

**The participation of women in rap music: / an exploratory
study of the / role of gender discrimination**

**Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements
for the M.A Research Psychology degree, in the Psychology
Department, Faculty of Community and Health Sciences,
University of the Western Cape**



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November 2001

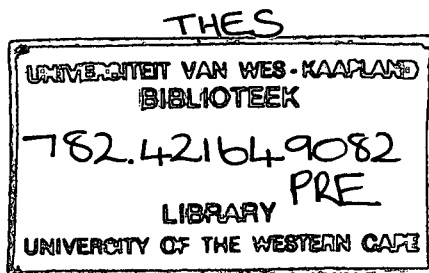
Student: Liezille Pretorius

Student number: 9512282

Supervisor: Prof. Tamara Shefer

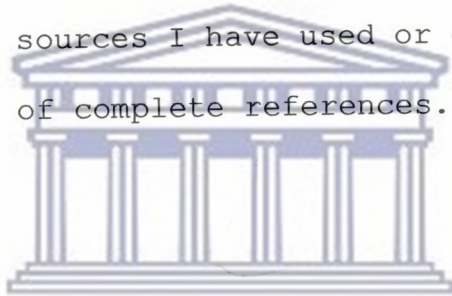


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DECLARATION

I declare that **the participation of women in rap music: an exploratory study of the role of gender discrimination** is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.



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L J PRETORIUS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It took me a long time to complete the thesis. It was very challenging and demanding for many reasons, not all academic. Finishing this research project gives me the opportunity to thank those who motivated me throughout the research process.

I would like to say thank you and God bless to:

Prof. Tammy Shefer, my supervisor who pushed me in all the right directions.

The Human Science Research Council for the research grant.

The participants of this study, who shared their intimate moments with me.

Uncle Tyrone, for your guidance.

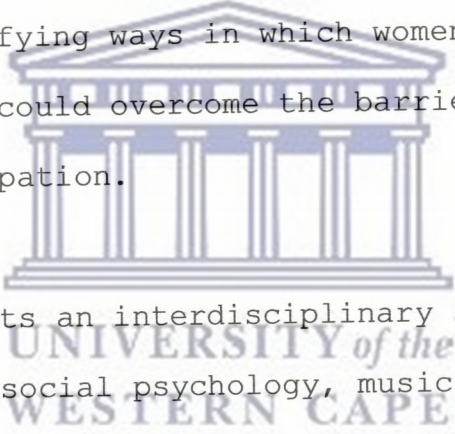
My siblings who helped with my chores when I was glued to the computer screen.

My partner in life (sun)Ray, without your love and support I would not have gotten through the lonely research process.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents who could never understand why I chose to do research on women in rap music.

ABSTRACT

This study is about the way in which men, specifically in the local context of Cape Town, dominate the rap music culture. Globally, rapping is associated with poetic lyrics that express the rappers' environment or worldview. Historically women's worldviews were kept silent and it is within this context that this investigation explored why women are not represented well in the rap culture. The significance of the study lies in the possibility of identifying ways in which women interested in becoming rap artists could overcome the barriers that currently inhibit their participation.



This project represents an interdisciplinary study that falls within the realms of social psychology, music, feminism and social constructionism. Specifically, this thesis employed feminist psychology and social constructionism to construe and interpret the roles of women in rap music.

Working within a qualitative feminist framework, the data was gathered through focus groups and in-depth telephonic individual interviews with participants. The discussions held with the participants were transcribed and the data was analyzed thematically. The results reflect that women feel that they are

being discriminated against in rap culture on the basis of their gender.

Despite the key finding that women are being discriminated against in the rap culture, it was also found that when the two sexes came together and spoke about the gender inequalities in the culture, a strong awareness of gender sensitivity was created. This study therefore suggests that one powerful way of challenging gender inequality in rap culture may be through raising awareness by way of discussions of gender bias and discrimination at rap forums, radio talk shows and workshops aimed at unifying the South African rap culture.



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CHAPTER ONE

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An introduction to the importance of theorizing rap music culture in South Africa

INTRODUCTION

Unger (1979, p.141) states: "It is important to study the areas in which women have been neglected or in which their treatment has been biased". I share in this belief that research should be conducted in areas in which women have been neglected and treated inequitably. As such, the focus of this current research project is the role that gender discrimination plays in women's participation in rap music culture.



The necessity to mention the rationale and genesis in this chapter is prudent because the very nature of this project is uncommon in South African psychological literature. The absence of psychological research on women in entertainment and especially women in rap music in South Africa in particular, proved part of the motivation for the research.

The structure of the project is divided into a pre-academic and an academic phase. A range of basic concepts that are

pertinent in conceptualizing rap culture is also presented. The chapter concludes with an outline of the rest of the thesis.

My interest in rap music was stimulated by an encounter with a hip hop radio program. Of particular interest was the way in which the presenter contextualized a song and interpreted its lyrics, as well as the social analysis of the lyrics undertaken by the presenter.

A cursory analysis of the music indicated (1) a strong emphasis on "brotherhood" in the music, and (2) the lack of participation of women within rap music culture.

The above analysis is further strengthened by my observations at music festivals. Most performers and supporters of this genre of music Black males, but there is also a noticeable unwillingness of women to participate. For example, after a performance by an all-male group, the organizer invited the women present to participate in an "open mic (microphone) session". Since there were only six or seven women in the crowd of about 200 men it was therefore not surprising that none of the women volunteered. This evidence of women's marginalization and uneasiness to

participate in the culture provided further motivation for undertaking the current project.

While much research (Powers, 1995, Wester, 1997, Cook, 1993) has been undertaken in the United States of America, there are very few documented studies on rap culture in South Africa. The exception is the Haupt (1995) study that focused on the articulation of rap music as a form of resistance to Apartheid. The current project can therefore be considered as one of the first studies about rap music culture that focuses on women in rap music in Cape Town. For this reason it was very difficult to find academic literature on the position of women in rap music, particularly within the African context. Most of the sources that I could draw on were found in magazines and websites.

As with any particular culture, the participants of hip hop culture extensively use concepts that are unique to this culture. These concepts are clarified in the next section.

1.1 BASIC CONCEPTS

Not much literature exists which define the concepts below precisely. However, through conversation, with the

'experts' on the topic, as well as with the artists, the following descriptions emerged.

1.1.1 Hip Hop

"Hip hop is a culture, a way of life for a society of people who identify, love, and cherish rap, break dancing, DJing, and graffiti" (Chuck D, 1998).

Although it is difficult to define hip hop, this thesis proposes to interpret it in a broad sense as 'a way of life' with hip hop's devotees practising it like a religion. To its followers, hip hop is a 'home' for those who wish to express themselves in a manner which is often condemned by society. It is a dynamic culture that has five components with each element actively contributing to connect its elements to the comprehensive content of the culture by regularly participating in hip hop events and hip hop forums. Hip hop is the umbrella term used to include all its components or elements of which rap music is the mouth piece. Hip hop's five forms of expression are rapping (also known as emceeing), disc jockeying, b-boying or b-girling (also known as break dancing), spraycan art and knowledge of Self.

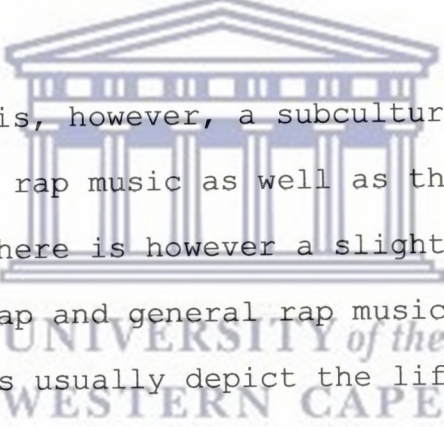
1.1.2 Rap music

"The men and women of my generation [born between 1968 - 1975] are products of another revolution: one taking place within the family. The majority of us were raised in single-parent households, usually headed by women. Most of us grew up in environments that were unstable and unpredictable. That made a lot of us confused and bitter, right from the jump. This is where rap music comes in" (Powell, 1997, p76).

The above view ascribes the development and rise of rap music as a response to social ills. The rap culture emerged in one of the lowest socio-economic and crime ridden areas of the United States, namely the Bronx, during the late 1970's (Toop, 1985). Similarly, Apartheid, unemployment, domestic violence, gangsterism and other social ills marked the emergence of the rap movement in South Africa. In this thesis, there is a clear distinction between rap music, the rap music culture and the hip hop culture. At this point it is important to unpack the differences in the terminology, which forms the basis of discussions in this thesis.

According to Toop (1985), rap music is rhythmical talking to a funky beat. Emceeing which generally refers to a Master of Ceremony, is an avant-garde term that replaced the label rapping. One of the possible reasons for this change in terminology could be related to the fact that rapping developed negative connotations and was associated by people

who were opposed to the culture as the mouthpiece of gangsterism. Emceeing on the other hand is associated with a respected person who has the audience listening attentively (Davey, 1999). Even though the term rap and emcee are used synonymously by hip hop artists, most practitioners prefer being called emcees. In the context of this study, the term rap or rapper is used because hip hoppers in Cape Town more commonly use it. When the term hip hop is mentioned in this thesis, it refers to all the elements of the culture, including rap.



Rap music culture is, however, a subculture that includes everyone who makes rap music as well as those who listen to it religiously. There is however a slight distinction, between gangster rap and general rap musicians, because gangster rap lyrics usually depict the lifestyles of real life gangsters, whereas rap music generally does not necessitate participation in the gang subculture.

Kwaito is a mixture of disco music, rap, rhythm and blues, ragga and a dose of American and British house music. The lyrics are mostly chanted over a slowed-down bass and an electronically programmed house beat. With the rise of house music's popularity, people from the ghetto called it Kwaito after the Afrikaans slang word 'kwai', which meant

that the music was seen as good (Mdu, 1999). DJ Oscar Warona Mdlongwa was one of the pioneer Kwaito artists who started remixing international house tracks and added percussions and African melodies. According to Tokollo (1999), many people believe Kwaito fulfills the same role that hip hop does in black America.

1.1.3 Hip Hopper, Hip Hop Artist and Hip Hop Community

A hip hop community normally comprises of those who affiliate themselves with the hip hop culture, with followers called hip hoppers. A hip hopper is someone who is either a hip hop artist or a follower of the music genre. For instance, a hip hop follower could be any patron who buys the music and attends hip hop festivals. A hip hop artist is someone who 'breathes the spirit of the culture' and like all other musicians, hip hop artists make a living out of the music (Toop, 1985).

