the huge Negro ghettoes of the cities" (Jones 1963, p. 178). Opponents, once again, "descended on the new music with a fanatical fury" (Jones 1963, p. 188). Members of the emerging Black middle class where quick to express their disdain. And for the first time, white "middle-brow" music critics and writers were voicing their negative opinions of bebop not simply because it was a Black music, but because of the sounds and the content of the music. They failed, Jones argues, to examine the music outside of "white middle-brow standards of excellence" and question bebop's "social and cultural intent" or the reasons why the particular sounds and content existed at all (Jones 1970, Ch. 1).

As the Civil Rights movement began gaining steam and the political terrain began to change in the 1950s and 1960s, so did the nature of Black popular music. During this time Black DJ's and Black radio managed grab the attention of a sizable portion of white youth by playing "electric blues" or rock & roll. However, while rock & roll went on to dominate the airwaves for decades following, it did so only after white artists began performing "covers" of rock & roll songs written by black artists and, later, became successful at emulating the style more generally. As George puts it: "...rock became, after 1965, white music made by white people with the occasional black old-timer thrown in" (George 1988, p. 93).

At the same time, attacks against Black leaders, artists and intellectuals led to a reemergence of the Black church as a dominant (and safe) institution of Black expression. In turn, gospel music fused with rhythm & blues, linking the spiritual with the secular to form what would later be called “soul” music. Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s Black artists on record labels like Motown and Stax found great success singing slick and “soulful” pop songs. But by the latter part of the decade, soul music had undergone a transformation that mirrored the changing and increasingly political rhetoric of the Black public sphere - “as the organized struggles for African-American empowerment intensified...the black popular music tradition began to convey the urgency of its historical moment”(Neal 1999, p. 62).

During the late 1960s artists such as Curtis Mayfield, Aretha Franklin, and James Brown released Black protest music to both critical and commercial success. Neal (1999) argues that this segment of the Black Arts Movement culminated in the release of Marvin Gaye's album “What's Going On” in 1971. The reign of the Black Arts Movement would be brief. “What's Going On” was released in the wake of seemingly unrestrained state repression against a number Black political groups, exemplified by COINTELPRO's (FBI's counter-intelligence program) surveillance of Martin Luther King and its infiltration into (and attempts at destroying) the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party. In addition, the years that followed saw a rise in corporate involvement in Black artistic expression and an ensuing depoliticization of popular Black music and art. That the content of Gaye's 1973 album “Let's Get It On” was overtly sexual and almost devoid of the political messages found on his album released just two years prior only makes sense given the larger social context, a “logical

manifestation[s] of the effects of pervasive state-sponsored violence aimed, successfully, at destabilizing the most radical elements of the black protest movement" (Neal 1999, p. 66).

The increasing influence of corporate radio on Black music led to the beginning of what George (1988) described as the "death" of rhythm and blues and the reign of the "crossover" artist. Major labels managed to woo a number of the top soul and R&B artists of the 1960s from the independent labels on which they'd become famous. Disco would be the nail in the coffin and by the early 1980's only a select few "urban contemporary" (Black) artists were garnering commercial success. Most of America, however, was unaware that for nearly a decade teens in New York were shaping the contours of an artistic subculture that featured its own brand of musical expression. Hip hop culture gave birth to rap music, a genre that, in the span of only a few years, would become a worldwide phenomenon and provide a platform for a Black (and Brown) underclass to tell their story – a story that had fallen on deaf ears for the greater part of the last decade.

Black Noise – The Rise of Hip Hop

Tricia Rose (1994) has suggested that the primary context for rap music's creation lies within Afrodiasporic artistic and expressive traditions, the development of hip hop culture more generally, and the unique urban context of New York City during the 1960s and 1970s. Many of the sounds of rap are similar to and can be rooted in West African forms of musical expression (Rose, 1994; Keyes, 2002; George, 1998). Words are recited in a poetic fashion with the cadence of the rapper's speech set to the heavy instrumental

rhythms. Melody takes a back seat to drum beats, while singing is usually reserved as accompaniment. Rap is sometimes used to tell long stories or cautionary tales, a practice that some have traced back to West African griot storytellers. The African and early African American practice of “playing the dozens”, where men boast about their masculinity and trade insults, today takes the form of the “battle rap” where rappers verbally spar to show their rap skills. “Toasting” or chanting rhythmically over instrumentals is a practice can be traced back to early African-American slaves. More recently (but *before* hip hop), toasting over electronic instrumentals became common in Jamaica as well, suggesting a common African origin. Hip hop’s connection with Jamaica is not simply a sidenote.

Clive Cambpell, or DJ Kool Herc, is seen by many as the “Father of Hip Hop”. Chang (2005) goes in-depth to explain how Herc started it all. Herc had moved to New York from Jamaica in the late 1960s and brought with him knowledge of the loud stereo systems he’d seen at street parties in Kingston. In the early 1970s, Herc became a local legend, known for throwing the wildest and loudest house parties in New York. With Herc’s help, all of the artistic aspects of what collectively became known as hip hop began to come together. For example, B-boy collectives, or “breakdancers (which also borrowed heavily, but indirectly, from African dance [Rose, 1994]), had been forming for a while and would come to his parties to show off their dancing skills.

Other “hip hop” DJ’s gained in popularity as well. Grandmaster Flash became a master at using two turntables and a mixer to play a drum break on one turntable and mix it with the same drum break from the same record on the other turntable, extending the break indefinitely and giving the b-boys a platform for their dance battles. Later, Afrika

Bambaataa – an ex-gang leader who formed the Zulu Nation, a collective of Black youth brought together to bring positivity (often through music) to a once gang-torn New York – became known for playing the most obscure and unique records of all the early DJs. As a result, the New York gang members who had "tagged" their names all across the city in order to mark their gang turf slowly turned to this new subculture and soon became "graffiti artists" whose work was featured prominently at hip hop parties. Rapping appeared later, almost out of necessity. Many of these hip hop parties were so large that DJs would regularly use the microphone to make announcements, calm the crowd, etc., but it was Grandmaster Flash's mastery of the turntables that created the first hip hop rapper. Flash's lightning fast hands and unique technique – he'd often mix records behind his back or with his feet – would often stall the party as the crowd would stop to watch. For that reason, he employed Cowboy, later a member of Flash's "Furious Five Emcees" to jump on the microphone and get the party back in gear through raps, chants, and call-and-response.

These parties continued gaining in popularity of the 1970s. However, other forces besides a simple love of the music was pushing youth to become involved in hip hop. For many, it was the only option they had. Many have outlined New York's urban landscape during this period and have suggested the role it played in the rise of hip hop and rap (Hager, 1984; Rose, 1994; Toop, 2000; Keyes, 2002; Chang, 2005). In the 1950s government funding was approved for the Cross-Bronx Expressway. This expressway aimed to provide a route between New Jersey and Long Island and directly *through* heavily working-class areas of the Bronx. By the late 1960s, many working class Blacks and Hispanics had relocated south of the expressway in the South Bronx. By this time

manufacturing jobs had relocated from this area as well. By the mid-1970s the deindustrialized South Bronx had lost hundreds of thousands of jobs, income dipped to alarmingly low levels and youth unemployment had topped 50 percent. While slumlords were taking control of deteriorating housing projects (often having them burned to the ground so they could collect insurance money), post-Great Society funding and services to aid those left in the aftermath had disappeared. While the government and the outside world had become engaged in "politics of abandonment" (Chang, 2005) of the Black and Brown youth of New York City, hip hop helped lead many of them through the rough times.

The rise of rap was slow going over most of the next decade. While rappers became more prominent at hip hop parties during the last few years of the 1970s, few thought it was something that could be recorded and sold for profit. Only after Sugarhill Gang sold over a million copies of the second rap record ever made in 1979 did a few major record companies thought it would be a good idea to invest in rap. Even after Kurtis Blow and Run-D.M.C. were signed to major labels and received gold records, breakdancing and hip hop style became global, and Hollywood produced movies about rap and hip hop (Beat Streat, Krush Groove, Breakin) many were convinced it was still a passing fad. But by the end of the 1980s, rap albums and singles were regularly receiving gold and platinum sales plaques and artists and groups were performing in front of sold out crowds around the world.

Along with the rise in the success of rap music came controversy. While major labels became more eager to sign and make money off of popular rappers over the course of the 1980s, others were set on ridding the world of rap completely. By the end of the

decade numerous artists were embroiled in battles over censorship. 2 Live Crew, for example, faced opposition from government groups, had their album banned in Florida, and were arrested for indecency after performing one of their X-rated hits on stage (Rose, 1994). N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude) were criticized for releasing the song Fuck The Police and later appeared on a Justice Department "watch list" alongside 6 other rap groups and solo artists accused of advocating violence against law enforcement (Pollack, 1990). Ice Cube became the target of a nationwide boycott for releasing music littered with references to support of the use of violence to battle social injustice (Chang, 2005). Immediately following the huge success of a number of lighthearted rap releases in the early 1990s (including some by Vanilla Ice, a white rapper with a fabricated gangster past), "gangsta rap" exploded in popularity among fans of all ages and colors. In the larger culture "gangsta rap" became a catch-all for all violent rap music, failing to differentiate between that which celebrated gang lifestyles, heterosexual conquest, and conspicuous materialism and that which called for violent revolution against oppressive forces.

During the time all of these *multiple* "voices" were emerging from within rap music, many of the rappers and authors cited at the beginning of this paper were making claims that it was the last political "voice" Hip Hop Generation youth. However, with the existence of these myriad styles I was left to wonder about the strength of the political arm of rap music. I was curious if the strength of rap's political "voice" had changed over time, especially considering the controversy surrounding some of the more political releases. Because no empirical research had been carried out to provide a clear measure

of political rap's success, I took it upon myself to answer these questions with the present research.

Chapter 3 – Theory

The previous chapter provides a number of examples of how differences in power have shaped the social realities of Black Americans which, in turn, has shaped the nature of social critique through music. The present chapter outlines a few key theoretical perspectives that allow for a better understanding of how social critique is carried out by subordinate groups. The first section details Scott's explanation of the "art" of resisting domination through the creation and communication of critical discourse about inequalities. Examples of music as critical discourse are drawn from the previous chapter and used to illustrate these ideas.

Differences in power can also influence the manner in which we are able to understand these discourses. In the next sections I discuss theoretical ideas that are useful in shaping how I will carry out my own research on the way popular rap music has (or has not) addressed important political issues. First, I explain some of the basic tenets of standpoint theory. This is done in order to highlight the role social location plays in influencing the "world-view" of subordinate groups. This discussion of world-view provides a lead for the next section, where I attempt to outline the contours of the political discourse of the Hip Hop Generation. Lastly, explain how the points of this agenda can be used to guide my research.

Hidden Transcripts

The history of all hitherto existing Black American music is a history of struggle to create spaces wherein the music itself is allowed to be heard. Regardless of their subordinate position and despite the constraints of legal slavery and/or

discrimination Blacks have still succeeded in communicating discourse outside the immediate control of dominant groups. This, of course, includes the promulgation of the emancipatory discourse upon which the present research is focused. Scott's (1990) work on public and hidden transcripts illuminate the manner in which this occurs.

