

## **HIP-HOP AND FEMINISM**

Fall 2013

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Department of Political Science

### **OBJECTIVES**

For more than 30 years, hip-hop has been the most pronounced cultural identifier for young Americans. This course seeks to address, analyze, explore and contest the political aspects of hip-hop music and culture through a close examination of feminism. This course is an analytic space for debate and discussion about the impact of hip-hop culture on the sexual, gender and political understandings of Americans and others around the world.

In addition to the traditional aspects of assigned readings, lectures and class discussions this class will include a significant independent research component, visits with experts in the field, and several Beyond the Classroom Experiences. This class is offered as a writing intensive course. It is not service learning eligible.

## **ASSESSMENT**

You will produce one long paper (12-15 pages) in this class. The paper will include an empirical, quantitative analysis of data from the new “Outlook on Life and Political Engagement” survey.

Research proposal (3-4 pages): includes overall motivating question of the paper, specific hypotheses to be tested, specific survey questions you will use, a preliminary list of 5-7 outside sources. (10%)

Due: September 27 by 5pm

Paper outline and Annotated Bibliography (3-4 pages): Complete outline of research paper included specific data analysis to be performed. Annotation of 5-7 outside sources explaining their relevance to the research paper. (15%)

Due: October 25 by 5pm

Initial reporting of results and graphs/ tables/ figures. (length will vary) (15%)

Due: November 22 by 5pm

Final paper (12-15 pages) (30%)

Due: December 12 by 5pm

Poster based on the research paper at Hip-Hop and Feminism Conference. (15%)

Due: December 5

General class discussion, attendance and participation (5%)

Participation in and one (1) short reflection paper (2-4 pages) on a Beyond the Classroom experience. (10%)

## **Honor Code**

You are bound by the Tulane University Honor Code in all the work that you do for this course at this university. See <http://tulane.edu/college/code.cfm> .

**\*\*NOTE:** You will lose points if your papers or assignments are late. 1/3 letter grade will be deducted for every 24 hours the assignment is late. No assignment will be accepted after 72 hours late without prior agreement.\*\*

## **Students needing accommodations**

Tulane University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students who need accommodations must be registered with the Office of Disability Services and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance. See <http://tulane.edu/studentaffairs/disability/index.cfm>

**Required Texts:**

Cohen, Cathy J. *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Love, Bettina. *Hip Hop's Li'l Sistas Speak: Negotiating Hip Hop Identities and Politics in the New South*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2012.

Morgan, Joan. *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: A Hip-Hop Feminist Breaks it Down*. New York: Touchstone, 1999.

Pough, Gwendolyn, Elaine Richardson, Aisha Durham, and Rachel Raimist, eds. *Home Girls Make Some Noise: Hip Hop Feminism Anthology*. Mira Loma, California: Parker Publishing, LLC, 2007.

Rose, Tricia. *The Hip-Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Rap - and Why it Matters*. New York: Basic Books, 2008.

**Required Software:**

This class requires that you have access to SPSS software for statistical analysis that is part of your final project.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Week 1: August 27

Introduction to the course

We will discuss the “Outlook on Life and Political Engagement” survey. The survey description and codebook is linked on the Blackboard site. Please be familiar with it on the first day of class.

### Hip-Hop as a Cultural and Political Problem

### Week 2: September 3

What is at stake when culture meets politics?

Chapters 1-3 of Cathy Cohen’s *Democracy Remixed*

\*Jewell, K. Sue. “The Social Significance of Cultural Imagery.” In *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of US Social Policy*, 15-35. New York: Routledge, 1993.

\*Watkins, S. Craig. “The Culture Industry and the Hip Hop Generation.” In *Representing: Hip-Hop Culture and the Production of Black Cinema*, 232-245. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

### Week 3: September 10

The Hip-Hop Wars

Tricia Rose, *The Hip-Hop Wars*. Chapters 3-8

Watch: “Hip Hop, Mass Media and Racial Storytelling in the Age of Obama”  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u\\_x1c6kt3JQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_x1c6kt3JQ)

**Special Guest: Tricia Rose via Skype**

### Week 4: September 17

What is different when women make the music?

Section 1 of *Home Girls Make Some Noise: Hip Hop Feminism Anthology*

**Special Guest: DJ Soul Sister in class**

<http://www.djsoulsister.com>

## Women on the Mic

### Week 5: September 24

Is it possible to be a Hip-Hop Feminist?

Joan Morgan, *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost*

\*hooks, bell. "Black Women Shaping Feminist Theory." In *Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women's Studies*, eds. Frances S. Foster, Beverly Guy-Sheftall and Stanlie M. James, 31-45.

**\*\*RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE BY FRIDAY at 5PM via EMAIL\*\***

### Week 6: October 1

\* Oware, Matthew. "A 'Man's Woman'? : Contradictory Messages in the Songs of Female Rappers, 1992-2000." *Journal of Black Studies* 39, no. 5 (2009): 786-802.

