

Popular music assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Focusing on a music based scene, movement or Artist of your own choosing from the period 1955 to 2000. You will detail, explain and analyse the roots, character and legacy of your chosen subject and consider what impact, if any, your subject has had upon popular music culture and the contemporary music business. Your choice may be a genre based scene such as the development of House Music in the UK through the 1980s and 1990s, or a geographically connected movement such as the Singer- Songwriter movement in Los Angeles during the early 1970s, or a significantly influential and important Artist such as David Bowie or Madonna.

You will need to have your choice of subject approved by your Module Leader, so do not begin researching or writing your assignment before you have discussed your theme with them. In this essay I will attempt to focus on a specific music scene as well as a movement being my choice of the East Coast Hip-Hop scene and the culture it carries. Aiming to focus on the time period of 1980-2000, where it felt it had its biggest and most controversial moments.

Digging into its roots and some of its legacy and the people within the society that helped cause some drastic changes that occurred and still go on at present spiraling in today's society causing effects on the popular music culture and music industry. "Rap is a gimmick, but I'm for the hip-hop, the culture." - Method Man East Coast Hip-Hop was birthed from the genre Hip-Hop when it had its most peak moments in the years of the 1980s going into the premature years of the 1990s. Marred to the Orlando form of Hip-Hop it became well known and recognized for the positive some-times being afro centric and realistic lyrics that often had some epithet of meaning into what

was currently going on in the “ people’s lives”. East Coast Hip-Hop combined various genres of music and sounds one of the largest example’s being Jamaican danceable toasting where Do’s played the rhythm and artist such as Sister Nancy, Yellow Man and Dennis Allocate blessed the music with their voice making unusual sounds by their mouth or slightly mining over the beat making the crowd feel welcomed and at one with the artist.

The passion of using words to express feelings and thoughts similar to Soul music which was also popular at this time. With all of these factors East Coast Hip-Hop began to see the rise of a new community and culture allowing us to sit back and witness the growth and beginning 1 OFF DIM, Notorious Big, Jay Z and Nas who would all go on to cause their own footsteps on the future and all the great things it bought then, and still today in culture and the music industry.

Originating from the East Coast of America, being more specific in the South Bronx of New York Hip-Hop came alive and began to stomp down so many barriers. In the beginning Hip-Hop contained no toasting, rapping nor talking but talented Do’s that created unfamiliar sound. However this would go on to change as people such as Gill Scott-Heron began to perform words of blissful spoken poetry. During the years of the sass’s block parties were a main source of time killing, entertainment and gathering for the African American community and in some cases the youth of Ladino’s.

Do’s such as DC Cool Here would arrive to individuals house bringing the party and crowd with them to play music that would satisfy at the time most popular being soul/Ran. They soon found a new trend that would go on to

make history using Jamaican Dub where percussion was used to cause isolation then the breaks of songs allowing B-Boys and B-girls to breakneck to the funky and new vibrant sound. They went on experimenting with techniques and ideas such as scratching and beat mixing were Mac's such as Roseanne Shanty began to spit over.

In the year of 1975 things slightly began to change in regards to the “street life” known gangs of New York began to bring the animosity into another forming a-boy and B-girl groups who began to dance to the break of Hip-Hop, which went on to create a new trend of “break dancing”. This became to play and contribute a huge amount to Hip-Hop along with other components Mining, graffiti and Digging. Together these elements would be the first building posts for East Coast Hip-Hop. You see in the beginning the basic thought of Hip-Hop was the music the Do's created along with the lyrics the Mac's put on top of them.

However with the new trends of breakdancing and spray painting people were almost forced to take notice that this wasn't just a phase the people were going through but now a lifestyle choice and belief for the South side of the Bronx New York. In 1974 Sylvia Robinson and Joe Robinson founded Sugar Hill Records which before its time was never done and became the first major Hip-Hop recording company which then gave East Coast Hip-Hop the power to expand and see growth. Their first major success in 1979 when “Rappers Delight” produced and created by “Sugar Hill gang” having a score of 3 on UK charts and thirty six in the US.

This song gave East Coast Hip-Hop the platform it needed to gain recognition from the world. This gave East Coast Hip-Hop the seed it needed to grow. In 1981 Tommy Boy Records/ Entertainment the independent label was created and merchandised by Tom Silverman and also sent a shock wave through the music scene with albums such as 'Naughty by Nature' a group entitled album. "Naughty by Nature" was released in 1991 and was hailed to be one of the best 100 rap albums by 'One of the greatest albums ever made' (NAME 2010).