Scott argues that there are four varieties of political discourse among subordinates, the first of which is the *public transcript*, or the "open" and "official" interaction between subordinates and those who dominate. The public transcript is typically guided by a number of "theatrical imperatives" that exist to affirm patterns of domination between groups of unequal power. These "rituals of power" are performances wherein each group openly demonstrates its dominance or consent. These displays, Scott suggests, are strategic: even if the public performance of each group seems to suggest that the group supports its location within the unequal power structure, it is more immediately in their best interest to act in such a way. If the dominant group were to publicly act in ways that contradict its claims to power, the legitimacy of its authority and possibly its safety would be compromised. And, as mentioned, subordinate groups risk facing negative consequences for revealing more critical aspects of the hidden transcript in a public setting, but also increase their chances of receiving help or perks from the dominant group if they openly agree with aspects of the public transcript.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the public transcript is the "offstage" or *hidden transcript* that is communicated among members of the dominant or subordinate group and behind the back of the other. Whereas each group shares the public transcript, a hidden transcript emerges *within* each group and never comes in contact with the hidden transcript of the other. While the public transcript is "safe" for subordinate groups

to engage in because it does not give rise to open conflict, the hidden transcript is also "safe" for the same reasons – if criticisms of dominant groups by subordinate groups remain unknown to the dominant group, political unrest remains unlikely.

Though subordinate groups may develop a "hidden" discourse that is critical of dominant groups and larger social structures, this does not mean this discourse is never spoken in the face of power. On the contrary, subordinate groups often engage in a third type of political discourse wherein criticisms of the dominant group are expressed openly…but in disguised form. An "infrapolitics of the powerless" (Scott 1990, p. xiii & 183) develops as subordinate groups use folk tales, jokes, theatrical performances and *song* loaded with hidden meaning and masked intentions to critique power, even when in close proximity to those groups that dominate them. When Chuck D states that he "pour(s) it on in metaphors" he is highlighting the need for Blacks to cloak their criticism of those in power with seemingly ambiguous or innocuous words or actions. Lastly, there are occasions where the hidden transcript is expressed openly *and* undisguised - instances of open defiance that "carr(y) the force of symbolic declaration of war" and create a window through which we can view those "rare and dangerous moments in power relations" (Scott 1990, p. 10).

Scott insists that the nature of the content of emancipatory discourse, as well as the nature of the social spaces within which this discourse is shared, is unique to the particular culture and history of the subordinate group creating such discourse. Simply put, political transcripts are *social* products. Whether subordinate groups voice their criticisms openly and explicitly, openly but in disguise, or only among other subordinates is a direct result of power relations between dominant and subordinate groups. The

greater the domination over subordinate groups, the more likely subordinate groups will have to work to create social spaces that are shielded from control and surveillance of those in power. The greater the extent of domination over subordinate groups, the more likely these groups will have to utilize linguistic disguises and coded language when communicating social critique. On the other hand, more equal power relations are likely to result in the hidden transcript becoming more public, more overt, and more honest.

Clear examples of Scott's points are found throughout the preceding chapter. Again, while American slaves showed deference to their masters in day-to-day interactions, emancipatory music was sung in slave quarters, "hidden" and beyond earshot of their masters. "Disguised" forms of emancipatory music were sung openly and within feet of their masters. The blues flourished after artists began to utilize live music venues tucked away in increasingly Black urban ghettos, "hidden" from white audiences. Gospel, and then soul, emerged only after the Black discourse was relegated to the Black church "hidden" from the prying white eyes of the state. And, of course, this state repression itself was, in part, a response to the fact that Blacks had begun to engage in *open* and *undisguised* political dissent.

Rose (1994), citing Scott, contends that elements of rap also function as hidden, open and disguised transcripts. She argues that song lyrics contain not only outwardly emancipatory content, but also political messages disguised by slang (1994, p. 100). Interestingly, she argues that rap music, when played loudly on radios and car stereos, can also function as a *symbolic* political gesture, regardless of the music's content; by making a choice about where and how they can say things, in the face of opposition, they are essentially performing a political act (Rose 1994, p. 236). That rap music contains

both open and disguised messages as well as emancipatory and hegemonic messages makes the application of Scott's ideas extremely complex. In addition, any analysis of rap music must also take into consideration the fact that in 30 years it has grown from an art form relegated to the slums of the urban ghetto to a wildly popular commodifed art form listened to and supported by millions of people around the world in both dominant and subordinate classes. The social realities of the Hip Hop Generation, as well as the power relations between it and dominant groups, have changed as well. Because, as Scott suggests, discourse among a subordinate group is unique to historical and cultural realities, then *changes* to these realities should result in changes to the discourse. This logic should extend to emancipatory discourse, including that found within particular art forms such as rap music. Exploring these possible changes to emancipatory discourse is part of my aim with this research. Before doing this, though, I must first find a way to separate emancipatory themes from the larger discourse that emerges from the Hip Hop Generation.

Standpoint Theory

As an analytical tool, standpoint theory provides insights into why and how subordinate groups develop a worldview that shapes their discourses. Standpoint theorists argue that "group location in hierarchical power relations produce(s) shared challenges for individuals in those groups" (Collins 1998, p. 201). Standpoints do not simply emerge because members of a group share a particular demographic; rather, the shared challenges of members of a subordinate group – challenges which are a *product* of their shared social locations – help create "similar angles of vision" which produces a "group standpoint" about the world around them. Their location is a starting point from which

political perspectives develop out of group discussion and deliberation (Hartsock 1983, p. 246; Collins 2000, p. 260). Essentially, the experiences of any group within a society are not universal and, as such, understandings of that society are also not universal. Instead, a multitude of narratives about the nature of social reality develop as members of subordinate groups engage in dialogue with each other about their shared experiences.

Hartsock argues that because dominant groups have the power to structure the relations in which all members of a society must participate, their visions of reality are partial and distorted (Hartsock 1983, p. 232). Dominant groups are unable to "know the everyday world through the particularities of (subordinate group member's) local practices and activities" (Smith 1990, p. 28) and, as such, the claims they make about the nature of the world around them often conflict with realities that subordinate groups endure. It is argued, then, that in order to speak about issues unique to a particular subordinate group you are required to have knowledge of the locally and historically situated social conditions that shape the group's worldviews. Because this knowledge is unavailable to dominant groups, only *members* of subordinate groups can serve as legitimate spokespersons for the experiences of the subordinate group as a whole. As Smith, referring to women, puts it: "we (plural) are the authoritative speakers of our (plural) experience"(Smith 1990, p. 28).

Some note that care should be taken to refrain from painting a picture of subordinate group experiences as homogeneous and without diversity. hooks, for example, points out the failure of many elite white feminists to acknowledge the "racist discrimination, exploitation, and oppression of multi-ethnic women by white women" which "made it impossible for the two groups to feel they shared common interests or

political concerns" (hooks 2000, p. 50). In order to correct this, Collins (1998) calls for the use of frameworks that take into consideration *multiple* worldviews located within subordinate groups. This is *not* a call for examination of *individuals* who occupy multiple subordinate social locations or an examination of how the intersectionality of these locations leads them to create different meanings about their own experiences in different contexts. Rather, it is a call for an understanding of how intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc. shape any *group's* experience across different social contexts. This approach allows you to see, for example, that white women often assign less salience to race than Black women. This is because knowledge of the social conditions that shape a *Black* woman's worldview is unavailable to white women, even if both groups face similar challenges because of their location as women in a hierarchical society (Collins 1998, p. 208).

Toward a Hip Hop Generation Standpoint

As editor of The Source magazine in the 1990's, Bakari Kitwana (2002) began using the term "Hip Hop Generation" as a label for Black Americans born between 1965 and 1984. As a group, he argues, they have shared experiences that have created a specific set of attitudes, values, and understandings about the world – a generational standpoint, if you will, that differs greatly from that of their parents. While the Civil Rights Generation formed their values and identities around "traditional" institutions such as family and the church, today's Black youth are more likely to look to global images of (American) blackness in film, TV, and especially music. Globalization and corporate media conglomeration allowed for a small segment of Black artists to produce and spread their messages and rap music and hip hop culture where at the forefront…but this was not

without its costs. Kitwana suggests that "the global corporate structure that gave young Blacks a platform was the driving force behind our plight" (Kitwana 2002, p. 11). Globalization also played a hand in pulling many manufacturing and industrial jobs from the central cities where a large percentage of Blacks were located and shipping them overseas. That this was followed by increasing Black unemployment, an explosion of drug trafficking and gang activity, and a subsequent increase in violent crime within these cities should come as no surprise. These realities, coupled with increasingly harsh drug policies (from mandatory minimum sentences to 3-strikes laws), anti-loitering measures, curfews, the creation of gang databases and other aspects of a "politics of containment" were the catalyst for this new worldview (Kitwana 2002; Chang 2005).

It is with this in mind that Collins asks: "How might coming of age during the period from Black Power to hip hop shape the political responses of this generation toward racism, nationalism, and feminism?" (Collins 2004, p.5). In addition to Collins and Kitwana, a number of authors have noted the failure of the state and, more importantly, the Civil Rights generation to provide leadership and assistance to post-Civil Rights youth. Dyson remarks:

> "We (*members of the Civil Rights Generation*) have reneged on our responsibility as black adults to keep the culture vital by making it relevant to contemporary struggles. That means translating the terms of past struggle into present action. Instead, older blacks often nostalgically rehash romantic memories of the past, failing to acknowledge just how remarkably similar our failures and prospects for triumph are to those of the hip-hop generation" (Dyson 2004, p. 319).

Sullivan suggests that today's Black youth have lost confidence in the older generation and believe "traditional Black leaders lack the capacity, desire, and ingenuity to address

the contemporary crises that destabilize Black working-class life and destroy Black neighborhoods and families" (Sullivan 1996, p. 7)

In response, Bynoe (2004) asks "Who Shall Lead Us?". She does not seem to have an answer about who *will* lead, though she does provide some arguments about who likely will *not.* While she recognizes that rap music and rappers more specifically can play a role in Hip Hop Generation politics, she's unwilling to place the burden of leadership squarely on their shoulders. She writes "breakdancing, rapping, and protesting are great attention-getters for a cause, however these actions do not constitute politics or political action" (Bynoe 2004, p. vii) and suggests that "the leadership to come from the post-civil rights generation must be able to do more than rhyme about problem (sic)" (Bynoe 2004, p. xi). Neal (2002) is a little more optimistic about the role of rap/hip hop *and* Civil Rights era leaders in contemporary Black politics. The key, he suggests, is to bridge the gap. He asserts that Hip Hop Generation thinkers and intellectuals - what he labels the "post-soul intelligentsia" - might be "the black community's best intellectual hope to bridge the widening gap between yesterday's civil rights marcher and today's hip-hop thug" (Neal 2002, p. 104).

Though I tend to disagree with Bynoe's comment about art being apolitical (and believe the aforementioned authors who have written about music's political functions would disagree as well) I think her statement that art is *not enough* is important. The unifying theme between Bynoe and Neal seems to be the suggestion that members of the Hip Hop Generation must not look to others for guidance, but develop a political agenda *amongst themselves*. Kitwana (2002) observes that a Hip Hop Generation standpoint may have existed, but by the turn of the century had not been articulated into a concrete

political agenda. There *were* organizations in place working to address a number of political issues, many of which drew support from rappers and hip hop artists, but most were created with a narrow goal in mind. For example, the “Rap The Vote” campaign of 2000 and the “Vote or Die” campaign of 2004 were organized to increase voter turnout during important election years. In 2001, Def Jam Records CEO and hip hop entrepreneur Russell Simmons created the Hip Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN), an organization “dedicated to harnessing the cultural relevance of Hip-Hop music to serve as a catalyst for education advocacy and other societal concerns fundamental to the empowerment of youth”. The HSAN addresses broader political issues than the campaigns for voting, evidenced by a 15-point “What We Want” program on their group’s website (HSAN 2007). Still, the HSAN and other political organizations do not claim to be promoting a political agenda for the Hip Hop Generation as a whole. In addition, Baker notes that the HSAN “lacks the necessary 'hood first' strategy needed to truly empower the Hip-Hop generation”. Noting the number of wealthy entertainment industry stars that make up the HSAN's organizing body he asks “How can you really know what's goin on in the hood if you live in a million-dollar house in the suburbs?” (Baker 2004, p. 216). The National Hip Hop Political Convention (NHHPC), on the other hand, was organized with the more narrow focus of creating a political agenda, but *also* attempted to do so by utilizing strategies that, I suggest, were more successful at putting the “hood first”.

