

Black women vs hip-hop essay



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Crystal Smith once wrote that “ Images of black women in hip-hop culture make it more likely for them to be viewed as targets to be defaced and abused. ” This statement is confirmed true there are many African American women in the hip-hop culture that are disrespected or abused in some type of way during the making of a video or even the lyrics of a song. There are many ways African American women of the hip-hop culture are being abused and disrespected. Some video women or as others would call them “ Video Vixens” start off as strippers.

The artists go out to these strip clubs see the women and ask them to be in their video. The women accept any offer and will do anything the artist asks them to do just to make fast money. These women want to become famous and believe doing these disgraceful things to themselves will help them achieve this goal. The women are being disrespected by the things they are asked to do in these videos like the things they are asked to wear and the dances they are asked to do. In the article “ Hip-Hop’s Betrayal of Black Women,” Jennifer McLune has strong views.

She comments on how African American women are being betrayed by hip-hop, by the African American culture, and by their community. She also states how many hip-hop figures make excuses for why hip-hop continues with such a great, bold disrespect for African American women. Although hip-hop betrays African American women, in many ways there are still some African American women that go along with the male point-of-view. African American women that support this type of behavior from hip-hop are betraying their own kind and are losing this battle against hip-hop also.

McLune starts the article with Kevin Powell's statement on why hip-hop objectifies African American women. McLune writes " But just as it was unfair to demonize men of color in the 1960s solely as wild-eyed radicals when what they wanted, amidst their fury, was a little freedom and a little power, today it is wrong to categorically dismiss hip-hop without taking into serious consideration the socioeconomic conditions that have led to the current state of affairs. Or, to paraphrase the late Tupac Shakur, we were given this world, we did not make it" (214).

Powell has a weak excuse for the disrespect towards women. McLune writes " So we were given this world, we did not make it;" does that mean we cannot try to change the minds of others or the culture as a whole (214).

One would agree with Tupac Shakur but we should improve what we were given instead of making situation worse. There should be a point where we overcome this world we were given. We should try to change the minds of others or the culture as a whole. Not all rappers in hip-hop treat women in these cruel ways.

McLune states " Hip-hop artists like Talib Kweli and Common market themselves as conscious alternatives, yet they remain passive in the face of unrelenting women-hating bravado from mainstream artists" (214).

Although, hip-hop has artist, who cares, respect and do not degrade women these artist still look up to the women-hating artist. These artists give credit for the type of music and videos other artist unlike themselves put out for society. The positive credits for the disrespectful, women-hating music are an influence for buyers to listen to and buy these songs.

McLune writes “ Most so-called conscious artists appear to care more about their own acceptance by mainstream artists than wanting to make positive changes in the culture” (214). These artists advertise themselves as conscious aware, but cannot or do not want to change the negative affects of hip-hop music. Women should not have to hear words like as McLune writes about a lyric for the rapper Jay-Z “ I pimp hard on a trick, look Fuck if your leg broke bitch, hop up on your good foot” (215). Most rappers today are not as cruel as Jay-Z was in his earlier years.

Jay-Z in fact no longer say these types of things, maybe he has realized that he does not need to degrade, and disrespect women to be a famous artist. Words like these are harsh and should never be spoken at all, especially towards women. McLune states that “ Hip-hop artist Eve, who describes herself as “ a pit bull in a skirt,” makes an appearance in the Sporty Thieves video for “ Pigeons,” one of the most hateful misogynistic anthems in hip-hop. Her appearance displays her unity with the women branded “ pigeons,” but with the men who label them” (215).

Eve is in this video not as a “ pigeon” but as a supporter of the rappers who are calling the other women “ pigeons”. Her appearance is disrespectful to herself and women as a whole. There are many female rappers in hip-hop; many of them are standing with the same team that writes such harsh lyrics towards women. McLune writes, “ This is a heartbreaking example of how hip-hop encourages men to act collectively in the interest of male privilege while dividing women into opposing camps of good and bad or worthy and unworthy of respect” (215).

Women rappers that are on that same team should realize that they are not special and that eventually their team will objectify them with that same disrespect. In conclusion, McLune is using this article to let it be known how some African American women believe we are being betrayed by our culture and are looking for ways to take a stand on these issues. But as long as they have some women going along with these disrespectful ways and people like Kevin Powell there will never be a solution or change in this major problem.

Maybe if all women took a stand to the hip-hop culture we can overcome some women feelings this disrespect. Rappers only put out what the fans want to hear. Therefore, fans should really listen to the words that these rappers are saying. If the fans change the rappers would be forced to change with them. Crystal Smith has a point the more images we see of African American women the more they will be abused and defaced. Women in the hip-hop culture should take her words into consideration. Maybe they would not feel as though they are being abused and disrespected if they did so.