1.1.4 B-boy and Break dance

B-boying, referred to as break dancing by the commercial market, is a form of dancing inspired by the singer James Brown's rhythmic movements. In 1969, when James Brown's

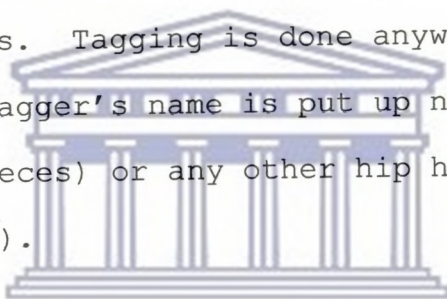
famous song *Get on the Good Foot* was introduced, it accompanied a high energy, almost acrobatic dance movements (Fresh, 1998). The *Good Foot*-dance was later dubbed b-boying. Fresh (1998) gives some examples of the different kinds of break dance moves b-boys and b-girls utilize, like the windmill which is when the b-boy rolls from shoulder to shoulder, spinning his legs around in the air continuously. Another popular break dance move is airplanes, a type of windmill with one's arms spread out straight to the sides. The barrels, which are windmills with arms rounded in front of you, is also a very popular break dance move. An interesting break dance move is the uprocks, which is a dancing fight in which the dancers move in close proximity to each other without touching. It resembles a kung-fu battle, but with more continuous movement and more rhythm.

1.1.5 Graffiti Art and Spraycan Art

Graffiti art is an important element of hip hop because it too, much like the other elements, emerged at a time when the youth needed a medium to express themselves other than joining gangs. Spraycan art often tells the story of the artist's life or how the artist views the social or political situation of the country. During the 1980's in South Africa it became almost impossible for spraycan

artists to express themselves, due to police harassment. This harassment stemmed from the belief that spraycan artists were promoting political slogans and anti-government information.

In the United States of America, spraycan art was introduced by means of tags (Outcast, 1998). Tagging is the stylized signatures of the spraycan art writers. Although the tag is in one colour it is done with elegant curves and creative letter deformations. Tagging is done anywhere and on everything. The tagger's name is put up next to their 'pieces' (masterpieces) or any other hip hop related work of art (Outcast, 1998).



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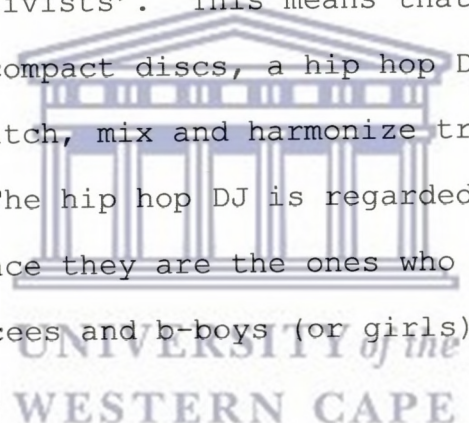
According to Outcast (1998), 'piecing pieces' is the actual art itself, done with spray paint on a chosen wall.

A 'piece' can be anything from your own name or political message. A piece is where a writer shows his or her skills with extensive colours, fades, 3D's and even a character. A good writer will avoid drips (unless intentional), colour his piece in properly, the outline lines should connect properly and make the overall effect really dope. He would want to make his piece a burner (a well done piece). A piece can be done anywhere and on anything horizontal. For example, walls-cement, metal doors, gates or canvasses (Outcast, 1998, p.1).

'Bombing' is another term that helps define spray can art. Bombing incorporates the terms (tagging and piecing) mentioned previously. Bombing is accompanied by big bubble letter outlines to almost life-size tags.

1.1.6 Disc Jockey (DJ)

By definition a hip hop DJ does not fit the commercial concept of the DJ art form. Hip hop disc jockeys are viewed as 'vinyl-only activists'. This means that while commercial disc jockeys use compact discs, a hip hop DJ uses two turntables to scratch, mix and harmonize tracks simultaneously. The hip hop DJ is regarded as the back bone of the culture since they are the ones who mix the 'funky beats' for the emcees and b-boys (or girls) to practice their art form on.



1.1.7 Knowledge of Self

This element of hip hop which is concerned with the development of self is taken very seriously by hip hoppers. However, I have noticed that hip hoppers in South Africa use the term as a synonym for Black Consciousness. I suspect that this is so because hip hop is male dominated, the most important social struggles for Black males are racial

inequalities and poverty. However, if women dominated the culture, it might suggest that the 'knowledge of Self' component of the hip hop culture could have different meanings.

1.1.8 Representation

Representation means to stand or take the place of another thing or person (Reber, 1995). In rap music culture however, to 'represent' is to show and receive respect. For instance, if a female rapper gets on the stage and outwits a male rapper, all hip hoppers would say that she is 'representing'. In other words, she is presenting her talent and skills in the name of rap culture tradition as well as being representative of women rappers.

1.2 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Chapter Two contextualizes rap music culture in the United States and describes it in relation to the South African context.

Chapter Three sketches a feminist framework and posits the social constructionist perspective on gender discrimination. This framework is concerned with psychological theories,

feminist and postmodernist theories. Feminist and social constructionist theories understanding of the plight of women in rap music is addressed in this chapter.

Chapter Four provides the methodological framework for this research. It presents the focus group study and discusses central methodological components of feminist focus group research. After discussing the pivotal role of reflexivity, the social location and the investments I made in the research are discussed, with particular reference to power relations between the participants and the researcher.

Chapter Five contains a detailed presentation of the concrete process of the research, including the aims, significance, methods and procedures, participants and analysis.

In Chapter Six the findings of the research are presented and discussed, with particular reference to the central ways in which male and female groups in the focus group study viewed the position of women in rap music, specifically in Cape Town. This discussion includes the data collected from the telephonic interviews conducted with women in rap music in Cape Town and I integrated this information with the

outcomes of the focus groups and telephonic interviews which culminated in the theoretical debate which follows.

In the final chapter, the central findings and trends are related to the theory and practice. Finally, a reflection on the limitations, practical implications and possibilities for intervention, as well as suggestions for future research, are discussed.



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CHAPTER 2

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Theorizing contemporary studies on rap music culture

INTRODUCTION

"A great Brazilian music teacher once said that when Africans first came to America, they did not speak the same language, so they often expressed themselves through music. If there's a drum beat in the song, you'll feel the African spirit expressing itself" (Latin music lover, Ricky Martin, in Cameron, 2000, p.141).

This depiction of music also describes music. Like Ricky Martin says, music has historically brought people together. A case in point is the freedom or liberation songs that many Black people in South Africa, as well as civil rights revolutionaries in the United States of America, utilized as a vehicle towards freedom during the apartheid struggle and the 1960's civil rights movement respectively.

Ironically, one of the strongest criticisms against rap music is its' explicit (sexual) lyrics and the exploitation of women evident in lyrics and in music videos. Music therefore appears to have both the power to emancipate as well as to oppress and subjugate. In this chapter it is essential to place the criticism of rap music in the context of the United States, where rap music's roots lie, and Cape

Town, which is the focus of this study. While not necessarily representative of all of South African rap culture, exponents of this genre claim that Cape Town is the capital of hip hop in Africa.

In order to analyze the link between gender discrimination and the lack of women's participation in rap music, this chapter begins with the history of rap music culture. There appears to be some evidence of a pattern in the gender stereotyping of women in music, and studies attesting to this are presented here. Also, a literary analysis of lyrics of rap music is undertaken. This chapter concludes with a general look at gender in music.

2.1 HISTORY OF RAP MUSIC IN NORTH AMERICA

In the early 1970s a musical genre was born in the crime-ridden neighbourhoods of the South Bronx. Hip hop was a product of streetwise ingenuity; extracting rhythms and melodies from existing records and mixing them with searing poetry chronicling life in the 'hood'. And so hip hop spilled out of the ghetto (Blow, 1998).

Hip hop is the voice of a generation that refused to be silenced by urban poverty, a local phenomenon fueled with so

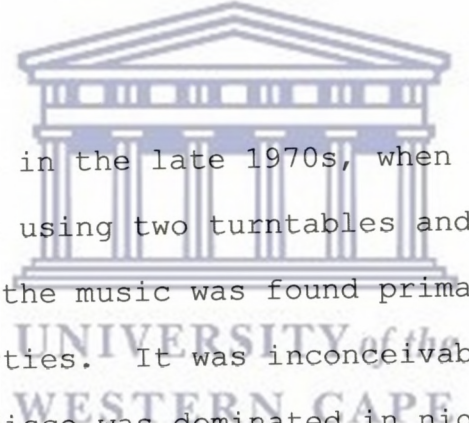
much passion and truth it is no surprise that elsewhere in the world hip hop emerged out of similar circumstances. Rap music is often utilized as a means of articulating resistance against the same conditions of poverty and disadvantage, which gave birth to the hip hop movement.

Hip hop poured onto the streets and subways from the housing projects, taking root in Bronx clubs like the Savoy Manor Ballroom, Ecstasy Garage, Club 371, The Disco Fever, and the T-Connection. From there it spread downtown to the Renaissance Ballroom, Hotel Diplomat, the Roxy, and The Fun House. It migrated to Los Angeles, where the West Coast hip hop scene developed, sporting its own musical idiosyncrasies (Blow, 1998). In the early years of the culture the movement was untitled until Afrika Bambaataa started calling it 'Hip Hop' which was a term coined by Lovebug Starski, who used the term in his rap rhymes (Fresh, 1998).

Through television shows like BET's *Rap City* and *Yo! MTV Raps* and a succession of Hollywood movies, hip hop gained millions of new fans across America, in places far removed from the genre's Bronx roots (Heibutzki, 1998). It spread to Europe, Asia, Africa, as well as most other continents, gaining greater cultural significance as the years passed.

Today it is one of the most potent and successful musical forms of the 21st Century.

In order to understand the history of rap music in North America, it is important to know that while rap music is only a form of music, since 1975, hip hop is a term applied to a specific black culture according to rapper, Chuck D (1998). Hip hop is not a culture but a sub-culture of a people with a culture (Chuck D, 1998).



Rap music was born in the late 1970s, when Caribbean disc jockeys created it using two turntables and a microphone. In the beginning, the music was found primarily at nightclubs and parties. It was inconceivable to put rap on a record because disco was dominated in night clubs all over. However, by the start of 1980 a rap record had already been made and rap music was soon being blended with rock and other types of music, such as a combined rendition of "Walk this Way" by Run DMC and Aerosmith (Chuck D, 1997). Soon thereafter, the white rapper Vanilla Ice helped to popularize rap music among white audiences.

Kool DJ Herc is dubbed the 'godfather of hip hop' and was a Jamaican-born DJ who moved to the Bronx in 1967. With his

unique play list of rhythm and blues, soul, funk, and obscured disco, Herc quickly became the catalyst for proposing the hip hop way of life (Blow, 1998). The people from the Bronx and Harlem loved his ghetto style, which gave birth to the concept of the b-boy. The b-boy, breaker boy or Bronx boy loved (the breaks of) Kool Herc, and as a result soon created break dancing.