The NHHPC was the brainchild of a group of Hip Hop Generation “activists, artists, educators, entrepreneurs, journalists and civic leaders” (including Kitwana and Jeff Chang) who began meeting in the spring of 2003 with the expressed purpose of

developing “a plan to funnel the political and cultural power of the hip hop generation into mainstream political activities”. The means by which they chose to do this was the establishment of a bi-annual convention “to develop, endorse and vote on a political agenda for the Hip Hop Generation” (NHHPC, 2006). The first convention was held in Newark, NJ in June of 2004. Including 600 delegates from 20 different states, there were 6,000 in attendance. The 3-day convention schedule included artistic/entertainment performances, training and workshops (sessions were titled “Criminal Justice 101, Media 101, Money 201, Organizing 302 etc.), and town hall meetings. On the final day, delegates met to put forth a Hip Hop Generation Political Agenda. After more than 4 hours of deliberation over the merits of roughly 40 proposed amendments, a final 5-point agenda was ratified. The points of this agenda center around issues of 1) Education, 2) Economic Justice, 3) Criminal Justice, 4) Health and Wellness and 5) Human Rights. These 5 issues are more thoroughly defined by amendments listed under each (See Appendix A). The 2006 convention in Chicago followed in the same manner and ended with the reconvention of delegates to discuss strategies for implementing the agenda. Plans for the 2008 convention in Las Vegas were discussed as well.

The formation of Black political agendas is not something new. Even prior to the abolition of slavery, there are instances of groups coming together to draft similar agendas on “the state of Black America”. Bynoe (2004) provides to readers a brief account of these occasions. She argues that the first Black agenda was David Walker’s “Appeal…”, a petition against slavery and a call to revolution by oppressed Africans worldwide. In 1890, the National Afro American League drafted a six-point program calling for voting rights for Blacks, the creation of anti-lynching laws, and the like – a

program that, Bynoe argues, was the precedent for the principles espoused by the Niagara Movement and, later, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The 1960s saw the creation of two influential agendas: Adam Clayton Powel's "Marching Blacks…", a position paper outlining 15 steps to Black power and the Black Panther Party's 10 point plan for rectifying injustices faced by Blacks. In 1972, thousands of delegates from grassroots and established organizations nationwide convened in Gary, Indiana for the National Black Political Assembly (also known as the Gary Convention) and developed yet another Black political agenda.

Bynoe (2004) provides a number of reasons why each group failed to reach many of their stated goals. In most cases these agendas served simply as "rhetorical tools" that did not suggest any long-term strategies toward specific objectives. The Black Panther's plan faltered after the group began to fracture internally (thanks, in part, to infiltration by the FBI). The Gary Convention's main goal was not the development of a political agenda, but the establishment of a Black political party. Bynoe's biggest critique, however, is that most of these agendas "failed to incorporate, in any fashion, the opinions of Black people". Without any sort of representative input from everyday citizens these organizations failed to garner any widespread support. This, I argue, is where the NHHPC differs somewhat from previous Black agendas.

The first NHHPC was completely free to the public, so long as attendees registered for the convention online. However, being involved in the agenda setting process did not actually require attending the biennial conference. Online registration also granted you access to local organizing committee meetings in cities across the United States. Each of these committees was headed by at least one of the delegates who were

involved in the actual discussions that led to the adoption of items for the 5-point agenda. And while attendees were required to pay a fee to attend the 2006 convention (and will be required to do so for the 2008 convention), I would suggest that the 2004 convention was more inclusive of everyday citizen's input in developing a political agenda than prior attempts at agenda setting. Though the success of the agenda may now depend on the strategies suggested by a limited number of members, the *initial* drafting of the agenda involved input from a group more representative of everyday Black citizens. Therefore, I suggest that the NHHPC 5-point agenda comes closer to outlining the political imperatives of the Hip Hop Generation *as a whole* and contains characteristics of a *Hip Hop Generation political standpoint*. This has important implications for the manner in which I will carry out the present research

A Hip Hop Generation Standpoint as Tool for Analysis

If the NHHPC agenda does, in fact, outline the political imperatives of the Hip Hop Generation I can use its themes to determine whether successful rap music has addressed these imperatives. This approach is markedly different from previous analyses of political rap music. For the most part, researchers have taken an inductive approach by meticulously investigating rap music already labeled "political" and then identifying its most meaningful or common themes. Perkins (1996), for example, suggests political or "message" rap falls into one of three categories: 1) African centered, 2) neonationalist, and 3) Islamic. Allen (1996) offers a similar classification system which also contains "cultural-political nationalist" and "Islamic nationalist" categories, but he substitutes an "earthy gangsta rap" category for Perkins' "African centered" category.

I, on the other hand, will mostly be using a deductive approach. I will use the NHHPC 5-point agenda as a starting point and examine popular rap lyrics to determine the extent to which each theme has been addressed. This switches the larger research question from "What types of political issues are addressed in rap music?" to "How does rap music address specific political issues?".While I plan to use the 5-point agenda as the foundation on which my analysis is carried out, I feel that for the sake of my research it is somewhat incomplete and in need of clarification. The founding members of the convention, including Kitwana more specifically, provide some clues about how to address these shortcomings

The architects of the NHHPC initially identified and organized their work around *eight* specific political issues. These were narrowed down to the *five* found in the convention agenda and consist of the following: 1) Criminal Justice, 2) Economic Justice, 3) Educational Empowerment, 4) Equality, 5) Global Issues, 6) Health, Environment and Welfare, 7) Media Regulation and 8) Organizing the Organizers (NHHPC, 2006). You'll notice that four of these issues – those of equality, global issues, media regulation, and organizing the organizers – are absent from the final 5-point agenda. One can only speculate as to why as to why these issues did not appear in the final agenda, but I believe their inclusion as part of a Hip Hop Generation political standpoint would be beneficial.

It seems to me that the initially suggested issues of "Equality" and "Global Issues" were (or at least could be) merged under the larger umbrella of "Human Rights", point 5 of the NHHPC agenda. I would argue that equality, as well as "peace", "liberty", "freedom", anti-racism/sexism/classism/etc., and the like *are* human rights, as

highlighted by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR 1976). In addition, I feel that it goes without saying that Human Rights are a global issue affecting groups (often differently) all over the world.

I am unsure why the "Organizing the Organizers" and "Media Regulation" issues disappeared from the final ratified agenda. Perhaps "Organizing the Organizers" was too specific to the organization of the convention itself for it to constitute a political issue for the Hip Hop Generation as a whole. However, the creation of this convention is itself a response to the lack of political organization among contemporary Blacks. Stating the political needs of the Hip Hop Generation is important, but agendas alone "are insufficient to motivate either constituents or institutional decisions-makers" (Bynoe 2004, p. 34). For this reason I have chosen to add a variation of the deleted "Organizing the Organizers" to the list of themes I will look for in my analysis of rap lyrics, one which I will call more simply "*Political/Community Organization*".

I also intend to add a variation of the "Media Regulation" theme, but simplify it to "*Media Issues*". Kitwana states that "the influence of…traditional purveyors of Black culture have largely diminished in the face of powerful and pervasive technological advances and corporate growth." (Kitwana 2002, p. 7). Again, mass media have increasingly shaped the worldview of the Hip Hop Generation for decades; that the generation itself was named after the most visible aspect of the Hip Hop subculture - rap music, which by 1998 was the best selling genre in America – is telling of its potential political importance. If mass media are one of this country's biggest cultural influences, then media issues concerning regulation, censorship, representation, conglomeration and other factors that direct what sort of messages are disseminated to the populace are of

great importance. Indeed, this assumption is one of the biggest motivating factors in carrying this research in the first place.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

In order to determine the extent to which emancipatory political themes have been addressed by popular rap music I analyzed the lyrics of some of rap's biggest hits. This examination focused more specifically on 1) the most successful songs from the first years that rap emerged as a commercially viable style of music and 2) the most successful rap singles of recent years. By selecting songs from these periods was able to provide "snapshots" showing the prominence, or dearth, of political rap music (relative to popular rap releases as a whole) at different points in time. In addition, this should make visible any changes in the prevalence of political themes in successful rap music between these two periods.

Christian Lahusen (1996) has suggested that the popularity of a musician and his/her music can be used as a measure of the diffusion of ideas being communicated by the songs s/he produces. He argues that fame has symbolic power that allows for celebrities to establish their ideas as being representative of an entire genre's music. Their image becomes representative of the genre's "social reality, myths, needs, and aspirations" (Lahusen 1996, p. 209). Greater success of an artist's song, it is argued, results in greater recognition and more pronounced interpretation of the messages within the song. If this is the case, examining the most popular rap songs should reveal the degree to which political messages are being diffused and recognized among those who listen to rap music. Lahusen also makes the case that music industry charts that measure the relative success of popular songs provide a good indication of the popularity of an artist and/or his/her music (Lahusen 1996, p. 209). Therefore, it stands to reason that I

could use such a chart to determine the popularity of rap releases. For this reason, I drew my research data from the music charts in Billboard magazine, the leading trade journal on the music industry in the United States.

Sampling Procedure

Setting the Time Frame

For most of the 1980s, rap music releases rarely appeared on Billboard's music charts. It wasn't until 1984 – a full 5 years after the first rap record was released – that a rap album made significant inroads into the pop music mainstream. In that year, Run-D.M.C's self-titled debut became the first full-length rap album to be certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America. In 1985, their sophomore album did the same, but in half the time. However, it wasn't until 1986 that rap music began to fully "cross over" In that year, Run-D.M.C. released the hugely successful multi-platinum album Raising Hell, which featured a cover of Aerosmith's "Walk this Way" and a guest appearance by the white rockers. Later in the year, Run-D.M.C.'s Def Jam labelmates the Beastie Boys, a former punk group comprised of three white suburban teens, released the rap album Licensed To Ill to similar success.

Still, the appearances of these releases on Billboard's charts were the exception rather than the rule. Rap albums and singles rarely registered a blip on the pop charts and fared marginally better alongside R&B and soul releases on Billboard's "Top Black" singles and albums charts. It was not until 1989 that the Billboard charts were changed to reflect rap music's increasing popularity. In March of that year, Billboard debuted the

Hot Rap Albums chart and the Hot Rap Singles chart, which ranked the 25 best selling releases in each category. Because this is the first year in which a chart that lists only the most popular rap releases was available, I chose 1989 and 1990 as the first years from which I would draw a sample of successful rap releases. To provide a comparison group I drew a similarly sized sample of successful rap songs from the years 2005 and 2006.

Song Selection

Billboard music charts monitor a number of different genres of music, different music formats (albums, singles, Internet downloads, etc.) and rank these formats in a number of different ways. Before settling upon a chart from which to obtain my sample of songs, choices had to be made about which charts would best provide the information needed to carry out my research. The sample of rap songs I chose to analyze were drawn from Billboard's Year End "Hot Rap Singles" chart in 1989 and 1990 and Billboard's Year End "Hot Rap Tracks" chart in 2005 and 2006. A full list of the songs on these harts can be found in Appendix A. The process by which I decided to use these particular charts is outlined below.

