

Hip hop matters



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(Assignment) ' A GREAT YEAR IN HIP HOP' Watkins S. Craig's ' A Great Year in Hip Hop depicts the growth of Hip Hop culture as a force touching all spheres of American life facing all odds during the period from 1970s to 1990s. Though the growth was visible in all spheres, the writer mentions the growth in three spheres; namely music magazines, rap music and finally apparels. In the case of music magazines, the growth started in 1990s. By mid nineties, as a result of increase in the audience of hip hop, The Source became the best-selling music magazine. However, the period also witnessed the growth of competitors like Vibes by Quincy Jones and Time Warner, and XXL, creating tough competition in the field of music publishing. In fact, hip hop had its humble beginning in 1970s through mix tapes, local parties and local concerts. In the case of apparels, the growth at once. For example, the brand FUBU which had its humble beginning in 1992 became one of the best selling brand in 1999. Being influenced by the hip hop designs, entrepreneurs like Carl Jones and T. J. Walker started designing which laid foundation for the modern-day urban sportswear, thus developing the field into a multi-billion dollar industry. In the case of hip hop music, the way of growth was not so peaceful. There were a number of hurdles to cross. Firstly, the African American culture was long accustomed to R&B which was in harmony with their culture and social norms and the rap that neglected such things was too difficult to digest for them. So, throughout its growth, there were lobbying against rap music. At first, even radio stations hesitated to play rap music as they feared a decline in the number of audience. Though the popularity of rap was clearly visible in the market, retailers failed to accept this reality that the deep rooted R & B gave way to rap music. One incident that gave a push to the growth of rap is a photo event named ' A

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Great Day in Harlem 98' held by XXL in 1998 in an attempt to set their publication apart from other rivals. Many prominent figures including Grandmaster Flash and DJ Herc participated in the program which made the world realize the massive growth of hip hop culture. However, the mainstream could not stop rap from its rise. By 1992, radio stations like WJPC-AM followed by KYOK-AM started playing rap and it was the beginning of an uncontrollable growth. By 2004, Inside Radio, a data and information company revealed that rap has become the most prominent music style. Thus, by 1998, rap officially became America's music of choice according to Billboard. Works Cited Craig, Watkins S. Hip Hop Matters: Politics, pop culture, and the struggle for the soul of a movement. Boston MA, Beacon Press, 2006. Web 8 Feb 2011 <http://www.scribd.com/doc/15447208/Hip-Hop-Matters-Politics-Popular-Culture-and-the-Struggle-for-the-Soul-of-a-Movement-S-Craig-Watkins>