

Anthropology



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Your Full Your 21 February Anthropology As per Robin Kelley, by “conceiving black urban culture in the singular” (p. 17), anthropologists or other social scientists and researchers (or even ordinary people at a certain level) generalize all African-Americans, lumping them together, so to speak, and giving the image that there is no complexity in the cultural practices and beliefs of the urban black population. This, says Kelley, causes stereotyping of the “underclass” as per the social scientists own definition of the term and, therefore, the reality of different cultures within that same underclass is not discussed among them. For instance, social scientists in the 60s, generalizes all black culture as ghetto culture, claiming it to be a result of the racist attitude of the society. This resulted in another sweeping generalization that there is only one urban black culture. Perhaps a good example of how Kelley has tried to understand what culture forms mean to the people who participate in them is that he has given individual attention to various urban African-American he interviewed, asking them their opinion, without coming in with a preconceived notion. Thus he has given the opportunity for people to speak for themselves regarding their culture and individuality. Ulf Hannerz, in his definition of what he termed soul, failed to take into account what exactly the term meant to those black urban dwellers who used it. Despite admitting that he could not find any urban ghetto inhabitant that could define it, he defined the term himself based on what he himself perceived the term to be. Works Cited Kelley, Robin D. G. “Looking for the ‘Real’ Nigga: Social Scientists Construct the Ghetto.” *Yo’ Mama’s Disfunktional! Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998. 15-42. Print.