Pop Charts vs. Rap Charts: Songs were drawn from Rap charts instead of Pop charts for a number of reasons. Foremost, as stated above, few rap releases appeared on the pop charts until well into the 1990s. As such, using only those rap releases that appeared on the Pop charts would likely result in a smaller sample of rap songs (and, I speculate, a near absence of releases featuring political themes). Also, because Billboard's Pop charts provide data about the success of releases from *all* genres, obtaining a sample would have

required the extra work of identifying which releases were rap releases. Drawing from Rap charts eliminates this problem.

Rap Singles vs. Rap Albums: I opted to research songs appearing on singles charts instead of albums appearing on albums charts, in part to maintain a manageable amount of research data. This kept me from having to analyze *each* song found on *each* album appearing on the Top Rap Albums charts.

Weekly Rap Singles vs. Year-End Rap Singles: Billboard's Year-End Rap Singles chart provides a clearer picture of which songs were the most popular over an extended period of time. Year-end charts are determined through a calculation that takes into consideration each song's positions *and* longevity on the weekly charts throughout the preceding year. The 2005 and 2006 Year-End Hot Rap Tracks chart listed the 25 most successful songs for those years. The 1989 and 1990 Year-End Hot Rap Singles chart listed the 30 most successful songs for those years. I decide to omit songs 26-30 for these years from analysis to maintain uniformity across time periods.

It should be noted that the Year-End Hot Rap Singles charts from 1989 and 1990 and the Year-End Hot Rap Tracks charts from 2005 and 2006 do *not* rank songs according to the same criteria. The Rap Singles chart ranked songs according to *sales*, while the Rap Tracks chart ranks songs according to *radio airplay*. The charts, however, are comparable. The Rap Tracks chart was introduced in 2002 to *replace* the Rap Singles chart. This change occurred as a response to the decreasing availability of retail singles - for a few years prior to 2002 a number of rap's biggest hits were not even released as singles and, as such, were not appearing on Billboard's Rap Singles chart (Billboard

Unveils…, 2002). Differences aside, each chart has been the standard by which the success of rap singles has been assessed.

Obtaining Song Lyrics

Most of the lyrics for each song in my sample were obtained from the Internet. Written lyrics to the majority of the songs were downloaded from the Original Hip-Hop Lyrics Archive (OHHLA), a website that is updated almost daily with user-submitted lyrics for thousands of rap albums and songs. In order to find lyrics for the few songs that did not appear on OHHLA I turned to Internet search engines – Yahoo!, Google, etc. – to see if they were available on other websites.

I was unable to locate written lyrics for about 10% of the songs from my sample. In those instances I attempted to find recordings of the songs and, when successful, transcribed the lyrics myself. A few of the songs were available in free streaming audio or video formats on the Internet. The music videos for two of the songs, for example, were available on Youtube. In addition, I transcribed lyrics to a handful of songs found on CDs I owned myself. I was unable to find lyrics to only one song from the entire sample. This song *was* featured on a CD I owned; however, the album version of the song was an instrumental and I was unable to obtain a copy of the single/radio version.

This highlights at least one possible limitation of using song lyrics found on Internet websites. These lyrics are often (and in the case of those transcribed from my own album collection, *always*) "album versions" of the songs instead of "singles versions". The singles versions of songs that appear on full-length albums are

occasionally altered into more radio-friendly formats, edited for time and, with rap music especially, edited for language. However, the general messages typically remain the same, even if obscene words and phrases are "bleeped out" or replaced.

Analytic Techniques

I performed a content analysis of each song's lyrics to determine if, how often, and in what ways they focus on the political imperatives of the Hip Hop Generation. This was done by noting all instances where a song addressed 1) any of the *five* themes listed in the National Hip Hop Political Convention agenda (See Appendix B) and 2) either of the *two* themes – Political/Community Organization and Media Issues – outlined in Chapter 3. The five political themes found in the NHHPC agenda are defined, in part, according to the amendments listed under each theme on the agenda itself (See Appendix B). Additional criteria used to specify the contours of these themes are found in the definitions section of the analysis codebook (this codebook provides instructions for the content analysis process – See Appendix C). For example, in addition to the amendment issues associated with the "Human Rights" theme, other criteria were added, including some of the suggestions – equality, peace, freedom, etc. – provided for that theme in Chapter 3. Specific criteria used to define the two themes not found in the NHHPC agenda are not provided in the codebook's definitions section, though some suggestions are offered.

Again, because I explored the frequency with which these songs addressed a pre-existing list of issues, the research process was mostly deductive. However, in dealing with the two additional themes – Political/Community Organization and Media Issues – I employ an inductive strategy. Because these themes were not addressed in the NHHPC

agenda, no list of concerns associated with them was available. As such, I took note of how the songs discussed the themes, which allowed for the important issues associated with the themes to emerge *from* the research. I also took note of issues that were related to any of the five NHHPC agenda themes, but were not listed on the agenda as specific concerns.

A coding form (See Appendix D) was assigned to each song that was studied. Each form was labeled with the year the song appeared on the Billboard chart and the song's position on the Year-End chart. The coding form is divided into two columns. The left column contains each of the 7 themes I searched for. Listed underneath each of the 5 themes from the NHHPC agenda are the concerns associated with the broader point. Additional blank lines are located underneath each set of concerns. These lines provide a space to write-in issues that are associated with a theme, but that are different from those already addressed. Listed underneath the Political/Community Organization and Media Issues headings are blank lines that provided a space to write-in issues associated with those themes.

After identifying an issue associated with one of the 7 themes a check was placed on the line next to that issue in the right column of the coding form. A check was made for *each* time a particular theme was mentioned, whether it was done so in the form of a string of words, a line in the song, a string of lines, etc. The sum of the total number of checks made for each theme was placed in the box next to that theme on the coding form. These checks were used to provide information about which issues where addressed most often, how often each issue was addressed, what issues emerged from the data, how these

frequencies changed between the two time periods, etc. Raw information is present in table form (See Appendix E) and is discussed more in-dept in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 - Results

This chapter presents the findings of this study. This is done by discussing each of the seven political themes and noting the frequency and manner with which the songs from my sample addressed them. Differences in these frequencies and in the relative success of songs from each time period are highlighted. In addition, a number of political concerns that appeared in the music, but that were *not* voiced in the NHHPA agenda are further elaborated upon (for a full list of these issues, see Appendix D). A number of lyrical passages are cited to provide specific examples.

The data reveal that, by and large, few popular rap songs from either period address the important political issues put forth in this research. When they do, for that matter, it is often brief or in passing. Still there are notable exceptions and evidence suggests that, with further research, trends in how the content of popular rap music has changed over time may be revealed.

Political/Community Organization

Far and away, the political imperative of the Hip Hop Generation most addressed by the songs in my sample was that of political or community organization. Passages that mentioned the importance of or called for organization and unity within the Hip Hop Generation appeared over 40 different times during my research. Simply noting this frequency, however, does not paint an accurate picture of this occurrence.

The overwhelming majority of these passages came from two songs. “Self Destruction” by the Stop The Violence All-Stars (89-1; 1989 – chart position #1) makes specific references to organization 17 times. “We’re all In The Same Gang” by the West

Coast Rap All-Stars (90-12) makes twenty of these references. Allusions to a need for organization in these songs took one of two forms: 1) general calls for "unity", utilized slightly more in the "Same Gang" song, and 2) expressions of opposition to intragroup violence. Calls for unity were straightforward in both songs. Typically, these passages used the words "unity" and "unite" or phrases like "get together", "stick together", or "stand together". At one point in Self Destruction, rapper Chuck D suggests an "urge to merge".

On the surface, criticisms of intragroup violence found in each song seem to be simply addressing a need to end violence. However, I would argue that many of these passages criticizing violence were geared more toward bringing together the Black community. The following quote is from a statement made by the Executive Vice-President of the National Urban League (which received all funds raised by sales of Stop The Violence Movement projects) in regard to the Self Destruction song:

> "Violence seems to be so much a part of modern culture, but robbing and stealing and killing one another are unacceptable destroyers of our communities. The National Urban League and the People of the Stop the Violence Movement believe community is another word for 'family.'
>
> We hope to re-emphasize this ideal for some, and introduce it to others." (Lomax 1990, p. 22)

So, while the KRS-One line "the way we live is positive, we don't kill our relatives" from Self Destruction seems at first to serve as a simple condemnation of violence, when examined within the bigger picture it comes across as an appeal for "relatives" within the Black community or "family" to stick together. Young MC echoes this sentiment on "Same Game" by rapping "Brothers killing other brothers, I thought the idea was to love one another?"

Another interesting way in which rappers, I argue, attempt to create a sense of community or group cohesion is by speaking about ingroup and outgroup relationships in "us" versus "them" terms. This can be found numerous times in the song Fight The Power (89-04) when Chuck D repeats the line "we got to fight the powers that be". The keyword here is "we", which indicates that Chuck D is calling for other members of less powerful groups to come together and rise against the unnamed "powers that be". Ice-T also suggests taking action against unnamed "enemies" in We're All In The Same Gang". In the same song rappers from the group Above The Law actually name the "other", suggesting that the government contributes to the conditions that lead to intragroup violence. The government, they argue, could change things but "they don't, because they want it like that/ Because the system's been set up to hold *us* back" (emphasis mine).

Criminal Justice

Numerous songs from my sample provided critiques of criminal justice practices, especially during 1989 and 1990. Kool Moe Dee (89-11) hints at the idea that police target and profile individuals based on assumptions about race and class. He raps:

> The police I'm givin' them fits/
> A young brother in a Benz legit//
> I don't sell no drugs and take no shh/
>
> \- Kool Moe Dee – Knowledge Is King

Chamillionaire provides a similar critique nearly two decades later, with the line "Thinkin' they'll catch me in the wrong, they keep tryin, steady denyin that it's racial profilin'" (Ridin, 06-10). While this issues is spoken about specifically only a couple times in the song, the overarching theme – repeated numerous times in the refrain - centers around continued attempts by police to try and catch him "ridin dirty" (with drugs).

While the NHHPC agenda lists concerns about active, purposeful attempts by law enforcement to target and meddle in the lives of Black youth, a couple of rappers draw attention to what they believe are active, purposeful attempts by law enforcement to avoid assisting Blacks in trouble. Public Enemy rapper Flavor Flav, for example, provides numerous examples of why he believes "911 Is A Joke". He opens the song with:

> Now I dialed 911 a long time ago/
> Don't you see how late they're reactin?//
> They only come and they come when they wanna/
> So get the morgue, embalm the goner//
>
> - Public Enemy – 911 Is A Joke (90-18)

For Flav, it seems, police don't respond to life or death situations; they're often the reason "death" even becomes a possibility.

Education

Of the 100 songs from my sample only 4 addressed issues concerning education. Boogie Down Production's "Why Is That?" (89-24) was one of two to address any of the concerns set forth in the NHHPC agenda. Three passages in this song are critical of school curricula and refer specifically to the failure to teach Black and African history. While these criticisms are made in passing the tone of the song hints at this issue throughout. Most of the first verse, for example, is a history lesson in itself, outlining the genealogy of the first generations of (Black) humans in Africa before asking why such information is not more readily available or accepted. Song 05-16 addressed the other NHHPC agenda issue of school funding/resources *and* violence with the line "No schoolbooks, they used that wood to build coffins"(Game - Hate It Or Love It).

Songs 89-1 and 89-4 briefly address issues concerning education, but do not speak to any of the issues from the NHHPC agenda or even relating specifically to the education system. Instead, each mentions the importance of being educated about the world around you. In Self Destruction (89-1), Daddy-O notes that "to teach each" and make others aware is, in fact, what rap should be about. Chuck D would likely concur, asserting in Fight The Power (89-4) that "What we need is awareness" - that rappers need to "make everybody see" (what's going on around them) before they can "bum rush the show" or "fight the powers that be".