DJ Hollywood was the first rhythmic disco rapper. Unlike Herc he was not confined to the South Bronx. He would DJ downtown, midtown, and throughout the five boroughs of New York City, although he gained his fame at Club 371 in the Bronx. Hollywood's characteristic style was mainstream disco, but he was also the first DJ to interweave disco with rhythmic rap. Unlike the DJs and MCs before him who were radio announcers generating crowd participation, Hollywood put raps together in rhythm with chants, simple rhymes and a considerable crowd response.

Afrika Bambaataa is also known as the 'grandfather of hip hop', having been a part of the movement since 1972. The former gang leader of the Black Spades, Bambaataa is the founder of the Zulu Nation, an organization dedicated to peace, love, and unity. The Zulu Nation is said to have

worldwide membership of more than 400,000, including some of rap music's brightest stars.

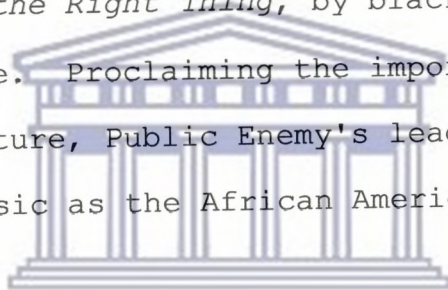
Started in 1976 Grandmaster Flash, Cowboy, Melvin Glover, Nathaniel Glover, Eddie Morris and Rahiem (Guy Williams) became the premier rap group of the early 1980s. Grand Master Flash and The Furious 5 gained immense recognition in the recording industry with several hit records (Blow, 1998). Also in 1976 Grandmaster Flash introduced the rap technique and in 1979 the first two rap records appeared: "*King Tim III (Personality Jock)*," recorded by the Fatback Band, and "*Rapper's Delight*," by the Sugarhill Gang (Headbob, 1997). Perceived as novel by many white Americans, *Rapper's Delight* quickly inspired *Rapture* (in 1980) by the new-wave band Blondie, as well as a number of other popular records. Then, Grandmaster Flash introduced quick mixing and composed the first extended stories in rhymed rap (Headbob, 1997). Up to this point, most of the words heard over the work of disc jockeys such as Herc, Bambaataa, and Flash had been improvised phrases and expressions. In 1978 DJ Grand Wizard Theodore introduced the technique of scratching to produce rhythmic patterns.

Sampling brought into question the ownership of sound. Some artists claimed that by sampling recordings of a prominent

black artist, such as funk musician James Brown, they were challenging white corporate America and the recording industries right to own black cultural expression (Headbob, 1997). However, rap artists were also challenging Brown's and other musicians right to own, control, and be compensated for the use of their intellectual creations. By the early 1990s a system had come about whereby most artists requested permission and negotiated some form of compensation for the use of samples. Some commonly sampled performers, such as funk musician George Clinton, released compact discs containing dozens of sound bites specifically to facilitate sampling. Sampling had the significant effect of instilling a newfound sense of musical history Black youth. Earlier artists such as Brown and Clinton were celebrated as cultural heroes and their older recordings were reissued and popularized.

During the mid-1980s, rap moved from the fringes of hip hop culture to the mainstream of the American music industry as white musicians also began to embrace the new style (Headbob, 1997). In 1986 rap reached the top ten on the Billboard pop charts with (You Gotta) *Fight for Your Right* (To Party!) by the Beastie Boys and *Walk This Way* by Run-DMC and Aerosmith. Also during the mid-1980s, the first female rap group Salt-N-Pepa, released the singles *The Show Stoppa*

and *Push It* (Headbob, 1997). *Push It* reached the top 20 on Billboard's pop charts. In the late 1980s a large segment of rap became highly politicized, resulting in the most overt social agenda in popular music since the urban folk movement of the 1960s. According to Headbob (1997), the groups Public Enemy and Boogie Down Productions epitomized this political style of rap. Public Enemy became famous with their second album, *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*, and the theme song *Fight the Power* from the motion picture *Do the Right Thing*, by black American filmmaker Spike Lee. Proclaiming the importance of rap in black American culture, Public Enemy's lead singer, Chuck D, referred to rap music as the African American CNN (Cable News Network).



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Alongside the rise of political rap came the introduction of gangster rap, which attempts to depict an outlaw's lifestyle that includes sex, drugs, and violence. In 1988 the first major album of gangster rap was released titled *Straight Outta Compton* by the rap group Niggaz With Attitude (NWA). Blow (1998) states that songs from the album generated an extraordinary amount of controversy for their violent attitudes, which inspired protests from a number of organizations, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation

(FBI). However, attempts to censor gangster rap only served to publicize the music and made it more attractive to both black and white youth. NWA became a platform for launching the solo careers of some of the most influential rappers and rap producers in gangster rap music, including Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, and Eazy-E.

In the 1990s rap became increasingly eclectic, demonstrating a seemingly limitless capacity to draw samples from any and all musical forms. A number of rap artists have borrowed from jazz, using samples as well as live music. Some of the most influential jazz-rap recordings include the *Jazzmatazz* CD, an album by Boston rapper Guru, and *Cantaloop* (Flip Fantasia) a single by the British group US3. As rap became increasingly part of the American mainstream in the 1990s, political rap became less prominent while gangster rap, as epitomized by the Geto Boys, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and Tupac Shakur, grew in popularity.

Since the mid-1980s rap music has greatly influenced both black and white culture in North America. Much of the slang of the hip hop culture, including terms like 'dis', 'fly', 'def', 'chill', and 'wack', have become standard features of the vocabulary of a significant number of young people of

various ethnic origins. Many rap enthusiasts assert that rap functions as a voice for a community with no access to the mainstream media. According to rap music advocates, rap serves to engender self-pride, self-help, and self-improvement, communicating a positive and fulfilling sense of black history that is largely absent from other American institutions (Headbob, 1997). Political rap artists have spurred interest in the Black Muslim movement as articulated by minister Louis Farrakhan, generating much criticism from those who view Farrakhan as a racist. Gangster rap has also been severely criticized for lyrics that many people interpret as glorifying the most violent and misogynistic imagery in the history of popular music. Defenders of gangster rap argue that the raps are justified because they accurately portray life in inner city America. Gangsterism is often perceived as a consequence of poverty and unemployment that underlines the notion that rap music has the innate ability to both liberate and subjugate.

2.2 WOMEN IN RAP MUSIC (NORTH AMERICA)


"It figures that the first female emcee to strike solo platinum would have to act like one of the guys (referring to Da Brat). Or did you not know that rap has long been a man's world only with a handful of female emcees asserting their femininity"
(MusicHound, 1999, p.2).

There are successful women rap artists who are often perceived as using their sexuality to enable them to be successful in the music industry. In this regard they are often referred to as 'microphone sexpots' (Davey, 1999). Most female artists claim that the music industry is male dominated and that it is difficult for females to be signed to record labels. Most, if not all, of the female emcees in the United States have male mentors who 'discovered' them and made them famous. A case in point is the artist known as Yo Yo who is often regarded as one of the most confident Black women to ever express herself on stage. Yet, her breakthrough only came when she participated in one of the songs of a famous male rapper. In addition, her first solo-album was produced by the same male rapper, Ice Cube, who acted as her mentor (MusicHound, 1999). It would therefore appear that success for female rap artists is only possible through the help and assistance of the male artists who are regarded as pioneers in the rap industry.

MusicHound (1999) is further of the opinion that most female emcees either use their sexuality to 'make it' in the male dominated rap world or they tend to 'mimic the oppressor'. Rap music, as a product of Black male tradition and experience, has defined the images of women in particular ways, because people are defined by others in one way or

another (Cook, 1993). The most common images portrayed in rap music videos are sexist and as a result encourage disrespect towards women. An important study by Barongan (1995) focused on the influence of misogynous rap towards sexual aggression on women. It was found that misogynous rap does facilitate sexually aggressive behaviour towards women.

The following lyrics sung by Jay-Z exemplifies Barongan's (1995) study.



"You know I bug 'em,
fuck 'em,
love 'em, cause I don't funk in' need 'em.
Take 'em out the hood;
keep them lookin' good..."

The pimp lifestyle illustrated in this songs' music video objectifies women. According to Strauss (2000), pimping is illegal almost everywhere, because of the abusive way in which sex workers are manhandled by their pimps. Pimps are also considered to be generally abusive males (Kalof, 1999).

At the tender age of 16 Jay-Z was a well-positioned drug dealer and gangster in his Brooklyn neighbourhood (dela Rea, 2000). Even though researchers like dela Rea (2000) state that he gave up his criminal lifestyle in 1992, he still glorifies it in his song "Big Pimpin'" when he raps:

"I'm a pimp in every sense of the word, bitch
...Let em play with the dick in the truck
...I hate waitin' Ho
Get your ass in [the truck]
And let's RI-I-I-I-I-IDE"

In spite of the pimp lifestyle still being an illegal activity, Jay-Z prides himself in his ability to objectify women. He says that he is 'a pimp in every sense of the word', which could mean that he abuses women physically, psychologically and emotionally. The word "bitch" is used quite often by Jay-Z. According to Burchfield (1729, cited in Mills, 1991), "a woman is but an animal and an animal is not of the highest order" (p.122). It seems as if most male rappers in the new millennium have not lost Burchfield's patriarchal way of thinking. Feminists have illustrated how the word "bitch" is akin to a female dog when 'on heat' actively seeks insemination (Mills, 1991). In regard to the cultural standards of the time of these feminists, such a dog is considered 'lewd', one of the meanings of bitch appropriately applied to women (Mills, 1991).

Furthermore, when Jay-Z says, "Ho, get your ass in the truck", he is referring to a woman as a prostitute, as prostitutes usually get into men's vehicles to sell sex. The term "ho" is short for prostitute and hence, it depicts women as immoral creatures of society. In light of the

analysis of Jay-Z's song "Big Pimpin'", it suggests that generally women are portrayed as sex objects in rap lyrics. Being exposed to these abusive lyrics provides another insight into the challenge of women's participation in rap music culture.

Further empirical evidence demonstrating the link between rap music, attitudes and behaviour towards women emerges in a study on the influence of gangster rap and attitudes toward women (Wester, 1997). It was found that participants exposed to gangster rap music had significantly more negative attitudes toward women than those who were not exposed to gangster rap. The study further demonstrated a direct relationship between misogynous rap music and sexually aggressive behaviour towards women.

According to Fromm (1973), the family is the psychological agency through which a child acquires the core of social characters shared by most other children partaking of the same culture. The parents then, are the representatives of the society which children model. Eminem's song, *My name is*, will exemplify aspects of Fromm's theory. In the song *My name is*, Eminem raps:

"Ninety-nine percent of my life I was lied to

I just found out my mom does more dope than I do
(Damn!)
I told her I'd grow up to be a famous rapper
Make a record about doin' drugs and name it after her
(Oh thank you!)”