\* Mullins, Katie L. "Black Female Identity and Challenges to Masculine Discourse in Rah Digga's Dirty Harriet." *Popular Music and Society* (2012): 1-19.

In class films:

Byron Hurt, *Beyond Beats and Rhymes*

Elizabeth Wood & Gabriel Nussbaum, *Wade in the Water*

## Stats Break!

### Week 7: October 8

The best stats class ever!

We will discuss how to use statistical tools to study the cultural and political issues we care about. I promise this class will be both fun and informative. Hip-hop and statistics! What could be better?

Bring the codebooks for the Outlook survey. You should be very familiar with it by now. Meeting room TBA.

\*Hip Hop and Stats Notes: Part I by Prof MHP on Blackboard

## Sex and Sexuality

### Week 8: October 15

#### Sex and Hip-Hop

Section 2 of *Homegirls Make Some Noise*  
(except Andreana Clay piece, which we will discuss 10/22)

\*Hunter, Margaret. "Shake it, Baby, Shake it: Consumption and the New Gender Relation in Hip-Hop." *Sociological Perspectives* 54, no. 1 (2011): 15-36.

**Special Guest: Professor Nghana Lewis**

### Week 9: October 22

#### Sexuality and Hip-Hop

\* Smalls, Shante P. "'The Rain Comes Down': Jean Grae and Hip Hop Heteronormativity." *American Behavioral Scientist* 55, no. 1 (2011): 86-95.

\* Lane, Nikki. "Black Women Queering the Mic: Missy Elliot Disturbing the Boundaries of Racialized Sexuality and Gender." *Journal of Homosexuality* 58 (2011): 775-792.

\*Clarke, Cheryl. "Lesbianism: An Act of Resistance." In *Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women's Studies*, eds. Frances S. Foster, Beverly Guy-Sheftall and Stanlie M. James, 12-22.

\*Cohen, Cathy. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" In *Still Brave: The Evolution of Black Women's Studies*, eds. Frances S. Foster, Beverly Guy-Sheftall and Stanlie M. James, 240-268.

Clay, Andreana. "'I used to be scared of the dick': Queer women of color and hip-hop masculinity." In *Homegirls Make Some Noise*, 148-166.

**\*\*OUTLINE AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE BY FRIDAY 5PM\*\***

## Stats Break!

### Week 10: October 29

Second ever best stats class ever.

One more fabulous stats class! You are going to love this! Seriously....

Bring the codebooks for the Outlook survey. You should be very familiar with it by now.

\*Hip Hop and Stats Notes: Part II by Prof MHP on Blackboard

## **Girls and Identity Formation**

### **Week 11: November 5**

Hip-Hop and Girls

Bettina Love, *Hip-Hop's Li'l Sistas Speak: Negotiating Hip Hop Identities and Politics in the New South*

### **Week 12: November 12**

Hip-Hop as a Feminist Tool

\* Henry, Wilma J. "Hip-Hop Feminism: A Standpoint to Enhance the Positive Self-Identity of Black College Women." *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 47, no. 2 (2010): 139-156.

\* Henry, Wilma. J, Nicole M. West, and Andrea Jackson. "Hip-Hop's Influence on the Identity Development of Black Female College Students: A Literature Review." *Journal of College Student Development* 51, no. 3 (2010): 237-251.

\*Ruth Nicole Brown, *Black Girlhood Celebration: Toward a Hip Hop Pedagogy: The Political Future of Hip Hop Feminism*

Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 5 and Conclusion

**Special Guest: Ruth Nicole Brown via Skype**

## **The Political Future of Hip Hop and Feminism**

### **Week 13: November 19**

Hip Hop as a Feminist Political Strategy?

\*Rose, Tricia. "Bad Sistahs: Black Women Rappers and Sexual Politics in Rap Music." In *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, 146-182. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994.

Pages 389-470 in *Homegirls Make Some Noise*

**\*\*RESULTS, GRAPHS and FIGURES DUE by FRIDAY at 5PM via EMAIL\*\***

## **Week 14: November 26**

Hip-Hop in Politics and the Academy

Chapters 5 and 6 in Cathy Cohen, *Democracy Remixed*

\*Peoples, Whitney A. “‘Under Construction:’ Identifying Foundations of Hip-Hop Feminism and Exploring Bridges between Black Second-Wave and Hip-Hop Feminism.” *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism* 8, no. 1 (2008): 19-52.

**Special Guest: Marcyliena Morgan via Skype**

Professor of African and African American Studies, Harvard University  
Executive Director of the HipHop Archive

## **Week 15: December 3**

Conference planning and preparation for poster presentations. We will meet in location TBA to work together on this.

\*\*Final Poster Presentation at Hip-Hop Feminism Conference Thursday, December 5\*\*

\*\*Final Paper Due Thursday, December 12 by 5PM\*\*