Economic Justice

Only four songs comment on issues related to economic justice (one song appeared appeared on two different charts – 05-15 & 06-22). Two mention living wage issues, albeit indirectly and in passing. The focus of these passages is on the *consequences* of low wages. Ice Cube remarks:

> "One-time can't keep the law in order/
> Cuz everybody's going crazy for a quarter//"
>
> - Ice Cube – AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted (90-17)

This, I believe, is rather important. Many of the political issues this research focuses upon – violence, health, drug-dealing, etc. – are, in fact, effects of poverty. While in this instance the connection is made between poverty and "lawlessness", Cube does not expand further and, instead, finishes the song by noting in an almost celebratory manner the many reasons that he is "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted".

Other songs brought to light ideas surrounding the "economic priorities" of those within and outside of the Hip Hop Generation. The song Self Destruction (89-1) sends a message to those *within* the Hip Hop Generation that those who are greedy "fall for the

bait" and risk becoming just another "number" in jail. One passage points out that material possessions and "silly gold chains" aren't worth the death of a "brother". Rapper Game turns this criticism outward (though points to nobody specific) with the line "Thinkin how they spent 30 million dollars on airplanes when there's kids starving" (Hate It Or Love It, 05-11).

Health and Wellness

Very few songs addressed any of the NHHPC members' concerns about "health and wellness". Most of these references center attention on curbing violence. Even then, only the songs Self Destruction (89-01) and We're All In The Same Gang (90-12) make broad, general appeals to "stop the violence". However, as previously stated most anti-violence references in these songs serve a more specific function that simply pointing out negative effects of violence per se.

In one song, Young Jeezy raps about the need to sell drugs to get money for food (05-16, 06-22), though this is mentioned in one line of a song where Jeezy makes numerous references to the spoils that he has received as a result of selling drugs. While he certainly brings to light an important public health issue by taking note of those struggling to get a meal, his bragging about having "a hundred grand on his wrist" (an expensive watch) and being able to count a million dollars, I would argue, limit the emancipatory functions of this particular song.

Only one song mentions anything remotely associated with women's health or reproductive issues. In "Buddy" by De La Soul (90-3), Mike G addresses the need to wear a condom by rapping "For the lap Jimbrowski must wear a cap, just in case the young girl likes to clap". While this passage briefly calls attention to health issues related

to sexually transmitted diseases, this topic is certainly not the "theme" of the song as a whole. On the contrary, the rest of the song focuses on pursuing attractive women and, more than anything, comes across as an ode to or celebration of the penis. That the quote above suggests protection must be used because female partners may be infected with an STD - that condoms should be used to prevent men from passing on these diseases goes unaddressed – does not seem to show an understanding of women's health and reproductive issues from a *woman's* standpoint.

Media Issues

Only a handful of songs address specific media issues. All of these songs appeared on Billboard's 1989 chart. One issue that emerged from the song Self Destruction (89-01) focused on the demonization of rap music in the mass media – the song was recorded, in part, as a response to media attacks about "rap violence" (George, 1990). Rapper MC Delight's verse deals specifically with this issue:

> Pop, pop, pop when it's shot who's to blame?/
> Headlines, front page, and rap's the name//
> MC Delight here to state the bottom line/
> That black-on-black crime was way before our time//
>
> - MC Delight – Self Destruction

In light of this, I expected more songs to deal with direct attempts by mass media to censor rap music releases. However, this issue is mentioned only one time in one song from the entire sample. As part of a verse addressing freedom of expression issues more generally, N.W.A. rapper Dr. Dre states "Or they ban my group from the radio, Hear N.W.A and say 'hell no!'" on the song "Express Yourself" (89-07). This is not surprising given N.W.A.'s previous dealings with anti-censorship groups. Except for X-rated rappers 2 Live Crew, N.W.A. had received more negative attention for the explicit

content of their music than any artist since the anti-heavy metal crusades of the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC) during the mid-1980's. In 1989, N.W.A.'s record label received a letter from FBI Assistant Director Milt Ahlerich wherein he condemned the content of their song Fuck The Police. And while this occurred after the release of Express Yourself, it was just one of many battles over censorship that N.W.A. would face over the course of their career.

Human Rights

None of the Human Rights concerns listed in the NHHPC agenda appeared in any of the songs that were examined. However, as explained in Chapter 3, the NHHPC issues provided a very narrow definition of what constitutes human rights. *Most* of the concerns presented throughout the agenda are human rights issues. Article I of the ICCPR, for example, calls for recognition of people's right to "freely pursue their economic...development". Here we see that job discrimination could be considered a Human Rights issue, but more specifically it is an issue of Economic Justice. For this reason, the Human Rights category served mostly as a "catch-all" for all human rights issues not specifically addressed by the other six political themes.

Passages from the N.W.A. song "Express Yourself" illustrate this point more specifically. While at one point the song addresses the group having their freedom of expression challenged by media, there are instances throughout the song where free expression is addressed more generally. Though both focus on the human rights issue of free expression, the former is more specifically a media issue. Appeals for listeners to "express themselves", thus, were marked under the Human Rights theme instead of the

Media Issues theme. Similarly, lyrics citing general support of "equality" or opposition to "racism" were also placed in the Human Rights category.

Popular Rap Music and Hip Hop Generation Politics: Past and Present

There is far too little information available to conclusively determine whether there are any long-term trends in the success of rap music that addresses the above political issues. There are, however, a few notable differences in the success of this music between the two time periods studied. These differences are in 1) the total percentage of rap songs on Billboard's Year End charts that address these issues, 2) the frequency with which these songs address the issues and 3) the relative success of these songs compared to those who don't.

One fifth (5) of the songs on the 1989 chart addressed at least one of the seven political themes. Over one fourth (6) of the songs on the 1990 chart addressed at least one of these issues. Comparatively, only 2 of the 25 songs that charted in 2005 and 2 of the 25 songs that charted in 2006 addressed any of these issues; even then, one of the songs from 2005 also charted in 2006, meaning only 3 of the 50 songs that charted in those two years addressed the listed concerns of the Hip Hop Generation.

In addition, the 3 songs from the last two years of the study spoke about these issues with less depth than many of the eleven songs that charted in 1989 and 1990. Of these, only Chamillionaire's "Ridin" (06-10) addresses a political theme (racial profiling) throughout the song – the others merely mention issues a couple in passing. In contrast, many of the songs from 1989 and 1991 address political issues throughout. Some mention *multiple* political issues multiple times.

Lastly, many political songs from 1989 and 1991 were quite successful, even compared to the other songs appearing on the year-end list. I think the fact that Self-Destruction, one of the most overtly political songs in the entire sample, was number 1 on 1989's year-end chart is especially noteworthy. Two of the three songs featuring the most references to political issues in 1989 charted higher than any song featuring political references in 2005 or 2006.

Chapter 6 - Discussion and Conclusion

In this final chapter I further discusses the findings of this study and detail some of their possible implications. Throughout, I provide suggestions for future research that can answer a number of the questions created by or unanswered by the present research. I end with a section identifying some limitations of this research and the research process, a section outlining how I could expand on this research in the future and a brief conclusion.

Politics in Hip Hop Music vs. Hip Hop Generation Politics

The findings of this study show that popular rap music during the periods studied rarely addressed political issues important to the Hip Hop Generation. The magnitude to which those that *did* address these issues was typically small and both the frequency and magnitude decreased between the two time periods. These findings both provide answers and raise questions about the political issues actually addressed in rap music and how these issues relate to Hip Hop Generation politics.

Aside from the overall lack of political songs on these charts, the most notable observation is that there seems to be a disconnect between the political issues that *are* addressed in the music and the items found on the NHHPC political agenda. Again, the small percentage of songs from my sample that addressed the 5 broad political themes stated in the agenda rarely addressed the specific issues provided by the amendments to those 5 items. This fact in and of itself could point to any or, to some extent, all of the following explanations: 1) That those involved with the drafting of the NHHPC political agenda are out of touch with the issues that truly affect the Hip Hop Generation and the

rappers that have come to represent them, 2) the NHHPC agenda represents the issues most important to the Hip Hop Generation, but popular rappers are unable to articulate these needs, 3) that popular rap artists do not represent the Hip Hop Generation as a whole or 4) that those buying rap music prefer to listen to songs that do not address political themes. Whether any of these are valid explanations is a question to be answered by future research. However, these explanations by themselves miss a key piece of the hip hop puzzle – the music industry that markets and sells rap music.

Selling the "Last Voice"

Popular rap music is not only a form of cultural expression, but is also a business. It cannot be understood in terms of a simple one-to-one relationship between artists and audiences. Rap artists sign to record labels that act as a "middle-man" that "links – and perhaps more significantly separates – artist and audience in quite distinct ways" (Negus 1999, p.85). The industry heavily influences the popularity of a release through marketing and distribution and plays a huge part in determining what records are spun regularly on the radio and what albums appear on store shelves. Even then, it is not simply profit that influences how a record label chooses to market their materials. Negus suggests "the 'commercial' strategies of music corporations are not simply business decisions alone, but are informed by a number of value judgments and cultural beliefs." (Negus 1999, p. 89)

These "value judgments and cultural beliefs" can include shared, and often stereotypical, understandings of black music that derive from larger stereotypical understandings of blackness. Binder's (1993) discussion of the way rap music is discussed by news media provides a clearer example of how this process unfolds. She

argues that when news media discuss rap music, particular ideological frames surrounding race are often drawn upon. Rap, she argues, is often discussed in terms of the danger it poses to society, in part because this frame resonates with audiences that are part of a culture that often sees Blacks (typically males) as a threat to society. Negus (1999) suggests that this same process is at play among those who promote and distribute rap music. He notes that music business personnel are often "uncomfortable with the politics of black representation" (Negus 1999, p. 86) and uneasy with artists that "keep it real" by writing lyrics littered with profanity and candid discussions of violence. Rap becomes a "wild card" for industry promoters because the volatile nature of its content makes market successes unpredictable. For this reason, Negus suggests industry players who are pulling the strings behind the scene will often promote rap songs that are "safe" and non-controversial.

Assuming industry analysts are correct in their suggestion that rap's buying audience is almost 75 percent white (Rose, 1994; George, 1998; Kitwana, 2005), Negus' argument doesn't seem too far-fetched. In an era of post-Civil Rights racial politics and colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Winant, 2004) many whites are convinced that racism is a "thing of the past" and believe that, because "slavery is over", the *plight* of Blacks in America is the *fault* of Blacks in America. It would make sense, then, that a number of whites, even fans of rap music, might be uncomfortable listening to songs that address racism they claim does not exist. Record labels hoping to score a popular hit may simply be prioritizing "crassly accessible" (Dyson 2004, p. 320) rap songs featuring themes that white *and* Black Americans can related to – dancing, sex,

spending money, etc. – over songs featuring themes that will only resonate with small percentage of the population.

When The Hidden Transcript Goes Public

While few songs addressing political issues appeared on the rap charts, the fact that they appeared at all (and more so that some were quite successful) is itself important. Some of these songs featured political messages that were in direct opposition of status-quo understandings of the world around us. They challenged a number of taken-for-granted assumptions about racism, the criminal justice system, and human rights, and yet still managed to become more popular than many songs that may have focused on themes more universally accepted by rap's listening audience. How they managed to do this is a question for future investigation, but I'll attempt to provide a few explanations.