In this song, it is evident that Eminem blames his mother for his addictive personality. After being born in Kansas City and traveling back and forth between Kansas and the Detroit metropolitan area, Eminem and his mother moved into the Eastside of Detroit when he was 12 (Peters, 2000). Switching schools every two to three months made it difficult to make friends, graduate and to stay out of trouble. According to Eminem, his childhood was very traumatic. In an interview with MTV he stated that his father left when he was two years old and his mother never spent anytime with him. He also stated that his mother was a drug addict. Rap, therefore, became Eminem's solace. He decided to write lyrics about what he was experiencing psychologically, “I'm just throwing back the shit that the world threw at me when I was younger” (Peters, 2000, p.2).

Significantly, it seems as if Eminem blames his mother for his adverse childhood experience, while his father abandoned them when he was young. Eminem's lyrics therefore highlight his negativity towards the female gender, which could be indicative of him blaming his mother because his father left.

Tajfel's social identity theory (SIT) could be used to interpret Eminem's psychological situation, as far as explaining how being part of a low income, single parent family, encourages identifying with others from a similar family background (Foster and Louw-Potgieter, 1994). This social identity becomes part of his self-concept. According to Turner (1984), interpersonal and intergroup behaviour is controlled by different psychological processes, which are located in the self-concept. These psychological processes are illustrated when Eminem was asked about why he writes expletive raps and he replied:

"I'm not alone in feeling the way I feel. I believe that a lot of people can relate to my shit ...whether white, black, it doesn't matter. Everybody has been through some shit, whether it's drastic or not so drastic. Everybody gets to the point of 'I don't give a fuck" (Peters, 2000, p.3)

In the last verse of the song "*My name is*", Eminem humiliates his mother when he says:

"When I was little I used to get so hungry I would throw fits.
How you gonna breast feed me mom? (wah!)
You ain't got no tits! (wahhh!)"

According to Erikson (1970), people go through eight stages of psychosocial development. These stages include 4 childhood stages, one adolescent stage and three adult

stages. In an attempt to place the above lyrics in context, Erikson's first psychosocial stage of development, termed Trust versus Mistrust, illustrates that infants have basic physiological needs that should be met, like breastfeeding. So, basic trust results if the infant senses that it can rely on the satisfaction of its needs (Erikson, 1970). In Eminem's case however, it seems as if these needs were not met which is illustrated in his rap: "When I was little I used to get so hungry I would throw fits". Helplessness, feelings of abandonment and rage that accompanies the uncertainty of satisfaction, are embedded in his feelings of basic mistrust. Furthermore, Erikson's infancy stage indicates that if failure to develop basic trust occurs, mistrust and hopelessness develop, which are conditions that could lead to adult addiction or psychotic states, much like Eminem expresses in his raps.

In the opening pages of this thesis, Powell (1997) cited that the majority of African Americans were raised in single-parent households, usually headed by women. Thus in most cases the childhood environments of such children were unstable and unpredictable. He adds that this resulted in feelings of confusion and bitterness in children. The rap culture, therefore, has become a solace for Eminem. The above view seems to illustrate why most male rappers

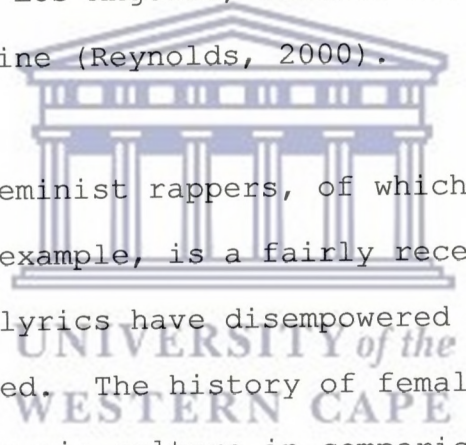
tend to dehumanize women in their lyrics, in an attempt to vent their anger and frustrations towards their mothers for mistreating them when they were younger. So when Eminem cited that he is not alone in his feelings of anger toward his mother, he meant that he was communicating to others in similar situations that they are not alone. I think that these personality and social psychological approaches give two different analyses to why male rappers exploit women in their raps. This exploitative nature of rap music could also suggest reasons why most women do not participate in the rap music culture.

In addition, there have also been a number of reported cases of gang rape, resulting in the arrest of gangster rappers, which have received extensive coverage. Still the more contemporary rap songs have not changed in terms of lyrical content. The same blasphemy and expletive raps that were characteristic of the earlier music continues to dominate. However, this does not appear to have detracted from the popularity of the artists. Ironically, the icon of hate speech, Eminem, was MTV's number one video artist of the year 2000 (Hay, 2000). One of his songs was described as 'disgusting' by the pop star Christina Aguilera who stated:

Slicing up your baby's mama and stuffing her
in a trunk and shoving her in the ocean with

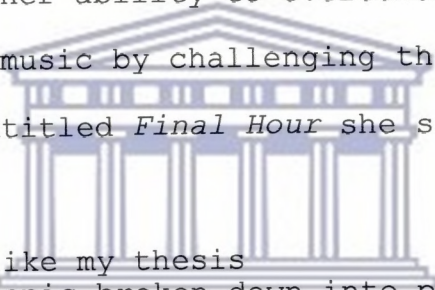
your daughter watching! That's disgusting. I'm sorry but I think the majority of the world thinks that's disgusting (Strauss, 2000, p.80).

Many argue that as long as gangster rap dominates, it is unlikely that rap lyrics will change (Cantor, 1987, Meischke, 1995 & Sommers, 1993). For this reason and because of the increasing concern over the effect of the negative portrayal of women in rap lyrics, the position of women in rap was the main focus at the third annual hip hop conference held in Los Angeles, October 1999 and organized by Rap Sheet magazine (Reynolds, 2000).



The emergence of feminist rappers, of which the artist Queen Latifah is a good example, is a fairly recent phenomenon. Historically, rap lyrics have disempowered women and their voices were silenced. The history of female emcees trying to survive in rap music culture in comparison to the history of male emcees, is embedded in gender politics. Clearly it is easier for males to succeed in the industry than for women. The artist Lauryn Hill for example states: "If you got some talent all they do is label you as a diva and put you on a pedestal. Whereas brothers cash in and become icons" (MusicHound, 1999). In other words, it is clear that most Black male rap artists verbally abuse their female counterparts through their lyrics.

There are some women artists who through their music, are challenging the under representation and marginalization of women in the industry. It is believed that the triumphant Lauryn Hill's solo success has the potential to reshape the way the music industry treats women in general (Seymour, 1999). Lauryn Hill has taken a risk to express herself through her music by positively educating Black people with her debut album entitled *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* (Seymour, 1999). What sets Lauryn Hill aside from most female rappers, is her ability to overcome the gender stereotypes in rap music by challenging the status quo. In one of the songs entitled *Final Hour* she says:



I treat this like my thesis
Well written topic broken down into pieces
I introduce, then produce words so profuse
It's abuse how I juice up this beat like I'm
deuce Two people both equals...
Don't discuss the baby mother business
I been in this third LP you can't tell me
I witness first handed
I'm candid and you can't stand it
Respect demanded!

In this song Lauryn Hill proves to the male rap artists that her lyrical and production skills are comparable to theirs because she "witness(ed) first handed". It seems as if Lauryn Hill demonstrates by way of her lyrics, that she demands respect for the skills she displays. Given her challenge to the status quo and her overwhelming success,

her contemporaries often recognize her as a pioneer who is paving the way for others. For example, the artist Aretha Franklin claimed that in this particular battle, Lauryn Hill is the 'chosen one' (Seymour, 1999).

The history of female emcees trying to survive in rap music culture in comparison to the history of male emcees in rap music is a clear demonstration of gender and power inequalities. The battle of the sexes demonstrated that the rap culture in America is no different to the South African context. Similarly, like the American history of rap, rap music in South Africa emerged in retaliation to the apartheid government and poverty. In the following section, rap music culture in the South African context is discussed.



2.3 HISTORY OF RAP MUSIC IN SOUTH AFRICA (CAPE TOWN)

Now it's been argued by the conservative play-it-safe, part-time cultural analysts and academics that hip hop has no place in South Africa. Hip hop does not move units. Hip hop is an unimportant culture with no future in South Africa (X, 1998, page 2).

X argues that, "cultural analysts thought hip hop was just a fad", whereas the hip hop culture has been in existence for about 16 years in Cape Town (1998, p. 2). According to X (1998), hip hop became popular in South Africa, Cape Town, in about 1982, in the form of Spraycan Art and b-boying.

During this period, people tolerated b-boys dancing opposite shops in the City Centre. X (1998) argued that b-boying was initially an activity that promoted multi racialism. However, as soon as its potential to expose the various social backgrounds to each other was realized, b-boying was prohibited in public places.

Eyal (1997) contends that the South African hip hop movement may be tied to the broader democracy movement. The 1980 boycotts against the Group Areas Act ensured that the street performances came to a halt because of the fear of police brutality which was enforced by the State of Emergency regulations which prohibited groups of more than three to congregate anywhere in South Africa. During this time, detentions, arrests and the banning of meetings were all part of the government's desperate attempt to restore "normality" "to a country that had not known normality since apartheid was institutionalized" (Okters, 1983 p.11). This period also made it difficult for Spraycan artists to go out and practise their art. X (1998) maintains that hip hoppers in Cape Town had to focus their energies on political participation while hip hop had to take a backseat to the boycotts and resistance against the apartheid government. The culture went underground and the artists rehearsed at

home. As a result, hip hop experienced a period of silence until the end of the 1980 boycotts.

In 1990, as a result of a significantly progressive change in the political climate in South Africa, the culture was revitalized through the promotion of emceeing. The rise of male rappers was overwhelming in comparison to that of female rappers. Female rappers like Mickey D, MC Square and 3rd Party were the pioneer female rap artists. However, precisely because they were the pioneer female rappers, they were faced with overwhelming challenges. The lack of a platform to express themselves, the lack of opportunity and support within the industry led to the end of these female artists rap careers. Emcees like Caramel, Ramsey, Emile, DSA and others were the forerunners of emceeing in Cape Town.

Currently the hip hop movement appears to be very vibrant in Cape Town, with more hip hop events taking place than previously. The culture is growing rapidly to such an extent that one hip hop group, Black Noise, has opened a Hip Hop shop in which hip hop music, Black Consciousness literature and other items related to the hip hop culture are sold. Most nightclubs in Cape Town now include rap music and hence drawing many hip hop followers to these

events. In addition, there appears to be significant shifts in this culture. While previously hip hop has been stereotyped as a Black cultural phenomenon with minimum white participation and support, now a White rap group called Max Normal is changing the 'hard core', 'politically incorrect' status of rap music in South Africa. This group is also changing the stereotype of hip hop being largely a ghetto driven music form, since the group hails from a very affluent suburb in Johannesburg.

Apart from racial shifts there has also been a gradual gender shift. While female participation in rap music culture in Cape Town is still minimal, today there is a definite increase compared to a couple of years ago. The next section explains why.



