

American Studies 01:050:247
History and Culture of Hip Hop
Fall 2014
RAB 001
Mon 12:35-3:55

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Course Description

Since its emergence in the 1970s as a localized community formation in New York, hip hop has developed into a billion-dollar, transnational industry with a broad range of cultural legacies and commercial products. This course examines the historical, social, political, and aesthetic roots of hip hop culture and music. We will look at its beginnings in urban black and Latino communities; its technological and aesthetic innovations; performances of racialized, gender and sexual identities; its contributions to popular music and cultural expression; and its place in a larger global commercial exchange. In addition to analyzing hip hop music, the course will look at advertising, fashion, cinema, music video, and other cultural forms influenced by hip hop.

OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate a firm grasp of the key developments in the history of hip hop culture.
- To understand hip hop music within the tradition of black music and expressive culture.
- To distinguish hip hop music from other forms of popular music.
- To identify the elements and aesthetics of hip hop culture and music.
- To analyze the growth of a cultural form from its inception in local communities to its incorporation into mainstream commercial culture.

Required Reading

Forman, Murray and Mark Anthony Neal, eds. That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2012. [TTJ]
ISBN-10: 0415873266
ISBN-13: 978-0415873260

**Book is available at New Jersey Books (discount bookstore) on 37 Easton Ave as well as campus bookstores.

Electronic Reserves on sakai.rutgers.edu [ER]

Online sources and handouts

Assignments and Grading

Participation: 15%

Quizzes (4 in total): 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Paper (3-4 pages): 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Requirements

Participation/In-class Activities: 15%

This is a lecture/discussion course. Attendance and participation are essential in the course. Students are allowed 3 absences for any reason whatsoever; each subsequent absence will result in a 3-point deduction on the final exam. Excessive lateness will count as absences. **More than 7 absences will result in failure**

of the course. Students are expected to attend all classes. If you need to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website to indicate the date and reason for your absence: <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra>. An email will be sent to me automatically.

Very Important: Students are expected to come to class having done the reading and completed all assignment for that day. Because this is a two-period session, reading for each session will amount to two class periods. Plan accordingly during the week.

Students will post two quips on our Sakai site over the course of the semester as part of their participation grade. Quips should be at least one paragraph and should engage the readings in a thoughtful manner. A lack of participation in class discussions and activities will weigh heavily on your final grade.

Quizzes (4 in total): 20%

Students will be given quizzes throughout the course. You will not be able to make up quizzes, unless you have a documented emergency or serious illness. Quizzes will cover course readings as well as lectures. Questions will consist of analyzing music and images, providing definitions of key concepts, and constructing short essay responses.

Paper (3-4 pages): 20%

Students are required to write an analytical paper that critically engages with issues raised in the course. Paper should apply concepts and theories of the course to a specific component of the hip hop culture. Paper must demonstrate a depth and range that shows sufficient engagement with course materials. More details will be provided closer to due date.

Midterm Exam: 20%

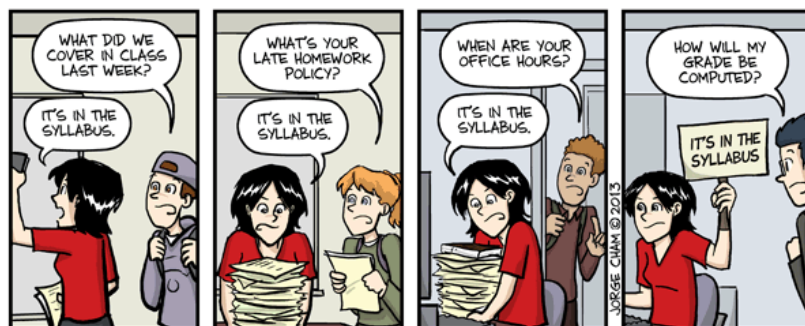
The midterm exam will cover material through the first half of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short response questions, and essays.

Final Exam: 25%

The final exam will cover material from the second half of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short response questions, and essays.

Rutgers University Grading Scale: Note: there are no minus grades at Rutgers.

100– 92= A; 91– 87= B+; 86–81= B; 80 – 77= C+; 76– 70= C; 69–60= D; 59– 0= F



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

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[Course Policies](#)

No cell phone viewable during class time. If I find you chatting, texting, or using your computer devices for anything other than note taking, you will be counted as absent. If it is a recurring issue, then I will ask you to leave the class.

All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day late. A late paper is one received after the start of class or one submitted electronically in lieu of a student attending class on the assignment due date. All papers must be double-spaced, typeset with Times or Times New Roman 12pt font, and have page numbers and one-inch margins. Format of papers should adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style or the Modern Language Association Style Manual.

Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated. Plagiarism includes copying classmates' answers and improper citation of any text in the course or otherwise. Ignorance of university policy is not an excuse.

Current Academic Integrity Policy:

Please review Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. **Honor Pledge: I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy.**

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus and to give impromptu quizzes during the semester.