Two of the most popular and most political rap songs from my sample – Self Destruction and We're All In The Same Gang – were released in response to specific high profile events of the time. After a string of violent incidents at rap shows in the late 1980s, a group of rappers, label executives, and industry insider came together and created the "Stop The Violence Movement". This collective released the Self Destruction song and music video, as well as other records, pamphlets, and books all of which aimed to bring awareness to different social issues. More specifically, the Self Destruction song addressed black on black crime, but, as previously mentioned, also attempted to deflect criticism that rap itself was responsible for this "surge" in violence. The West Coast Rap All-Stars song was released shortly after Self Destruction and addressed the increasing rates of gang violence in left coast cities like Los Angeles. The high profile nature of these issues may have spurred interest in the sales of each song. That Self-Destruction

was released as part of an all-out media blitz (one which included a mile long march in New York City that was lead by a number of rappers carrying an empty casket) may have helped push it to the number one spot on the rap charts for 1989.

Part of their success may be because of their approach to talking about political issues. Few addressed these issues in terms that would "carr(y) the force of symbolic declaration of war" that Scott (1990, p. 10) spoke about. Self Destruction and We're All In The Same Gang both talked about political issues in a way that did not directly challenge those in power. Instead, they suggested changes from *within* the Black community. This, I would argue, makes it easier for white listeners to wash their hands of responsibility for the creation and maintenance of the social structures that foster Black "self destruction". It may be that mostly-white rap audiences feel little discomfort hearing messages calling for Blacks to solve "their own" problems and are, thus, more likely to support such a song featuring these messages.

The reasons these songs were typically *not* successful in any of the years from my sample or the reason the proportion of political songs decreased between the first years rap became commercially successful and the most recent years must also be left for future research. However, I will again attempt to provide at least a couple of possible explanations. Part of the reason the success of these songs decreased could be because of the change in popularity of rap as a whole. It must be understood that Billboard's charts rank songs based on their popularity *relative* to one another. So, while the #1 song on the 1989 rap chart may have been more popular than all others released that year, it may still have been less popular than *every* song that appeared on the 2006 year-end chart. Thus, neither of these charts tells anything of the size or make-up of the buying or listening

audience. And because projections that rap listeners were 75 percent white did not began appearing until the mid 1990s, it is possible that the hits of 1989 and 1990 were popular among a smaller, blacker audience than in later years when it became one of the most popular of *any* genres.

Changes in the structure of the music industry must be taken into account as well. Since the 1980s, all forms of mass media have come under the control of fewer and more powerful owners – from fifty corporations in 1980 to five massive global conglomerates by the turn of the 21st century (Bagdikian, 2004). As a result, it has been argued that the range of political ideas that are readily available to the public has become increasingly narrow (Bagdikian, 2004; McChesney, 2000). This may well have affected the types of messages that are readily available in rap music as well. During the 1980's, many major labels failed to sign rap artists because they did not see them as guaranteed profit-makers. As such, independent labels like Tommy Boy, Profile, and Sleeping Bag were responsible for many of the era's most successful releases (Negus, 2000). This may have provided for a greater diversity of rap messages than in later years when (or if) major labels controlled a greater bulk of rap's releases. Future research could uncover whether there is a relationship between the type of label an artists is on (indie/major) and the prevalence of political themes in their music.

Reaching Out

This research and further research in the same vein may add to the discussions about rap music's political potential and its role in political movement. The findings clearly show that *popular* rap songs have failed to engage with Hip Hop Generation politics on a wide scale. This raises some questions about how Black leadership should

move forward politically. I was somewhat surprised to find that not a single song from my sample mentioned anything about establishing *formal* political or community organizations. While calls for unity and denouncements of violence suggest support for the creation of an organized body of individuals with similar needs, they do not show support for developing "official" groups that can bargain with political organizations that have the power to address these needs. Likewise, "togetherness" in and of itself does not provide solutions to the problems of the Hip Hop Generation. Whether this failure to address the formation of these organizations is evidence of skepticism among rappers (or even Blacks more generally) about their effectiveness, evidence of distrust in the formal political process, or simply an effect of the small sample size of this study is unknown and must be left for future research. Kitwana, however (2002, p. 183-187), suggests that this skepticism is present and understanding this phenomenon more completely may aid Black leadership can proceed, with or without the rap music by their side.

Future research could also examine the extent to which rap music does or could reach out to those outside of the Hip Hop Generation. Watkins (2005) notes that hip hop has never simply been a "black thing"; it has always been "multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual" (p. 150). Because the make-up of those who identify with hip hop is so varied, Watkins suggests that this opens the door for others who want to use hip hop to help mobilize political movement. Furthermore, many of political issues found in the NHHPC agenda cut across class, race, age, gender, nationality, etc. Human rights, criminal justice, education etc. are not simply "black issues". This line of research could provide answers to a number of additional questions. As with the present research, one could investigate if and how rap music addresses the political needs of different, narrowly

defined groups. Further, comparative studies could show how different groups attempt to utilize rap and hip hop, how successful they are in reaching their goals, how rap functions differently for each group and so on.

Scapegoating Rap

The content of popular rap music – both what *is* and what *is not* addressed in the lyrics – also contributes to the larger discourses about, for example, race, gender, and violence. These discourses shape how we understand the world around us which may, in turn, have real political effects. The recent controversy over radio host Don Imus referring to the mostly-Black, mostly-dark skinned women of the Rutgers basketball team as "nappy-headed hoe's" provides an example of how the lack of political (or at least "positive") messages in rap music shapes larger understandings of race and gender. Immediately after this story was leaked, rap music came under attack. Even after admitting that Imus' comments were out of line, many journalists would turn their focus to the prevalence of rap artists that regularly use sexist terms on par with or worse than the word "hoe". Without the popularity of sexist rap, the argument went, Imus would have never felt compelled to use such a word. This line of thinking, however, misses the bigger picture. Dyson (2007, p. 130) states:

> "It's apparent that Imus and many critics have got the line of detrimental influence backward: it's not that hip hop has helped mainstream the misogyny that its artists *invented*. It's that the ancient vitriol toward women has been amplified in the mouths of some young black males."

This research does not examine the extent to which the sexist, racist, and violent messages that lead to the scapegoating of rap music are amplified by a handful of highly

visible rappers. While such research is necessary to see what, if any, effects the preponderance of these types of songs have on listening audiences, those issues are beyond the scope of this study. What I believe my research *has* demonstrated is that some messages are *not* being amplified, including expressions of concern for human rights, unity, education or any of the other issues important to the Hip Hop Generation. The prevalence of rap with "negative" messages and the dearth of rap with political and other sorts of "positive" messages work *in concert* to make the rap music blame-game valid in the eyes of white media and/or whites as a whole. Critics attack rap not *simply* because it regularly features sexist and violent rhymes, but also because rap rarely features messages of political importance. As long as messages calling for the elimination of emotional and physical violence against women (for example) are absent from the airwaves, the association of these messages with the rap genre will remain absent from the collective minds of rap's detractors.

Pump Up The Volume: Strategies for Making Political Rap Successful

The findings of this research raise a number of questions for those suggesting rap is the "last voice" of Black Americans. While it seems popular rap music has not and does not typically address items from the NHHPC political agenda, this does not mean rap cannot contribute to political discussion. Here, I suggest, standpoint theory and Collins' concept of "safe spaces" may help provide some clues about how political rap can reach wider audiences. In her discussion of Black feminist standpoint, Collins notes that "silence is not to be interpreted as submission…" (1990, p. 98), that the absence of Black women's ideas and actions in the public sphere – a result of race, class, sexuality and gender oppression – does not mean a collective Black feminist standpoint does not

exist. The same, of course, can be said for a Hip Hop Generation standpoint more generally. What political rappers and those advocates of political rap need to figure out is *how* to make their messages visible in spite of barricades placed in their paths.

As Collins notes, "broadcast media…and other institutions in the information business reproduce the controlling images of Black womanhood" (Collins 1990, p. 101). Again, I would argue, the same can be said for members of the Hip Hop Generation more generally, albeit in different ways. Collins seems to suggest that there are limitations inherent in some of the institutions that are in the best position to disseminate ideas that run opposite these controlling images. The realm of popular music is hardly a social space that allows for free communication of counter hegemonic discourses. In the same way that Black women have sought out community institutions and social sites that provide "safe spaces" or locations in which they can freely and openly express resist domination, some have suggested that rap artists and fans should attempt to do the same.

Shomari (1995), for example, suggests that rappers and Black leaders should focus on utilizing rap's "underground" He suggests a greater focus on the creation of record companies that are Black-owned and independently financed. This way, rap's political messengers do not have to worry about being underpromoted or released from a major record label if their political messages are too uncompromising, turn off too many listeners and are not financially lucrative. Still, given the nature of a deregulated media market that allows for five conglomerates to control the overwhelming majority of all mass media messages, this raises a number of questions about the feasibility of such an approach. I cannot help but wonder if an underpromoted major label release would still have better odds of reaching a wide audience than a release that is marketed and

distributed by a label that is Black owned and operated from top to bottom. Would these companies be able to compete with major labels without losing money? Would they be any more likely to release records that address political issues than major labels?

Perhaps attempting to change the structure of the mass media before or in conjunction with the development of Black music companies would be a more fruitful strategy. Bagdikian (2004) suggest that in order to increase the variety of mass media messages, changes must be made to the industry itself. He calls for direct antitrust action by the Department of Justice, repeal of legislation that allows for legal concentration of power (such as the Telecommunications Act of 1996), and increased (or, rather, a renewed) focus on the Fairness Doctrine, which would require media to devote at least some time to public issues. He also details the emergence of a new generation of reform-minded media activists and the increasing use of newer and alternative media technologies. The Internet may provide some exposure for artists that are ignored by mainstream media through the sharing of digital music or even digital "word-of-mouth" as users discuss underground artists online. Thousands of tech-savvy younger people have set up pirate radio stations, broadcasting (illegally) out of their own homes to their own neighborhoods using equipment that can be found at local electronic stores. These are two examples of some strategies that may, to some extent, provide a platform for political rappers that may later lead to more commercial and widespread success.

This, however, glosses over the fact that rappers do have agency and some control over messages that inevitably reach the airwaves. As such, hip hop activists should also attempt to utilize strategies that get rappers themselves to talk about issues that are important to both the Hip Hop Generation *and* groups within the Hip Hop Generation that

have been alienated from political discourse both within and outside the hip hop community. For example, Keyes and Collins recognize the handful of female rappers who have been successful at addressing issues "from a viewpoint that is meaningful to black working-class women (Keyes 2002, p. 187), but male rappers release the overwhelming majority of all releases and dominate the popular rap charts while rarely producing music with this same point of view. Collins (2004, p. 193) suggests that having the few rappers and scholars promoting this type of hip hop feminism team up with grassroots feminist organizations and groups within the African-American community could aid in making others more aware of the issues faced by this segment of the Hip Hop Generation. Strategies for getting rappers, or even men more generally, to talk about these issues – a seemingly more daunting and complex task – are not discussed, though this may be of equal importance in making public the issues of the Hip Hop Generation.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations with the present study. Foremost, the small sample size hampers my ability to draw conclusions about the presence of political messages in popular rap music since its inception. In addition, because my sample only consisted of songs released during two 2-year periods, I was only able to make general claims about differences in the success of political rap between the two periods instead of differences *over time*. Unfortunately, I was unable to find any chart that lists more than the 25 most popular songs released in a given year.

While Lahusen (1996) believes that music charts are a good measure of the diffusion of knowledge about the information in songs on those charts, Billboard still does not provide a complete picture of the extent to which songs are diffused among

listeners. This may especially be the case with rap music. Kitwana (2005) notes that the "pass-along" rate of rap releases – instances where one individual will buy a particular album and lend or copy it to multiple others – especially high in some Black communities (which, he argues, also may inflate the percentage of whites that are actually buying rap music). Likewise, bootleg sales of popular rap albums are not uncommon…and are also not counted by Billboard. And while Billboard currently tracks the sales of legally downloaded digital content and uses this to determine chart positions, millions of *illegally* downloaded songs go undetected.