2.4 STATUS OF WOMEN IN RAP MUSIC IN CAPE TOWN

The status of women in rap music in Cape Town may be described in two ways: (1) the inactive participation of women in the rap music culture and (2) the negative way in which women are portrayed and devalued in most rap lyrics.

It is important to recognize that not all male rap artists are misogynists or discourage females from getting involved

in the culture. For example, Prophets of the City (POC) clearly speak out against misogyny heard in gangster rap. On the other hand, they contradictorily continue to victimize women in their raps. POC's music is considered to be highly politicized (Haupt, 1995). Yet, their *Age of Truth* single, "Understand where I'm coming from", illustrates that the group does not recognize women in politics. This is evident at the beginning of the song which states: "This song is dedicated to Nelson Mandela. I'd like to dedicate this song to Oliver Tambo, Chris Hani, Steve Biko..." (Haupt, 1995). As such, only men are portrayed as having had an active role in South Africa's social and political change. Female political leaders such as Ruth First, Coline Williams and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela are not mentioned. In addition, the music video, which captures South Africa's political struggles' does not show any women and there is only one scene of a protesting woman with no prominent female political figures seen (Haupt, 1995). It is clear that the active role that women played in the political transformation of the country is not recognized. As such it could be argued that the song reproduces the marginalization and devaluation of women.

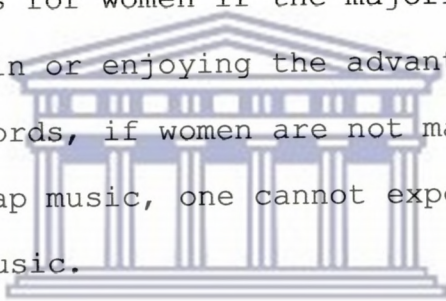
However, many of the groups in Cape Town have offered to equip both males and females with the necessary skills to

help them succeed in the music industry. They appear to be genuine in supporting and empowering women to advance in the industry. Despite these positive approaches it is important that if rappers aspire to make a positive contribution to social change in South Africa, they should revise their gender discourse so that women are uplifted and empowered and not oppressed and incapacitated.

Apart from the artists themselves, the marginalization of women in the industry is also reflected in the fact that very few rap supporters know about women artists. In a small informal pilot study that I conducted with 100 participants at the South African Music Day Festival in 1999, 98% of the participants did not know of any solo female emcee that has recorded an album. Only 2% indicated that they knew of one female that had recorded an album with a male group.

It is evident that there are many similarities in the representation and participation of women in rap culture in South Africa and North America. However, in South Africa female emcees face an additional obstacle. Firstly, they are discriminated against because they participate in rap music culture, which is seen as a negative subculture by most people in South African society, unlike in the United

States where rap music is a popular genre. Secondly, they are marginalized by the sexist music industry that promotes men rather than women. Lastly, there are not many female emcees within Africa. There are a handful of women who are known in Africa, such as Sista Joyce (Senegal), Magic Law (Pee Froiss) and Queen Afrik (Ivory Coast). In South Africa among the emerging female rappers are the Nubian Sisters, EJ von Lyric, Sista Gwen from Ethnic Seeds, Elize, Samantha and Odeal. Therefore, according to Miller (1988), "we cannot expect strong gains for women if the majority of women are not participating in or enjoying the advantages" (page xiii). In other words, if women are not maximally participating in rap music, one cannot expect progress for all women in rap music.



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2.5 A GENERAL LOOK AT GENDER IN MALE DOMINATED MUSIC

CULTURES: ROCK & HEAVY METAL

The following discusses the similarities and differences in predominantly male music cultures like hip hop, rock music and heavy metal.

"Although many women gravitated toward the Heavy Metal (HM) setting in order to escape stifling adolescent situations, they wound up in another oppressive context. Both the forceful corporeal practices of men and the highly gendered structures of power meant that women 'did' gender on men's terms" (Krenske, 2000).

Women 'doing gender' on men's terms, could be interpreted as men defining what it means to be a woman and women agreeing with the definition (Cook, 1993). Miller (1988) confirms that the model of the 'new women' seemed to be perceived as the model of the man. Heavy metal texts, narratives, identities and corporeal practices constituted a complex and contradictory gender regime that literally kept women 'in their place' (Kreshke, 2000).

"...It was like my dress was being torn off me, people were putting their fingers inside me and grabbing my breasts really hard and I had a big smile on my face pretending it wasn't happening. I can't compare it to rape, because it isn't the same. But in a way it was. I was raped by an audience. Figuratively, literally and yet, was I asking for it?" (Courtney Love, grunge rocker, in Johnson, 1995)

Courtney Love explains why stage diving inspired her to compose the song 'Asking for it'. Like female hip hop artists, heavy metal women artists tend to be marginalized or trivialized. According to Hansen (1988), few women stage-dive and those who do hardly ever used their bodies confidently because of the anxiety and pain associated with stage-diving. Gendered differences in the use of corporeal space were particularly evident in stage diving (Johnson, 1995). Much like the hip hop scene in Cape Town, at least 95% of heavy metal participants are male (Johnson, 1995),

while the females are either absent or occupied the periphery. It is however, very rare to find female artists perform at an event with a predominantly female audience.

There are very few examples where we as girls played to an audience of peers. Collectively many of the young men's activities was almost completely absent from the women's (Nehring, 1997).

The lack of women participating in predominantly male music cultures like rock, heavy metal and hip hop, portrays the reasons why women artists are creating a "feminist public sphere" (Nehring, 1997). This simply means that women in rock are now generating a gender-specific identity grounded in a consciousness of community and solidarity among women. Powers (1995) who is a member of Strong Women in Music (or SWIM) notes that the new wave of women in rock has also affected the production music in the United States and encourages women to get more involved in music at all levels. This is an important and essential development if the new prominence of women is to have a lasting impact. Fortunately female rock musicians have recently found a way to form an audience with other young women in punk rock music (Nehring, 1997).

Women in popular music before punk music tended to take the role of singer/song writer, longhaired, pure voiced self-accompanied on acoustic guitar and linked with gender stereotypes like sensitive, passivity and

sweetness. Others tend to model the images that their male counterparts create and become one of the boys (Nehring, 1997).

Much of the research on American popular culture has focused on the traditional roles of gender and sexuality portrayed in music (Kalof, 1999). Many studies (Seidman, 1992, Sherman and Dominick, 1993 and Vincent et. al., 1987) emphasize the sexual innuendoes and suggestiveness, gender stereotypes and implicit aggression found in music videos and lyrical content. Ballard and Coates (1995) for example, found that the type of music and lyrical content significantly affects peoples' moods.

Additionally, in a study of how exposure to nonviolent rap music influenced African American teenagers' perceptions of dating violence, different gender effects were found (Johnson, 1995). Rap music videos that portrayed women in sexually subordinate roles increased the young womens' acceptance of teen dating violence, although these videos did not influence the boys acceptance of teen dating violence (Johnson, 1995). Overall, research has revealed that some segments of American popular culture negatively influences mood and attitudes by increasing feelings of anger, encouraging gender stereotyping and promoting the acceptance of dating violence and rape myths (Kalof, 1999).

Music television (MTV) is an effective medium whereby viewers are literally hypnotized to support certain artists (Hay, 2000). Nehring (1997) for example states, "we never hear music for the first time, we instead live a constant exposure to the songs" (p.67). In essence, that is the main aim of music television: to overexpose the audience to music that creates popularity with the hope that people will purchase the music. Although MTV launched an Anti-Discrimination campaign that received overwhelming support, critics labeled the Anti-Discrimination campaign as 'a positive publicity stunt', to deflect criticism for giving too much exposure to artist with lyrics that glorify violence and videos that degrade women (Hay, 2000).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

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This chapter presented a background sketch of the history of rap music. Given the lack of publications on the rap culture in South Africa, most of the resources are of a popular nature. The chapter has attempted to contextualize the study and provide a general overview of the gender relations in rap music culture which mirror other male dominated music cultures like heavy metal and rock music. Some of the central discussions in this chapter were about the inactive participation of women in the rap music culture

and the negative way in which women are portrayed and devalued in the lyrics. The rationale behind this was to illustrate the manner in which language, expressed through rap lyrics, is not only a consequence of social conditions, but also has the power to subjugate women. In this regard, rap lyrics are repressive toward women and may contribute to womens' lack of participation in the rap culture in Cape Town. The next chapter focuses on theorizing women's position in rap music culture.



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CHAPTER 3

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Theorizing women's position in rap music culture

INTRODUCTION

The study is located within the framework of feminist and social constructionist theory. Feminist psychology seeks to intervene in ways that would uplift women in society and prevent further mental, physical, emotional and sexual abuse against women (Henderson, 1994). Social constructionism posits that the meanings people create in the world are the result of social interaction, that is, talking with other people and living in a cultural context that transmits meanings to people (Biever, 1998). This broad sense of social constructionist theory has been adapted by social psychologists in order to recast social problems as being social constructions. In social psychology, social construction is used to deconstruct common understandings and central aspects of human development, like gender. This chapter takes a critical look at how feminists and social constructionists view the plight of women in rap music.

While the previous chapter elaborated on the position of women in rap music in Cape Town and North America, this chapter theorizes the oppressed position of women in rap music culture. It also draws on psychological theories of competence motivation and dependence to broaden the analysis of women in rap music.

3.1 FEMINIST THEORY

A broad theory of women and gender in society is required to explain women's position in hip hop. Within feminist philosophy, there are various theories that analyze the position of women in society. Later in this chapter I discuss one of the various feminist theories: black feminist theory. However, what links the different feminist theories in a loose fashion is their attention to what have been described as the distinctively feminist issues which are the situation of women and the analysis of male domination (Grogan, 2000). Feminist theory has led psychologists to consider society's belief system about accepted role patterns and behaviours that have been prescribed for males and females (Biever, 1998). These roles are usually very limiting for women.

Central to feminist theory is the construct of gender. Reber (1995) argues that "gender is generally used to discuss the differences between male and female identity, societal roles and the like" (p.307). Most feminist theorists agree that the meaning of gender is constructed by society and that both men and women are socialized into these constructions. Therefore, gender is a set of socially fabricated relationships that are created and reproduced through people's conduct. In like fashion, sex-role stereotyping is the result of mutual definitions and meaning construction within a given society. Biever (1998) contends that the question is not how women and men differ, but how any given people, within their social contexts, have learnt to construct what is acceptable for both men and women.

The manner in which women in rap music conduct themselves, is one example of what female rappers think society expects them to rap about and especially male rappers who inspect and question their presentation in the public eye.