This displayed how critical it was to have record labels like these around and supporting the scene as it gave the artist's and creators the chance to show some-thing they both loved and had a sincere passion for. In the year of 1983 the world was struck by "the DNA of rap music" (Run DIM), making a bang on the East Coast scene the world watched as Jason Micelle Cam-Master Jay), Darryl McDaniel (D. M. C) and Joseph Simmons (Run) originating, Queens New York bought out their first single "It's like that". The single was aided with Sucker M. Co's reaching number 15 on the US R charts.

With Run Dam's hard-hitting beats, aggressive rhymes, fashion style and first solid four albums 'Run-D. M. C' in 1984, 'King of Rock in 1985, 'Raising Hell' in 1986 and 'Tougher Than Leather' in 1988, they had now found the new ability to bring awareness to the what was thought of the "underground music scene". As well as bringing new heights to East Coast Hip-Hop we saw them change Hip-Hop from being just a musical front too LOL to care about appearance and presentation with it's rough edges into a fashion statement being strategically clever about all of the fashion choices they made.

Run DIM was more than determined on pushing and creating their own style. They simply dressed on stage as they would on the corner of their streets in Queens, by doing this kids and fans were able to identify. Their “ stick-up kid” look was now shadowing the thoughts and motives of the streets.

Dressed in hardcore leather jackets, Godfather hats, exaggerated Jewelry, dark colored Jeans and of course their infamous Aids sneakers. It first began when people start recognizing Run DIM wearing their trainers with no laces, a style deriving from Jail where officers removed the laces to prevent inmates from committing suicide.

However all of these positive aspects didn't come without backlash . With the older generation seeing the effect Run DIM were having on the youth they began getting annoyed at them for using such stereotypical references and links. Run DIM soon received a back lash from musician and poet Dry. Gerald Ideas when he released “ Felon Sneakers” a song which he used to beat them down about connecting such things of inmates to the youths as bad influence.

This didn't stop Run DIM in their tracks however as they came back with the song “ My Aids” which also became one of their hits, turning the meaning around and deceiving it's stereotype to be a positive movement and contradiction to what the “ system” wanted “ Me and my Aids do the lilies things, We like to stomp out pimps with diamond rings, We slay all suckers who perpetrate, and lay down law from state to state” In affect this caused the sale of Aids sneakers to raise in the ass's eventually allowing Run DIM to do some-thing that hadn't been done before, hey were signed by Aids to produce their own clothing line and sneakers with a ultimate bonus of 1

million dollars. This would start a trend with Hip-Hop as it carries on to happen now with artist such as accent being sign to create sneakers and clothing for Rebook, and female rap artist such as Tenant Taylor and Missy Elliot to create their own styles for Aids. “ My Aids” was the confirmation needed that East Coast Hip-Hop was now more than a simple form of music but a lifestyle eventually launching street wear to the place it is today. After all this positivist the darkness and underground grunge began to come out of the East Coasts draining systems.

A new culture was growing influencing more of the East Coast’s talented artists that were Grandmaster Flash released the song “ white lines” telling the hidden story of the New York Streets using lyrics such as “ Ticket to ride white line highway, tell all your friends, they can go my way, pay your toll, sell your soul, pound for pound costs more than gold”. The lyrics demonstrated a warning about the effects of using cocaine. With the obvious use of cocaine taking place it was only right the story of the dealers e exposed, this is when the perfect timing for the “ hustler” to come up and tell his story of being apart of the East Coast scene. For the majority of underground rappers money making was at times A issue so they used the option of “ hustling” alongside rapping and for a time thought to have gone hand in hand working together “ Just like beats and flows” (Carter, S. 2010).

In 1986 Beastie Boys created their most successful album entitled “ licensed to Ill” which featured arguably their biggest hit “ fight for your right” making history as the first ever Hip-Hop album to reach the target of being umber one in the US billboards charts. This was a controversial factor and cause some animosity and annoyance amongst the black community as they

believed a right had been taken away from them. The Beastie Boys came from a middle/upper class background and had no relevance or experiences with the “ hustling” scene and the music that it was producing. 1987 was A year for big things giving the most successful rappers a steady platform to show what they had been working for.

With their political lyrics and statements Public Enemy became one of the most influential rap groups. Although their first album *My Adrenaline* wasn't a hit, their second album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* released in 1988 would go on to prove critics wrong selling over a million copies including songs with empowering political speeches made by Malcolm X. With Flavor Flav wearing his giant clock chains and the name of the group it was easy to draw the conclusion that they had come revert the idea of them being damaging to every-day people and society to become known for being powerful and influencing. However one of the most important and historic stamps were still left to come to put its mark on East Coast Hip-Hop.