Course Schedule

9/3: Introduction/ Course Overview

SECTION: EARLY FORMATIONS

9/10: General Introduction [TTJ]

Jeff Chang, Ch 1 *Can't Stop, Won't Stop* [ER]

Jeff Chang, Ch 2 *Can't Stop, Won't Stop* [ER]

Clips: *Wild Style*

9/17: Forman, "Hip Hop Ya Don't Stop" [TTJ]

Ford, Jr. "B-Beats Bombarding Bronx" [TTJ]

Ford, Jr. "Jive Talking N.Y. DJs Rapping Away in Black Discos" [TTJ]

George. "Hip-Hop's Founding Fathers Speak the Truth" [TTJ]

Castleman, "The Politics of Graffiti" [TTJ]

Flores, "Puerto Rocks: Rap, Roots, and Amnesia" [TTJ]

Clips: *Style Wars*

QUIZ 1

SECTION: THROUGH THE LENS OF SUBCULTURE THEORY

9/24: Pabon: "Physical Graffiti: The History of Hip-Hop Dance" [TTJ]

Hebdige, "Subculture" [ER]

Robin Kelley, "Looking to Get Paid" [ER]

Clips: *Breakin'*

SECTION: THE GOLDEN ERA

10/1: Jeff Chang, Ch 12 *Can't Stop, Won't Stop* [ER]

Dery, "Public Enemy Confrontation" [TTJ]

Simmons, *Life and Def* excerpt [ER]

more readings needed

Music: Eric B & Rakim, EPMD, Public Enemy, LL Cool J, Run DMC

On Media Reserve: *Krush Groove*

QUIZ 2

SECTION: HIP HOP: SPACE, PLACE AND HOOD NARRATIVES

10/8*: Forman, Murray. "'Represent': Race, Space and Place in Rap Music."* [ER]

more readings needed

*Marking Time: Prison Arts and Activism conference and exhibition (Oct 8-10, 2014)

SECTION: THE POLITICS OF RAP AND AUTHENTICITY

10/15: "'The Message': Rap, Politics, and Resistance" [TTJ]

Baldwin, "Black Empires, White Desires" [TTJ]

Judy, "On the Question of Nigga Authenticity" [TTJ]

Kitwana, "The Challenge of Rap Music from Cultural Movement..." [TTJ]

Perry, "My Mic Sounds Nice: Art, Community, and Consciousness" [TTJ]

Music: Public Enemy, Jungle Brothers, KRS One

10/22: **MID-TERM EXAM**

SECTION: GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN HIP HOP CULTURE I

10/29: Morgan, "Hip-Hop Feminist" [TTJ]

Rose, "Butta Pecan Mamis" [TTJ]

Sharpley-Whiting, excerpt from *Pimps Up, Ho's Down* [ER]

Rashad Shabazz, "Masculinity and the Mic: Confronting the Uneven Geography of Hip-Hop"*** [ER]

Music: Roxanne Battle, Salt N Pepa, Queen Latifah, MC Lyte, Lauryn Hill

SECTION: THE RISE OF GANGSTA RAP

GUEST: DJ Ready Ready*

11/5: Robin Kelley, "Kickin' Reality, Kickin' Ballistics" [ER]

Eithne Quinn, Ch 1, *Nuthin but a "G" Thang* [ER]

"Nappy Happy: A Conversation with Angela Davis and Ice Cube" [ER]

Optional: Ch. 8 *Nuthin but a "G" Thang* [ER]

Clips: *Colors*; *Boyz N the Hood*

Music: Ice T, NWA, Tupac, Snoop Dogg

QUIZ 3

SECTION: SOUTHERN HIP HOP CASE STUDY***

LECTURE: MACO FANIEL

11/12: Miller, "Rap's Dirty South: From Subculture to Pop Culture" [TTJ]

"Atlanta to Atlantis: An Outkast Retrospective" [online: <http://pitchfork.com/features/articles/9253-outkast/>]

SECTION: THE BUSINESS OF HIP HOP: CINEMA AND FASHION

GUEST: Jeremy Miller, Former Editor of *The Source Magazine**

11/19: S. Craig Watkins, "Producing Ghetto Pictures." [ER]

Michael Specter, "I am Fashion: Guess who Puff Daddy Wants to be?" [ER]

Christopher Holmes Smith, "'I Don't Like to Dream about Getting Paid': Representations of Social Mobility and the Emergence of the Hip-Hop Mogul" [ER]

Clips: *Do the Right Thing*; *Boyz N the Hood*; *Set it Off*; *Menace II Society*; *The Industry*

PAPER DUE

11/26: **NO CLASS (FRIDAY CLASSES MEET)

SECTION: GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN HIP HOP CULTURE II

12/3: Andreama Clay, "I used to be scared of the dick?: Queer Women of Color and Hip-Hop Masculinity," [TTJ]

Tim'm West, "Keepin' it Real: Disidentification and its Discontents" [ER]

Clips: *Beyond Beats and Rhymes; Pick up the Mic* Shanara R. Reid-Brinkley, "The Essence of Res(ex)pectability" [ER]

Mireille Miller-Young, "Hip-Hop Honeys and Da Hustlaz: Black Sexualities in the New Hip-Hop Pornography." [ER]

Ayanah Moor, "Still" [ER]

QUIZ 4

SECTION: HIP HOP CULTURE, AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

12/10: Kahf, "Arabic Hip-Hop" [TTJ]

Veran, etc. "Native Tongues" [TTJ]

Grenberg, "The King of the Streets"

Perullo, "Hooligans and Heroes" [TTJ]

Clips: *La Haine*

Music: Lucien, Orishas, M.I.A., Sister Fa

****LAST DAY OF CLASS/ EXAM PREP**

Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec 18: 8-11AM