A number of limitations stem my use of content analysis. First, content analysis is ineffective in showing causal relationships (Berg, 1998). Though this is a good method to show changes in magnitude and frequency, it renders the researcher unable to make claims about what *causes* those changes. As such, the above discussion merely provides *possible* reasons for the differences in political rap's success between the two periods.

Lastly, there by doing a content analysis of lyrics my analysis was derived from my subjective interpretations of the material. As suggested by Scott (1990) some political messages may have taken a "disguised" form. Further, rap music itself is rife with subculture specific slang. Hopefully, my interest in rap music limited the impact of falsely interpreting, or missing entirely, a particular passage, but this is not outside the realm of possibility.

Future Research

Throughout this chapter I have provided a number of examples of questions about rap music and politics that could be answered with future research. However, there are still a number of ways this current research could be carried out and expanded upon in

greater depth. Some of my arguments could be strengthened (or weakened!) greatly if an analysis of the most successful songs from *every* year since 1989 were carried out. This would allow for a clearer picture of the success, or lack thereof, of political rap music *over time* instead of at two points in time. By doing this one could see how these changes ebb and flow year to year, which would allow for one to better draw conclusions about how specific variables – changes in the music industry, world events, etc. – affect the content of popular music during specific periods.

I would like to continue with this research in such a way, but would also like to investigate a number of other issues that here went unexamined. This research began with me more specifically questioning the role of changes in the music industry on the content of rap music, but these questions went unanswered here. Another line of research I would like to continue with would be to examine the success of political rap music in spaces other than that of commercial music. While this commercialism may have affected the content and lead to the depoliticization of rap music here in the United States it has also made hip hop culture a global phenomenon. As the Internet continues to allow worldwide access to rap music it would be interesting to see how and if rap music functions politically in other countries and if continued commercialization in these areas has the same effects on the content of popular rap.

Limitations aside, I hope that the above research can serve as a stepping stone for future research carried out by myself or others. At the very least I believe the findings can add to the dialogue about rap music's role in a post-Civil Rights political climate. As a fan, I believe this dialogue can contribute to the elimination of negative and the proliferation of the positive in rap music. As an academic I recognize that it's not just

about the music, it's also about the way the music affects the world around us. The fact remains: it's *bigger* than hip hop.

Appendix A

Year End Hot Rap Singles – 1989

1. Stop The Violence All-Stars	Self Destruction
2. De La Soul	Me, Myself and I
3. Young MC	Bust A Move
4. Public Enemy	Fight The Power
5. The D.O.C.	It's Funky Enough
6. Slick Rick	Children's Story
7. N.W.A.	Straight Outta Compton
8. MC Hammer	Turn This Mutha Out
9. Kid N Play	Rollin' With Kid N Play
10. Heavy D & The Boyz	We Got Our Own Thang
11. Big Daddy Kane	Smooth Operator
12. Three Times Dope	Funky Dividends
13. Kool Moe Dee	They Want Money
14. Kwame	The Man We All Know and Love
15. 2 Live Crew	Me So Horny
16. Tone Loc	Funky Cold Medina
17. LL Cool J	I'm That Type of Guy
18. MC Hammer	They Put Me In The Mix
19. Milli Vanilli	Girl You Know It's True
20. MC Hammer	Pump It Up
21. Rob Bas & DJ EZ Rock	Joy & Pain
22. EPMD	So What Cha Sayin
23. Eazy-E	We Want Eazy
24. Boogie Down Productions	Why Is That?
25. Too $hort	Life Is Too $hort

Year End Hot Rap Singles – 1990

1. Salt N Pepa	Expression
2. Digital Underground	The Humpty Dance
3. De La Soul	Buddy
4. Snap	The Power
5. D-Nice	Call Me D-Nice
6. Sir Mix-A-Lot	Beepers
7. Above The Law	Murder Rap
8. Kwame	Ownlee Ueu
9. Kid N Play	Funhouse
10. 2 Live Crew	Me So Horny
11. Wreckx-N-Effect	New Jack Swing
12. The West Coast Rap All-Stars	We're All In The Same Gang
13. LL Cool J	The Boomin System
14. Father MC	Treat Them Like They Want To Be Treated
15. Chill Rob G	The Power
16. Eric B. & Rakim	Let The Rhythm Hit 'Em
17. Ice Cube	Amerikkka's Most Wanted
18. Public Enemy	911 Is A Joke
19. Public Enemy	Welcome To The Terrordome
20. Redhead Kingpin	Pump It Hottie
21. The D.O.C.	The D.O.C. and the Doctor
22. MC Hammer	U Can't Touch This
23. Vanilla Ice	To The Extreme
24. MC Lyte	Cha Cha Cha
25. Poor Righteous Teachers	Rock Dis Funky Joint

Year End Hot Rap Tracks – 2005

1. Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz	Lovers & Friends
2. Snoop Dogg	Drop It Like It's Hot
3. The Game	How We Do
4. 50 Cent	Candy Shop
5. 50 Cent	Disco Inferno
6. Kanye West	Gold Digger
7. 50 Cent	Just A Lil Bit
8. Bow Wow	Like You
9. Bow Wow	Let Me Hold You
10. The Game	Hate It Or Love It
11. Terror Squad	Lean Back
12. Ying Yang Twins	Wait (The Whisper Song)
13. Pretty Ricky	Grind With Me
14. T.I.	Bring 'Em Out
15. David Banner	Play
16. Young Jeezy	Soul Survivor
17. T.I.	You Don't Know Me
18. Missy Elliot	Lose Control
19. Ludacris	Pimpin' All Over The World
20. Webbie	Give Me That
21. Ja Rule	Wonderful
22. Lloyd Banks	Karma
23. Ludacris	Get Back
24. Ying Yang Twins	Badd
25. 50 Cent	Outta Control (Remix)

Year End Hot Rap Tracks – 2006

1. Yung Joc	It's Goin' Down
2. Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz	Snap Ya Fingers
3. Dem Franchinze Boyz	Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It
4. Nelly	Grillz
5. T.I.	What You Know
6. Chingy	Pullin' Me Back
7. Field Mob	So What
8. Sean Paul	Temperature
9. Young Dro	Shoulder Lean
10. Chamillionaire	Ridin'
11. E-40	U and Dat
12. Bubba Sparxxx	Ms. New Booty
13. Ludacris	Money Maker
14. Sean Paul	(When You Gonna) Give It Up To Me
15. T.I.	WhyYou Wanna
16. Yung Joc	I Know You See It
17. Busta Rhymes	Touch It
18. Dem Franchize Boyz	I Think They Like Me
19. Juelz Santana	There It Go (The Whistle Song)
20. Shawnna	Getting' Some
21. Three 6 Mafia	Stay Fly
22. Young Jeezy	Soul Survivor
23. Bow Wow	Fresh Azimiz
24. D4l	Laffy Taffy
25. Purple Ribbon All-Stars	Kryptonite (I'm On It)

Appendix B

National Hip Hop Political Convention Agenda

1. Education

1.1: We call for state constitutional amendments and/or federal legislation mandating equal funding and resources. We call for parity spending in all public school districts—suburban, urban, and rural alike. We demand transparency in school budgets and for the creation of committees that include community members and officials to ensure that education moneys are spent for their proper purposes and are audited yearly. We call for the restoration and preservation of community control of schools, and for independent community-based commissions to assess and evaluate the quality of community ownership of schools. We demand monies be used for the recruitment and training of teachers that are residents of the district. We reject the idea that vouchers are a viable solution to the disparities in education. We support access for undocumented immigrants to higher education and support the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act).

1.2: We call for implementation of curriculum that is socially practical, culturally relevant, comprehensive, developmental, and specific in nature, including but not limited to vocational training, based upon engaging students from a variety of learning styles, interest, and skills.

1.3: We call for funding and legislation to develop programs toward the eradication of illiteracy of all people, including those that have English as a Second Language.

1.4: We demand free education at all state and federally owned and operated post-secondary institutions, including trade schools and technical schools and the direct recruitment and retention of students of color. We oppose all attacks on affirmative action programs at all levels of higher education, and demand rollback of tuition hikes and the immediate full restoration of all state and federal budget cuts that have been since the beginning of the War on Terror.

Action: All delegates should go back to their states and hold an education summit that would include parents, parent organizers, educators, community groups, elected officials and students for the purpose of speaking to and elaborating on the four platform issues in specific and general.

2. Economic Justice

2.1: We demand fair taxation with representation, including a rollback of tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations, and advocacy for DC statehood. We demand that corporations that receive tax breaks and abatements from municipalities give two years notice of any move from those municipalities

2.2: We stand against gentrification in, disinvestment from, and displacement of our communities. We oppose the destruction of publicly funded and affordable housing. We call for mandatory investments in underdeveloped neighborhoods, through programs such as empowerment zones, public works jobs programs, small business administration, and/or tax abatements, subject to that community's review. In addition, opportunities

must be created to expand business opportunities for underrepresented minority businesses in urban areas.

2.3: We demand reparations for indigenous peoples (First Nations) and victims and descendants of the African Slave Trade, including funding to support institutions destroyed by slavery, Jim Crow, and eroded by centuries of institutional racism.

2.4: We demand full employment at living wages that help develop and empower our communities and individuals, with equal pay and advancement opportunities for women and men. We call for a Federal minimum wage with cost-of-living adjustment. We oppose all forms of economic violence. We call for the abolition of job discrimination, and the end of punitive welfare and foster care policies.

Action: Delegates should return to their respective states and research and investigate all local and state businesses and corporations that have participated in the American Slave trade; have city and state elected officials pass municipal ordinances and state legislation that requires any company that does business with local or state government to disclose any profit it has made from the American Slave Trade. We will boycott all said businesses until a fair and equitable plan has been developed for reparations.

3. Criminal Justice

3.1: We demand the reinstatement and protection of all civil and human rights, including voting, employment, education, and economic opportunities for all individuals who have been accused and/or convicted through the criminal justice system. We demand the end of adult sentencing for individuals under 18.

3.2: We demand the reduction of all mandatory minimum sentences.

3.3: We demand the formation of civilian review boards with subpoena power and an independent prosecutor at all levels of the justice system including federal, state, local, and military.

3.4: We demand the end to the targeted persecution, prosecution and incarceration of youth, drug users, and political activists. We demand the release of Sundiata Acoli and other political prisoners who have served over 25 years.

3.5: We demand the end of corporate interest-driven prison systems. We demand a higher minimum wage for prisoners, and full reinstatement of arts and education programs.

4. Criminal Justice

4.1: We demand federal legislation that would institute free and equitable universal holistic healthcare, including affordable prescription drugs and equal access to hospitals for indigent communities.

4.2: We demand federal legislation that funds mental and emotional health awareness, research, and treatment.

4.3: We demand federal legislation that would increase funding for research, awareness, prevention, and treatment of HIV/AIDS, heart disease, cancer, drug abuse, environmental health and other public health issues. We demand adequate firehouses, hospitals, and free clinics in our communities. We demand full evaluations, treatment, and care for

communities with high asthma, cancer and airborne diseases. We demand viable clean air. We demand labeled GMO (genetically modified) foods.

4.4: We demand federal legislation to ensure women's reproductive health, including safe and legal access to reproductive choices, and education and awareness about reproductive issues.

4.5:We advocate strongly for aggressive policy measures designed to protect adults, children and women from sexual harassment, sexual molestation, sexual assault, domestic violence and rape. We are particularly concerned with the violent effects of the prison-industrial complex and police misconduct and brutality. We stand for women's personal autonomy.

