

College writing i sec. 39

[History](#), [African American](#)



College Writing I Sec. 39 15 March 2010 Stereotypes of Women in the Hip-Hop Culture Have you ever wondered what it would be like if there were no stereotyping in America. Stereotyping has been around for quite a long time and women in particular have been stereotyped for numerous reasons. There are various things in society today that put women down for the things they do. Hip hop music and their music videos have been around since the 1980's and continues to be very popular among young people, especially the young men and women of America. The media tends to exploit women's natural sex appeal in such a perverse way that they are corrupting the youth of today and presenting a perception of life that does not exist. There are a lot of music lyrics in the rap and hip hop genres today that pretty much perceive women as " skanks" for the clothing they wear. It is sad to say that our culture of movies and not just song lyrics revolves so much around women dressing in a sexy manner. " According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), up to 75 per cent of music videos contain sexually suggestive material"(Media Awareness Network 1). It is also said that many of these types of videos " glamorize" alcohol and tobacco use, plus fifty percent contain violent acts toward women (Media Awareness Network 1). Most of these videos, such as 50 Cents " candy shop, " contain women who are not popular in the media. They are women who audition for parts because they think they have the " looks" or skills to be a part in a video. What the producer is just trying to do is make the song an excellent " marketing tool" for the artist (Media Awareness Network 1). This in return brings in a large sum of money to the recording company. This is also how the women in the videos get paid. So in essence, I believe the women are

getting used by these companies to bring in money for them. In return, women in general are then stereotyped as sex objects. Due to these women who are willingly exploiting their bodies, women are characterizing themselves in a way that is not considered “ good. ” It is very poignant that women are using themselves because it is destroying the young culture of America. I know many people have a thing for rap music, especially young men and women. It is the type of genre that makes them feel good inside or they just like the rhythm. They may take pleasure in this type of music but it is definitely changing the way young people are thinking, more than ever young females. According to Mary Ann Liebert Publishers who published a journal article on women’s health, young African American females who spend a lot of time watching rap music videos will be more likely to partake in high-risk behaviors such as having sex with multiple partners, binge drinking and/or test positive for marijuana in their systems (Vol. 16, No. 8). The article also stated it could create a “ negative body image” for these young women. One can argue that young women feel that it is okay to live their lifestyle like the artists because they are famous and it is on television almost every day. Some people claim that this type of music with its explicit lyrics and music videos are hard to obtain for young people, when really it is not. In accordance with musical content containing explicit lyrics which include lyrics, acts of violence and sex, the U. S. Recording Industry started placing “ Parental Advisory” labels on the covers of these albums (Media Awareness Network 2). This started in 1990 and they continue to have these labels printed. However, this change does not stop all people under the age of eighteen from acquiring this type of music. This article also states that

some places such as Wal-Mart and K-Mart do not have labels and some stores have no restrictions on age limit to buy any type of their music. Another argument that proves young people can listen to this music is that it is readily available online on YouTube, or on television networks such as MTV. Canadian radio stations do not play music with such content. Maybe they should have thought that it probably does not matter since it is readily available online or on television. Some of these music videos that portray women in sexually implicit manners are 50 Cents "candy shop," Black Eyed Peas' "My Humps," and Ginuwines' "My Pony." They all have scandalous lyrics; the videos also contain either men paying for "sexual favors," or women dressed with very little clothes on to "please" the men. Young women around the United States see this as good music but it also can corrupt them. Even solo female artists put themselves into a category where they are easily stereotyped. "The midriff-baring Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears may be marketed under a "girl power" guise—but what they are really selling to their mostly pre-pubescent audiences is adult sexuality" (Media Awareness Network 3). This essentially tells young women that dressing with skimpy clothes on is okay. Dressed this way, men lose their tact and begin to flirt in a more sexual and demeaning way; on many occasions this is completely inexcusable. Women are putting themselves into this category, they are labeling themselves the stereotypes created by many other people. Rap artists today and of the past are using women for sex. Another artist who has used explicit lyrics is Akinyele. Some such lyrics he has used are found in his song "Put it in your mouth." One line he has in this song goes like this, "get on your knees, make like the breeze begin to

blow but dont give me no Ralph Lauren grin if your not down to go low. " This is an example of how rap music has gone too far and continues to be a problem for the young women of the society today. All in all, America's rap culture has had a harmful effect on the young people, especially women. There are many artists or groups who have lyrics that " promote" sex, drugs and alcohol to the listeners who are mostly young men and women. I know many women that want to go far in life; however, it is very difficult with all of the negative lyrics spoken by rap artists in the media. Women are changed by this type of music and some have troubles when they get to college because of the influences in their lives like rap music. It is a very sad situation that women are portrayed as sex objects, and because of it, many families face such things like teen pregnancies. We can certainly say as a society that there is one thing that will never change. Young people will continue to buy this type of music, because it will continue to be a popular type of genre. We will never know as a nation if this music will ever stop. A nation without this genre would certainly bring dramatic changes in the younger cultures of women, which I believe would make America a more unified country. Works Cited Cohn, Vicki. " Sexual Stereotypes Portrayed in Rap Music Videos Influence High-Risk Behaviors Among African-American Teenage Girls." Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. Publishers, 16 010 2007. Web. 13 Mar 2 010. . " Explicit Lyrics." Media Awareness Network, 2010. Web. 13 Mar 2010. . " Music Videos." Media Awareness Network, 2010. Web. 12 Mar 2010. . " Parental Advisory Labels." Media Awareness Network, 2010. Web. 13 Mar 2010. .