3.1.1 The gendered system: sex-role stratification

While sex role socialization affects both men and women, norms most likely associated with femininity are submissiveness, passivity and gentleness, whereas norms

associated with masculinity includes strength, dominance and aggression. These gender roles are manifested in rap music culture. For example, male rappers are usually the most prominent actors in the culture who come across as aggressive and in control. The female rappers however, are generally viewed as tomboys, 'unlady-like' and second grade rappers. Costos (1990) argues that many women buy into sex roles constructed by a gendered male dominated society. In accepting their subordinate place in society, women in fact make a secret bargain with men: "private power in return for public submission. Men thus rule in the world and allow women to rule in their own place" (Costos, 1990, p.723).

Sex roles are thus a form of oppression. This is one of the themes in feminist scholarship. The role that females hold in society keeps women limited to and restricted in their ambitions and need for achievement. Sex role socialization and stratification not only defines women in a particular way, but also the relationships between women and men.

Cook (1985) said that the acquiring of sexual identities are closely linked to the development of gender-role identities. The gender identity appropriate for the female role is submission; women are conditioned to be victims of gender discrimination.

Women have been challenging traditional role stratification and redefining gender-role identity. The women's movement has also brought gains to women in terms of employment, financial security and independence. Thus, with the status of women increases relatively to men's established power, men may retaliate by trying to put women 'back in their place'.

Hobson (1985) argues that it is especially the "liberated woman" who is particularly vulnerable to gender discrimination (p.115). Liberation for women means choice. It is because of the choices that liberated women make personal preferences to in terms of dress, life-style and language used, which make them vulnerable to gender discrimination. In simple terms the "liberated woman" has not come to be accepted in society. Bowlby (1988) argue that until men have come to accept and understand the new feminine behaviour, the gender discrimination will increase. The liberation of women in general and the gains of the women's movement in particular will in the long run contribute to the equality of both sexes. Bowlby (1988) contend that the new lifestyle of the liberated woman will be an open invitation to men who cling to the stereotype of what 'good' women should and should not do. This ultimately leads to an increase of gender discrimination.

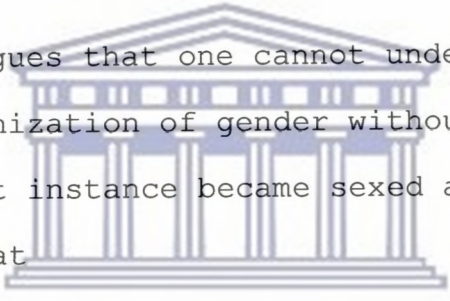
Feminists such as Millet (1970) and Miller (1976) argue that the stereotypical sex-role prescriptions stem from academics in social psychology. Millet seems to think that Freud and his theory of 'penis envy' had helped to organize a counter-revolution against the emancipation of women. She goes further to argue that the theory of penis envy was devised to stigmatize women who sought to escape the socially correct confines of 'feminine' behaviour.

According to Millet, all women want in Freud's theory is to obtain a penis. This means that all women, who move out of the sex roles prescribed, want to obtain a penis and what having a penis symbolizes. It is argued that women who break out of the mold, do this in a very underhanded way, through seeking independence and taking up feminist ideologies (Millet, 1970). By invading the 'male territory', women are seen as competitive towards males and thereby threatening men. According to Freud these women are regarded as suffering from a 'masculinity complex'. This is how penis envy theory was used to stigmatize women and thus keeping them in positions of submission.

However, many feminists (Michell, 1974; Chodorow, 1989; Gatens, 1991) have argued that psychoanalysis has indeed a place in feminist theories and that psychoanalysis should

not be completely rejected. Gatens (1991) has argued that psychoanalytic theory is important as it provides feminist with a theoretical framework "capable of articulating the social meaning and significance of biology" (p.12). Freud has thus provided one with a theory by which he explains how women have become sexed and gendered. As Chodorow (1989) states that "he [Freud] has give us a rich account of the organization and reproduction of sex and gender and how we are produced as gendered and sexed" (p.168).

Chodorow (1989) argues that one cannot understand the social and political organization of gender without understanding how we in the first instance became sexed and gendered. She further asserts that



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feminism also wishes to change the social organization and psychology of sex and gender. Its basic argument is that gender and sexuality, whatever the biology that helps to inform these, are created culturally and socially, they are not immutable givens. Therefore, feminism demands a theory of how we became sexed and gendered (p.169).

Chodorow (1989) claims that it cannot be denied that Freud was sexist and that he does have a distorted ideology about women and women's inferiority, which she says, feminists must challenge, confront and transform. It does however provide a theoretical framework of how masculinity and

femininity developed and how sexual inequality is reproduced.

This theory will however not be dealt with here, as it does not fall within the ambit of this thesis. It was however raised to show that feminism has and can gain from psychoanalytic theories.

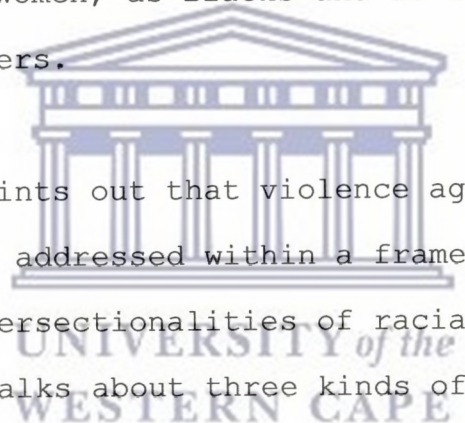
3.1.2 Black feminist theory

The following is a brief exploration of King (1997) and Crenshaw's (1997) recent work. They provide particular insight into models that could explain the position of women in rap music culture effectively.

White women mostly presented feminist discourses that had a homogenous view of women (Mama, 1995; hooks 1997). However, in the last decade there has emerged a specific feminist discourse that differs from the earlier feminist discourses represented by White women. Recent work in Black feminist scholarship have brought on a richer and more sophisticated, many-sided explanation of women's oppression (Spelman, 1997). The Black feminist scholars and activists have moved from views that spoke of a simplistic double or triple jeopardy to explain the multiple jeopardy, multiple

consciousness of Black women (King, 1997). Black feminists also explain the intersectionalities of race and gender (Crenshaw, 1997) and the tragically powerful embodiment of the ambiguous social positioning of Black women.

King (1997) for instance, argues that Black women face multiple oppression in terms of gender, culture, class and race. King (1997) contends that Black women should define and sustain a multiple consciousness that is essential for the liberation of women, as Blacks and as economically disadvantaged workers.



Crenshaw (1997) points out that violence against women of colour can only be addressed within a framework that is attuned to the intersectionalities of racial and gender oppression. She talks about three kinds of intersectionalities namely, structural intersectionality, political intersectionality and representational intersectionality.

Structural intersectionality focuses on the way in which women of colour are situated within overlapping structures of subordination, for example, of colour, race and gender. Political intersectionality refers to the different ways in which political and discursive practices relating to race

and gender interrelate, often erasing women of colour. The way in which political intersectionality relates to violence against women of colour reveals the ways in which politics centered around the notions of race and gender which leaves women of colour without a political framework that will adequately conceptualize the violence that occurs in Black women's lives.

Mama (1997) has studied the neglect of gender within Black psychology. She posits that Black psychology has tended to conceptualize race and racist effects in a simplistic manner, theorizations of gender have overlooked the role of race and how it is implicated in the production and reproduction of gender. Mama (1997) has also argued that psychology tends to treat race as though it has the same consequences for all Black people in racialized contexts.

Representational intersectionality refers to images (Crenshaw, 1997). This intersectionality means that the images of Black women converge to generate narratives that are deemed appropriate in any given social context. For instance, rap music videos portray Black women, which are constructed through racial and gender stereotypes. These stereotypes collectively form images of women of colour that are specifically and categorically unique. Crenshaw (1997)

contends that both the actual experience of gender discrimination and the representation of those experiences form the problem of gender violence. Feminists of colour must address how race and gender intersect in popular discourses as well as in feminist and antiracist politics.

In the following, I draw on changes in social psychology, particularly social constructionist theory to further develop an understanding of the plight of women in rap music.

3.2 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: Crisis's and paradigm shifts

Foster and Louw-Potgieter (1994) argue that there is no straightforward and direct definition of social psychology. The following presents some definitions of social psychology taken from leading textbooks. The first definition is drawn from a prominent American text which defines social psychology as,

a discipline devoted to the systematic study of human interaction and its psychological bias with a focus on the individual actor and the internal processes of the individual (Gergen & Gergen, 1981, p.7).

Another definition is drawn from a text that takes a sociological rather than a psychological stance towards this discipline.

Social psychology is concerned with the relationships between individuals and social structures, whether these structures consist of intimate kinship or friendship groups or work groups, or complex organizations and institutional arrangements (Lindesmith, Strauss & Denzin, 1975, p.3).

According to Foster and Louw-Potgieter (1994), the focus is directed at the interaction amongst individuals. In the above definitions of social psychology people interact with the social world rather than how people react to the social world.

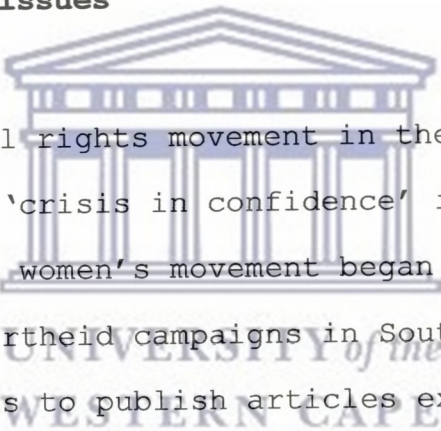
In the next text, Tajfel and Fraser (1978) define social psychology as:

a discipline which aims at integration of the psychological functioning of individuals with the social settings, small and large, in which this functioning takes place. We look at individual behaviour as it interacts with its social context, and as it, more often than not derives from that context. Most of human action is social interaction. Much of it is created by social interaction which shapes and modifies even those of our activities which often appear to us as individually determined (p.17).

Note that the writers (Tajfel and Fraser, 1978) view social psychology as a dynamic discipline. It is this definition

of social psychology that comes the closest to what this thesis identifies with. In order to enhance insight regarding the issues that preceded and influence the development of the social constructionist framework within social psychology, a brief and selective overview of debates that are relevant to this study, as well as the major paradigm shifts that came about because of them, are presented next.

3.2.1 Critical issues



As much as the civil rights movement in the United States contributed to the 'crisis in confidence' in social psychology, and the women's movement began to make its voice heard, the anti-apartheid campaigns in South Africa inspired social psychologists to publish articles expressing their concerns (Foster & Louw-Potgieter, 1994). Against this social background, a major crisis in social psychology became apparent: these hinged around metatheoretical concerns, especially the models of persons portrayed by the dominant experimental research approach (Pepitone, 1976; Sampson, 1977). Sampson (1977) noted that American social psychology appeared to have little relevance to major social and political issues. Despite this crisis, change has not occurred in great depth. Rather, only subtle technical

changes have occurred: a shift from pure to applied research; from laboratory to field studies; and from simple research designs to interactional and complex designs (Foster & Louw-Potgieter, 1994).