Action: All delegates should go back to their states and hold a summit on the effect of HIV/AIDS on women in their communities that would include parents, parent organizers, educators, community groups, elected officials, and students, for the purpose of speaking to and elaborating on the four platform issues in specific and general. Out of the Summits a report will be produced on conditions and a demand for an investigation of the establishment of free health care to be presented to respective State Legislatures.

5. Human Rights

5.1: We call for the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that will investigate, research, report and reconciliate human rights violations committed by the United States government throughout its history. The findings of this commission shall be institutionalized within public records and educational textbooks and disseminated via all available forms of media and communication. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall be convened by members of the National Hip-Hop Political Convention, working in association with a coalition of historians, scholars, elders, and other experts, and evaluated within one year of our first gathering.

5.2: We call for the drafting, promotion, and presentation to local, state, federal legislators, and public policy makers the People of Color (African, Latino/a, Asian, Native Indigenous Peoples) Anti-Terrorism Bill. The passing of this bill will immediately abolish terrorism in all areas of human activity, including, but not limited to, areas of sex, law, war, education, entertainment, economics, politics, labor and religion. The People of Color Anti-Terrorism Bill will be drafted by members of the National Hip Hop Political Convention with special attention paid to inhuman conditions within the penal system, land grabs in the form of eminent domain and gentrification, and chemical and biological warfare.

5.3: We demand an end to militarization. We call for an end to the recruitment of our youth into the armed forces in public schools and other public institutions. We call for the immediate repeal of the Patriot ACT I and II and a redefinition of "homeland security" for people of color. The National Political Hip Hop Convention strongly opposes any entity—corporate, media, entertainment, or other—which attempts to use Hip-Hop culture to support the potential drafting of our youth into the military.

5.4: We demand the ending of U.S. Imperialism, beginning by pulling our youth out of occupied territories like Iraq, Afghanistan, Puerto Rico Haiti and Colombia. We demand

the relief of previously colonized and enslaved Third World Countries from debt, structural adjustment programs, and forced austerity measures imposed on them by international lending institutions. We call for the end of military intimidation and monetary manipulation by these U.S.-led entities. We demand an end to all U.S. government aid and subsidies to Israel. We demand the immediate end to the U.S. construction and support of puppet governments, as in the Philippines, Haiti, and Colombia.

Appendix C

Thesis Codebook

This codebook provides guidelines that will help with the process of coding song lyrics from my research sample.

The main goal is to perform a content analysis of each song's lyrics and note all instances where the song addresses 1) any of the *five* themes listed in the National Hip Hop Political Convention agenda (See Appendix A) and 2) either of the *two* themes – Political/Community Organization and Media Issues – outlined in Chapter 3.

The five political themes found in the NHHPC agenda are defined, in part, according to the amendments listed under each theme on the agenda itself (See Appendix A). Additional criteria used to specify the contours of these themes are found in the definitions section below. Specific criteria used to define the two themes not found in the NHHPC agenda are not provided, though some suggestions are offered below.

A coding form (See Appendix C) will be assigned to each song being studied and will be labeled with the year the song appeared on the Billboard chart and the song's position on the chart. The coding form is divided into two columns. The first column contains each of the 7 themes I will be searching for. Listed underneath each of the 5 themes from the NHHPC agenda are the amendment issues associated with the broader point. Additional blank lines are located underneath each set of amendment issues and provide a space to write-in issues that are associated with a theme, but different from those addressed by the amendments. Listed underneath the Political/Community Organization and Media Issues headings are blank lines which provide a space to write-in issues associated with those themes.

After identifying an issue associated with one of the 7 themes a check will be placed on the line next to that issue on the coding form (See Appendix C) assigned to that particular song. A check should be made for *each* time a particular theme is mentioned. This will likely be in the form of a string of words, a line in a song, or a string of lines addressing the same topic. The sum of the total number of checks made for each theme will be placed in the box next to that theme on the coding form.

Code definitions/descriptions

1. Education

    a. funding – lyrics address …need for parity spending in all public schools; …need for community oversight of school spending; …rejection of vouchers; …support for spending to obtain the best teachers, etc.

b. curricula – lyrics address … social/cultural irrelevance, impracticality, or bias of school curricula; …opposition to narrow and unvaried approaches to teaching, etc.

c. literacy – lyrics address …the need to eradicate literacy of all people; current rates of literacy, etc.

d. access – lyrics address …making all public schools and public post-secondary institutions free for all; …making higher education tuition more affordable; …opposition to attacks on affirmative action; etc.

e. any other issue related to the education

2. Economic Justice

a. taxes – lyrics address …demand for fair taxation with representation; …demand for rollback of tax cuts for the wealthy; …demand for rollback of tax cuts for corporations; …demand for accountability from corporations who receive tax cuts; etc.

b. community maintenance – lyrics address …opposition to gentrification in, disinvestments from, and displacement of communities; …oppose the destruction of affordable public housing; …the need for investment into underdeveloped neighborhoods; …the need to expand business opportunities for underrepresented minorities; etc.

c. reparations – lyrics address …demands for reparations for indigenous peoples and descendants of the Arican Slave Trade; etc.

d. wages – lyrics addresss …need for a cost-of-living adjusted living wage or federal minimum wage; etc.

e. access – lyrics address …opposition to job discrimination against tall; …support for advancement opportunities for all; etc.

f. economic violence – lyrics address …opposition to punitive welfare and foster care policies; issues of welfare reform; etc.

g. any other issue related to economic justice

3. Criminal Justice

a. human rights (related to criminal justice) – lyrics address …reinstatement and protection of rights (voting, employment, education, economic) for those who have been through the criminal justice system; etc.

b. sentencing – lyrics address …demands to end adult sentencing for minors; reduction of mandatory minimum sentences; etc.

c. oversight – lyrics address …need for formation of civilian review boards and independent prosecutors; etc.

d. targeted CJ practices – lyrics address …profiling; …targeted persecution, prosecution and incarceration; etc.

e. prison system – lyrics address…demands for the end of corporate interest-driven prison system; …higher minimum wage for prisoners; …better treatment of prisoners; etc.

f. police misconduct – lyrics address …opposition to police brutality, violence, etc.

g. any other issue related to criminal justice

4. Health and Wellness

a. access – lyrics address …making equitable universal healthcare free for all; …need for adequate number of hospitals, clinics, firehouses in communities; etc.

b. mental health – lyrics address …demand for increased funding toward awareness, research and treatment of mental and emotional health issues; etc.

c. public health – lyrics address …demand for increased funding for research, awareess, prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, heart disease, cancer, drug abuse; etc.

d. environmental health – lyrics address …need for clean air/environment; funding for environmental health issues; etc.

e. women's health – lyrics address …ensuring women's reproductive health; access to safe reproductive choices; education and awareness about reproductive issues; etc.

f. violence and aggression – lyrics address …reducing sexual harassment, sexual molestation, assault, domestic violence, rape, murder, etc.; … implementation of measures to ensure the aforementioned; etc.

g. any other issue related to health and wellness

5. Human Rights

    a. investigations – lyrics address …the need to investigate, research, make public and reconcile human rights violations committed by the United States government throughout history

    b. terrorism – lyrics address …the abolishment of terrorism in all areas of activity – sex, law, war, education, entertainment, politics, labor, religion, etc.; …the passing of a bill aimed at ensuring the aforementioned; etc.

    c. militarization – lyrics address …an end to militarization; …an end to recruitment of youth in public institutions; …need to repeal the anti-terrorism measures that adversely affect people of color; etc.

    d. imperialism - lyrics address …need to end US Imperialism; …withdrawal of forces from occupied territories; …need to provide relief to previously colonized and enslaved Third World countries from debt, etc.; …need for an end to military intimidation and monetary manipulation; …support for ending US government aid to Israel; demand to end US support of puppet governments.

    e. any other human rights issue not specifically related to education, economic justice, criminal justice, or health and wellness; this includes, but is not limited to, support for broad less-specific human rights issues pertaining to "justice", "peace", "equality", "freedom", "liberty", "respect", "anti-prejudice", "anti-racism/sexism/classism or any other 'ism'", "anti-violence", and the like

6. Political/Community Organization

    a. possible political or community organization issues important to the Hip Hop Generation could include, but are not limited to… calls for the creation of organizations, groups, or parties intended to address political issues facing the Hip Hop Generation; …calls for involvement in workshops, conventions, summits, marches, protests and the like; …appeals in support of broad less-specific organization marked by calls for "unity", "sticking together", etc.

7. Media Issues

    a. possible media issues important to the Hip Hop Generation could include, but are not limited to, regulation, censorship, representation, conglomeration and other factors that direct what sorts of messages are disseminated to the populace

Appendix D

Thesis Coding Form

YEAR _____
SONG ID/CHART PLACEMENT _____

1. Education	☐
a. funding	_____
b. curricula	_____
c. literacy	_____
d. access	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
2. Economic Justice	☐
- taxes	_____
- community maintenance	_____
- reparations	_____
- wages	_____
- access	_____
- violence	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
3. Criminal Justice	☐
a. human rights (CJ)	_____
b. sentencing	_____
c. oversight	_____
d. targeted CJ practices	_____
e. prison system	_____
f. police misconduct	_____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

4. Health and Wellness ☐

- access _____
- mental health _____
- public health _____
- environmental health _____
- women's health _____
- violence and aggression _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

5. Human Rights ☐

a. investigations _____
b. terrorism _____
c. militarization _____
d. imperialism _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

6. Political/Community Organization ☐

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

7. Media Issues

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Appendix E

Content Analysis – Raw Data

Year											1	9	8	9											
Song ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Education	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Curricula	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
self-education	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Justice	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reparations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecoomic Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
intragroup priorities	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
external priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human rights (CJ)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sentencing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oversight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Targeted CJ practices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison system	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Police misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-drug selling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CJ indifference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Wellness	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women's health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Violence & aggerssion	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Rights	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investigations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Militarization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperialism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (general)	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equality (general)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
racism (general)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Political/Community Organization	17	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-intragroup violence	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
"unity"	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
unnamed opposition	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
named opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
group empowerment	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media Issues	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
rap stereotyping	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equal representations	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
media without a message	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (media)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Year	1990																								
Song ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Curricula	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
self-education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reparations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecoomic Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
intragroup priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
external priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Justice	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human rights (CJ)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sentencing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oversight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Targeted CJ practices	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison system	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Police misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-drug selling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CJ indifference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Wellness	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public health	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women's health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Violence & aggerssion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investigations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Militarization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperialism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equality (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
racism (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Political/Community Organization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-intragroup violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
"unity"	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
unnamed opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
named opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
group empowerment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media Issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
rap stereotyping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equal representations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
media without a message	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (media)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Year											2005														
Song ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Curricula	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
self-education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reparations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecoomic Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
intragroup priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
external priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human rights (CJ)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sentencing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oversight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Targeted CJ practices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison system	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Police misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-drug selling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CJ indifference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Wellness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women's health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Violence & aggerssion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investigations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Militarization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperialism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equality (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
racism (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Political/Community Organization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-intragroup violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
"unity"	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
unnamed opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
named opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
group empowerment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media Issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
rap stereotyping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equal representations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
media without a message	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (media)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Year											2006														
Song ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Curricula	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
self-education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reparations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ecoomic Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
intragroup priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
external priorities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal Justice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human rights (CJ)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sentencing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oversight	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Targeted CJ practices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prison system	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Police misconduct	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-drug selling	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CJ indifference	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health & Wellness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Access	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Environmental health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women's health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Violence & aggerssion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Investigations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terrorism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Militarization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imperialism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equality (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
racism (general)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Political/Community Organization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
anti-intragroup violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
"unity"	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
unnamed opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
named opposition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
group empowerment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Media Issues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
rap stereotyping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
equal representations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
media without a message	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
expression (media)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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