Jay Z made an entrance on to the scene in the unforgettable year of 1989 and would soon go on to be referred to as “ the best rapper in the world”. Jay Z being friends with Jazzy B was able to gain contact with Brooklyn DC Fresh Gordon who added him to a verse on a track with Big Daddy Kane on a mix-tape which began to circulate. Even with all this new unique talent Jay Z had he still fell into the rap what most other young black males were falling into “ hustling”. However if it wasn't for this lifestyle Jay Z wouldn't of been inspired to write and deliver the lyrics he did empower him to share his experiences of life, his laity “ had a story to tell” (Carter, S. 2010).

He himself made sure that his songs were as truthful as they could be not just glorifying the street life that was being lived but often trying to depict and explain how the once city paved with gold had turned into the streets that homed criminals, prostitutes, drug abusers but most important legends in the making. “ This is why the hustler’s story – through hip hop – has connected with a global audience. The deeper we got into those sidewalk cracks and into the mid of the young hustler trying to find his fortune there, the closer we get to the ultimate human story, the story of struggle, which is what defines us many others like him life story unravel, informing us of the streets he met and they changes him and also the people around him. Music was not Jay G’s only talent just like his peers such as Russell Simmons, Puff Daddy and Dry Deer we saw Jay Z bring his entrepreneur skills from the streets to his own office.

Owning brands and businesses such as Orca-Wear , clubs 40/40 which are located in over 4 different states, Carols Daughter a brand of beauty products, sports club bar 40/40 in over 20 airports, he also bought a share of the Brooklyn Nets basketball team and closest to home in 2005 Jay Z bought a stake in the England football team Arsenal. With the rise of Jay Z still escalating we saw rappers with similar dialect and begin to come through the East Coast Hip-Hop scene. Artist such as Nas, Wwv-Tang Clan and one of my own personal favorites The Notorious B. I. G. In 1994 spectators were blown away with B. L. G’s easy flow accompanied by his slight lisp, with the album “ Ready To Die” which hit the billboards at number 3. Once again we saw a rapper tell the public his life story allowing his peers to understand change and what can happen with a hard grind.

In his famous song "I Gotta Skill" he says "A Nigger never been as broke as me, I like that", demonstrating that there is some form of light at the end of the tunnel. With being on the rise and so much other success B. I. G still had other projects going on the most recognizable being "Junior M. A. F. I. A" which included some of his friends he grew up with in the streets such as Ill Cease, Chic Del Vice, M. C Slept and Ill Kim a female rapper artist he found on the street and helped to mould along with Puff Daddy. You see even with the world on his door step he refused to forget his promises to the streets and remain humble bringing his "old" crew into his "new" life and new found success. Nas was greatly inspired by the late B. I.

G and released his first album "Lunatic" in 1994 produced with East Coast producer Pete Rock and Large Professor. On this album Nas shared his childhood and not so long ago life experiences living in the inner city of New York. With his style of multi syllable rhyming the album was able to reach number 2 on the US charts. With the East Coast producing consistent and well produced acts the East Coast could not be ignored which also would bring rivals as mentioned before the East Coast and West Coast rappers soon began beef and go back and forth almost take it back to the streets. One of the most worldly known rhymes created by Tuba in "Hit Me Up" where he spoke about B. I.

G and his then current wife and also fellow label soul artist Faith Evans "I let these Niggers know its on for life don't let the West side ride tonight" This would be a groundbreaking moment not only for the East and West Coast, but for Hip-Hop on a whole. With B. I. G being killed in 1997 12 months after rival Tuba was murdered, there was almost a pause on the scene not

producing any new artist that would create new moments such as Jay Z, Nas or Public Enemy already had. Regarding the culture and music industry of today, East Coast Hip-Hop still plays a large part. Since the year of 2009 there has been a decrease of rap sales, however we can still see how artist's today are still inspired today with artist such as ASAP Rocky, who used the old school beats and gold fashion or Azalea Banks adding the sound of pop but being provocative with her lyrics as Ill Kim would often do.

The crack epidemic still carries on today and it is arguable that it may have got worse but with it being so world wide it is more controlled. We still hear artist rapping about their describing the past that haunts him “Vive been living this daily with no peace, no daydreams to save me, get high cause I want to survive, wish I could turn back the hands of time”. As the artist today would of been at an impressionable age most likely their teens, an impressionable age they would of been inspired by artist's such as Jay Z and Biggie Smalls inspiring them to use their life to express their feelings. However there are some differences mainly being fashion. Now rappers are more fearless with what they wear and how they wear it, however they still rock the gold jewelry.