Parker (1989) noted that the recurring debates around experimental social psychology were related to, amongst others, the fact that this framework studied social and psychological phenomena without addressing the crucial interconnectedness of underlying ideology, power and history. Like many others, he called for a social psychology that reflected more critically on the ideological function of the discourse in experimental social psychology, that is, how it serves to dehumanize social subjects and to depoliticize social science. He also stated that social psychology should move beyond individualistic notions of power that locates the control of power with the individual. Instead, he called for an acknowledgment of the fact that power reproduces particular relations between people and suppress resistance. Parker (1989) maintained that an understanding of ideology and power, rather than humanistic and ethnocentric perspectives, should govern investigations about transformations in individual subjectivity across time and place.

Additionally, debates about the power and ideological underpinnings of knowledge and scientific inquiry questioned the role of common sense with regard to the production of knowledge. Billig (1973) reflected on debates that reigned in this discipline about the validity and relevance of arguments based on common sense. He explained that early social psychology's critique and rejection of common sense was based on the notion that common sense is not agreed upon, consensual or unitary. It was therefore not considered truth, notwithstanding the fact that the topics covered in social psychology could be explored with common sense and that people's social experiences and realities are varied and subjective. Instead, the findings of experimental research were validated and considered the only representation of truth and knowledge.

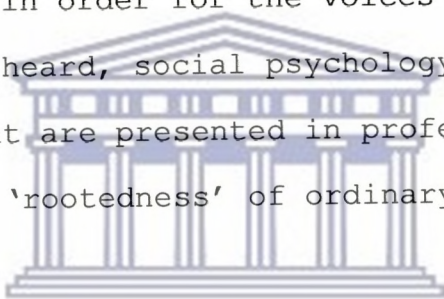


Differences regarding research methods have also divided this discipline (Foster & Louw-Potgieter, 1994).

Ironically, social psychology has tended to be dominated by positivist methods and the use of experiments and standardized questionnaires. The past two decades have seen an increase in the criticism of quantitative and experimental methods which advocates for the use of more qualitative methods. Like interviews and focus groups which requires the observation or interaction with research

participants in their natural settings and therefore developing the researcher to be more sensitive to social contexts (Harre & Secord, 1972).

The elimination and dismissal of subjective reality create what Shotter (1984) referred to as "silences" within social psychology. He argued that the radical reconstruction of social psychology depended on an acceptance of individuals' rights to speak and to have what they say taken seriously. He suggested that, in order for the voices of the socially marginalized to be heard, social psychology should challenge claims to truth that are presented in professional texts, and illustrate the 'rootedness' of ordinary, non-textual conversation.



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Another central debate within the discipline of social psychology is whether an individual should be the "subject" of study in psychology. According to Sampson, (1977) this notion causes serious debate and conflict within this discipline. Sampson (1977) presented an overview of at least six challenges to the assumption that the individual should, in fact, be the "subject" of psychological inquiry. According to him, cross-cultural studies postulate the existence of several significantly less individuated alternatives to self-contained individualism. Feminist

researchers, for example, reconceptualized patriarchal versions of social, historical and social life and introduced alternative views of personhood. Systems theory presented an epistemological position in which ontological primacy is granted to relations rather than individual entities. Critical theorists postulate that the individualized subjects are designed to serve ideological purposes and that studies about character traits and other individual qualities contribute to societal reproduction and not to human betterment. They also question the existence of an integrated, self-contained self and argue instead that individuals and society are not independent entities, but interpenetrated by each other; that is, the society constitutes personhood but that the person can also reproduce or potentially transform society. Social constructionists maintain that selves, persons and psychological traits are social and historical constructions and not naturally occurring objects.

A full exposition of all the different theoretical frameworks referred to above will not be explored in detail. However, a brief overview of the shift from modernism to post-modernism and the consequent establishment of social constructionism will be explored in the next section.

3.2.2 The move to postmodernism

The paradigm shift from modernism to postmodernism required social psychology to move its focus away from the person or the individual to the analysis of the individuals' interaction with the social context. Positivist notions of knowledge, truth and reality, as well as the global all encompassing worldviews posed by modern scientists are what contributed to the shift. What this means is that there are no facts, only images and interpretations, and that interpretations are inconclusive and subject to reinterpretation. It also questions empiricist notions of methods of re-theorizing the self (Gergen, 1994). In this sense postmodernism subscribes to this orientation and therefore employs a social constructionist theoretical underpinning this thesis deploys.

3.3 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST THEORY

Social constructionists acknowledge that there are many contesting perspectives of the world rather than one constant worldview. Although social constructionism is fairly new in psychology, it does not represent new insight to social science theory. Berger (1972) believed that all human knowledge is developed, transmitted and maintained in

social situations and through social institutions. He was optimistic about advancing a kind of 'sociological psychology' that could rationalize knowledge development (Biever, 1998). Berger (1972) was especially interested in the process of socialization and how people strengthen social structures that subsequently construct their realities. Nicholson (1990) adds that social constructionism was created in the context of explanation and within a framework of macro sociological perspectives.

Arguing from a social constructionist standpoint, social problems were recast as being social constructions, products of claims making, labeling and other constitutive processes (Sands, 1992). Social constructionism has become more popular in social psychology where it is used to deconstruct mutual understandings of human growth, anger, gender and other social psychological issues (Sands, 1992).

Biever (1998) appears to think that social constructionists and feminists share various ideas and practices. "Both recognize the importance of social context in understanding behaviour, interactions and relationships" (Biever, 1998, p.7). Postmodernists and feminists, (note Hare-Mustin, 1991) examine meaning and power. Instead of trusting dualities that pit all men against all women or simplistic

theories that harmonize all women's experiences, feminist postmodernism challenges us to create alliances that allow us to work together. It also assists in constructing a new understanding of gender relations, class relations and race relations that will empower everyone (Lather, 1992).

Despite the obvious similarities between feminists and social constructionists' perceptions on gender, there are also important differences that should be considered. According to Kenway, (1992) feminists are more likely to take a political stance to the marginalization of women. In contrast to the feminist view, social constructionists frequently challenge the idea that gender is the only lens through which behaviour is viewed and movement toward the political-theoretical stance of the researcher is not encouraged by all social constructionist researchers (Seidman, 1992). A social constructionist analysis of gender roles should allow for the possibility that both men and women have the right to choose a different voice, a more balanced cultural repertoire for both genders (Lather, 1992).

Feminists criticize postmodernists such as social constructionists for not adopting a more advocative, political perspective, in relation to oppressed groups such

as women (Henderson, 1994). Feminists assert that the relativism underlying social constructionism allows gender to be perceived as outweighing the acceptable societal construction in which men are privileged (Biever, 1998).

Taking into account Unger's (1979) argument that it is important to study areas in which women have been neglected or treated partially, it is necessary to consider an integrative approach to feminist and social constructionist theory. In spite of distinctions between traditional approaches to feminism and postmodernism, there is common ground. As such, this study argues that in order to understand the societal constructed impasse of women in rap music, a feminist social constructionist framework should be employed. In a nutshell, the feminist social constructionist framework suggests that because women are portrayed as unequal participants in rap music culture, it affects women's self-esteem and thus women lack the confidence to perform and make their voices heard. A better understanding of the way in which women internalize gender roles and how it impacts on their confidence may be offered through a gender analysis of social construction theories, which is discussed next.

3.3.1 The Social Construction of Gender Equality

This thesis is written within the realms of feminist and social psychology, therefore, this study has an interest in making visible the processes and structures which maintain social inequalities or disadvantage women (Walters, 1990; Hare-Mustin, 1991). The study takes a micro-structural view of the relationships, that is, what it means to be male or female is continually recreated during the life course by the opportunities available to individuals and through their interactions with each other (Risman & Schwartz, 1989, p.1). This view is both institutional and interactional. As men and women interact, they may either replicate traditional gender patterns or construct new ones. Whatever they do, they are influenced by social structures that today still promote gender inequality (Dusky, 1996; Lindsey, 1997; Knudson-Martin, 1995).

The ways in which male and females define equality in their interactions with each other is informed by cultural stories expressed through personal orientations, which Hochschild (1989) called gender ideologies, suggesting what is expected, normal, and fair among both males and females. These collective stories interject the dominant culture's specifications into the male or female dialogue, restricting

to a greater or lesser extent, the possible range of behaviours and affecting each partner's expectations and appraisal of the benefits and costs of the relationship (McDonald & Cornille, 1988).

Feminist scholars have long been interested in masculine power and domination (e.g., Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Heer, 1963; Olson and Rebusky, 1972), but only recently have they looked at the more subtle aspects of masculine power and the relationship of power and inequality (e.g., Ball, Cowan, & Cowan, 1995; Hertz, 1986; Horst & Doherty, 1995; Walker, 1996). Hare-Mustin (1991) and Komter (1989) use a multi-dimensional conception of power that takes into account not only the traditional Weberian definition of power as the ability to enforce one's will, even against resistance, but also invisible and latent power. Invisible power is the power to prevent issues from being raised. Latent power derives from the operation of dominant values and institutional procedures that shape a person's perceptions and preferences in such a way that they can see or imagine no alternative to the status quo or they see it as natural or unchangeable.

Conceptualizing male-female relationships in terms of invisible and latent power gives much more scope for

understanding of gender power differentials in society. It also helps make sense of research, for example, that shows that men have greater power to determine the direction of the conversation and what problems get discussed (Ball, Cowan and Cowan, 1995), that men's needs are more likely than women's to be reflected in most cultures.

3.3.2 The Social Context Creates Equality Dilemmas

As the above literature suggests, the social context both supports and inhibits the development of gender equality. The factors supporting equality are strong. Attitudes regarding men and women's roles are shifting, especially among younger persons, urban residents, and higher socioeconomic groups (Fleming, 1988, Keith & Schafer, 1991; Rossi, 1996). Young women and men are encouraged to assume that they can have an egalitarian relationship that accommodates both work and family (Hertz, 1986).

Yet the factors that continue to inhibit gender equality are numerous and potent. The power differential between men and women in the larger social context, especially the invisible and latent power, spills into the dynamics of the rap music culture, often in the form of unexamined gender expectations that reinforce and maintain male power. The woman's

position in rap music culture is further undermined by traditional gender expectations and with unequal resources and power, thus making actual achievement of equality difficult.

3.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

3.4.1 Psychological theory of Competence Motivation

The psychological theory of competence motivation suggests that if support prevails in an environment, it encourages confidence and competence. In relation to the study, it would imply that if people were willing to support and be receptive to female emcees, it would impact on whether or not female emcees perceive themselves to be able to emcee and participate in rap music to a greater extent. However, feminist psychologists such as Mulqueen (1992) are critical of White's theory (1959) of competence motivation.

Mulqueen (1992) argues that women today face conflict in terms of an innate motivation to be competent and the existing pattern of sex-role socialization that relegates women's expression of competence to spheres devalued by society. For instance, society views women as 'tomboys' when they get on stage and with a microphone express themselves. Mulqueen (1992) acknowledges this predicament

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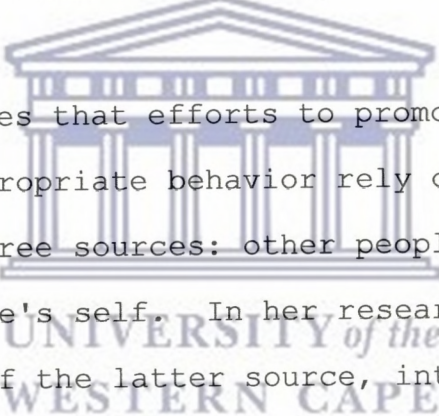
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and contends that women face the choice of being perceived as either competent or feminine, since being competent and feminine is contradictory in contemporary society. She says that competence is valued by society but is inconsistent with femininity, since femininity is associated with incompetence. This dilemma between women emcees' desire to express their competence as well as their femininity becomes more apparent when one examines male-female interactions. For instance, Curtis (1985) states that women's level of performance is inhibited when working with males.



Deyoung (1996) states that efforts to promote environmentally appropriate behavior rely on motivation originating from three sources: other people, the environment, and one's self. In her research, she examines a particular form of the latter source, intrinsic satisfactions. Nine studies are presented that investigate the multidimensional structure of intrinsic satisfactions and their relationship to reduce consumption behavior. Two categories of intrinsic satisfaction, labeled frugality and participation, are particularly well suited to encouraging such behavior. A third category, competence motivation, is explored in some detail and its dimensional structure is interpreted in terms of 3 dominant themes in the research literature.

Shackelford, Wood and Worchel's (1996) study on the social stereotypes of women as less instrumentally competent than men proves that women are unlikely to excel in mixed gendered groups. Because other group members do not perceive them as competent, their ideas are not judged credible and little attention is paid to their contributions. In this study, two experiments examined ways in which women can surmount these barriers to influence in male-dominated groups: an initial demonstration of their specific skill at the task, a behavioral style that conveys a cooperative motivation, and a style that attracts others' attention to their high-quality solutions.

White's (1959) research on competence motivation provides a framework for this project to the extent that it outlines the reality of the feeling women go through in the music industry. His theory emphasizes that one feels competent when one receives support from one's environment. From this it could follow that female emcees in Cape Town are not actively involved in the culture for reasons such as South African society's negative conclusion of hip hop as a culture, because women find it difficult to get signed on by record companies; and because women are not encouraged to participate in the culture.

There is no clear answer to why women experience difficulties in being signed to record companies or are active in the industry. The theory of competence motivation provides one perspective on this, namely the lack of a supportive environment. In addition, however there is also the phenomenon of women in the music industry being increasingly dependent on their male counterparts. The lack of technical skills and 'tricks of the trade' is one of the factors that put women in rap music in a vulnerable situation.

3.4.2 DEPENDENCE THEORY

The term dependence refers in essence to the fact that one person is reliant on others for support, opinions, beliefs and ideas (Reber, 1995). Being dependent on someone is a term often applied to women (Tait, 1997). Tait (1997) further indicates that the applications of dependence to women are "consequences of narrow social and self definition" (p.17). First, what is often missing from a perspective on psychological dependence is the state of being dependent, or "counting on other people to provide help, when one has not sufficient skill, confidence, energy; and or time" (Bornstein, 1992, p.3). This state is what accompanies people throughout the developmental process.

Dependence is an expected and natural part of the life of infants and children, a wall to push against for adolescents and an unwanted but necessary stage for many elderly people (East, 1998). This perspective of dependence is often missing from many discussions or debates. Dependence is neither normalized nor considered a universal human experience in which one's task in life is to integrate the desire for both autonomy and dependence (Chodorow, 1989). Motenko and Greenberg (1995) re-evaluated the role of dependence in late-life development using concepts drawn from psychology and scholarship on women's development. A perspective of old age as a time of continued, positive growth and change is proposed. Dependence is not a marker of decline and deterioration, but a necessary development for mutual growth and enhancement of late-life family reciprocity. Accepting dependence helps an older person maintain his or her competence, autonomy and self-esteem. The process of dependence as growth promoting could be viewed through a different lens with regard to the position of women in rap music culture.

However, in the context of power relations, Miller (1976) noted that the subordination of women by men is often confused with dependence; that is "subordinates are described in terms of, and encouraged to develop, personal

psychological characteristics that are pleasing to the dominant group" (p.7). Miller also stated that "feelings of weakness, vulnerability and dependence" are part of the human experience" and that women have become "the carriers for society of certain aspects of the total human experience" (p.22). Dependence has been constructed as a trait of women, both to give power to the dominant group by defining women as helpless or weak and to give women the role of carriers of universal needs for dependence.

The developing research and theory on women's psychology not only challenges dependence as a trait of women but also provides a basis for reconceptualizing dependence as strength. For instance, Gilligan (1993) found that women understand dependence and responsibility in terms of survival and sacrifice for the good of others. This point could relate to the dependency women in rap music culture have to men. In other words, the technological disadvantage women seemed to have inherited could in fact be seen as a means of learning the 'trick of the music making trade' through observation.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed Black feminism, the social

constructionist perspective and psychological perspectives, such as the meanings of dependence and competence motivation in relation to rap music, particularly women in the local context in Cape Town. This chapter challenged the conventional notion that applications of dependence are the consequences of narrow social and self-definition harboured by women. The analysis demonstrates how women in rap music culture have been socially constructed and how this construction does not take into account women's experience and voice. This chapter also provided insight into theories of Black feminists that provided a more complex theory of understanding women's oppression. They argue that women's oppression cannot solely be explained through gender, but also by taking into account race, heterosexuality, class, age, etc.



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CHAPTER FOUR

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Methodological Framework

INTRODUCTION


In this chapter the research that was carried out, including the methodological framework in which it is embedded, the central aims and the methods of data collection and analysis are described. This chapter outlines the study in the particular methodological context in which the research is located. A qualitative feminist research methodology is sketched along with the conceptual foundations of social constructionist research. Self-reflexivity is essential in the research process and this account is presented. Since reflections on the research process are fundamental in feminist work, the difference in power and inequality are reflected on in this chapter. Thus in closing, this chapter gives an account of my personal history and investment in this project.

4.1 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1.1 Paradigmatic decisions

The principles and philosophies of the interpretive-

hermeneutical paradigm within which this qualitative research is embedded, and the empirical analytical paradigm are discussed in this section. Since social scientific research is often characterized as having three paradigms of thought namely, the empirical-analytical paradigm, the interpretative-hermeneutical paradigm and the critical paradigm, these paradigms are said to differ ontologically, epistemologically and axiologically (Smalling, 1992a). Additionally, methodological matters such as objectivity and reliability and validity refer to other distinctions (Creswell, 1994).



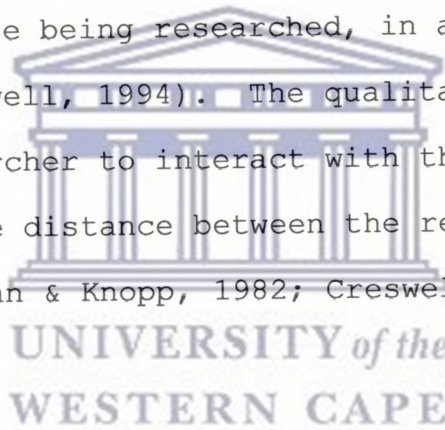
The ontological dimension refers to the research domain that is being investigated in research in the social sciences (Mouton & Marais, 1990). In most cases, the quantitative researcher views the research domain, or reality, as independent or objective in relation to the researcher. On the other hand, qualitative researchers view the research domain as constructed by the participants in the research (Creswell, 1994).

The epistemological dimension refers to the 'quest' for truth and is regarded as the key dimension of social science praxis (Mouton & Marais, 1990). The epistemological ideal

is that research conducted reflects as closely as possible, the true nature of the research findings.

Epistemological issues associated with these approaches concern the locus of scientific knowledge, for instance, reason and sensory perceptions (empirical-analytical) and verbal discourse and or intuition (interpretive-hermeneutical) (Smalling, 1992a, p.4).

The qualitative and quantitative methodologies differ with regard to the relationship of the researcher and the participants. The quantitative researcher is distant and independent of those being researched, in an attempt to regulate bias (Creswell, 1994). The qualitative paradigm requires the researcher to interact with the participants, which minimizes the distance between the researcher and the participants (Bogdan & Knopp, 1982; Creswell, 1994, Douglas, 1970).



The axiological dimension refers to the values of the paradigms (Creswell, 1994; Mouton & Marais, 1990). In the quantitative approach, the researcher's values are to be kept outside the scope of the research, whereas in the qualitative approach, the researcher's values are acknowledged and reported on (Creswell, 1994).

The term methodology in research means the "choices one makes in a specific research project and the reflection on the justification of those choices" (Meulenburg-Buskens,

1996, p.1). For instance, this project chose the qualitative methodological approach. If a researcher chooses the quantitative methodological framework, he or she uses a deductive form of logic wherein the theories and hypotheses are tested in a 'cause-and-effect' order (Smalling, 1992). On the other hand, qualitative methodology uses inductive logic that assumes categories that emerge from participants that provide 'context bound' data and theories that explain certain phenomena (Brogdan & Bilklen, 1982).

The rhetoric or language used in research is another way in which the paradigms mentioned differ (Smalling, 1992). According to Smalling, (1992a) the language used by qualitative researchers is more personal, informal and based on definitions that emerge from the study (Creswell, 1994).

In light of the above, Smalling (1992a) argues that the empirical analytical paradigm views people as a mechanisms, robots or organisms whereas the interpretive-hermeneutical paradigm views people or interpreters.

The difference between the empirical-analytical (positivistic) and the interpretive-hermeneutical paradigms, stated above, substantiates the use of qualitative methods

and techniques in this study. It necessitates a discussion on the shift from the mainstream empirical-analytical paradigm as a dominant paradigm that has shaped many disciplines, including psychology (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1996).

4.1.2 The turn away from positivism

Positivist research has been an instrument of dominance and legitimization of power elites, that must be brought to serve the interests of dominated, exploited and oppressed groups, particularly women (Pilcher, 1996, p.128).

Over the last four decades, there has been an overwhelmingly negative response towards the empirical nature of positivism within some social science research. Feminists, amongst others, have argued that the positivist paradigm has too many limitations on what can be legitimately included in a scientific design (Lather, 1992). There is an emerging range of methodological initiatives in the social sciences, specifically the new developments in critical psychology and feminist research methodologies (Parker & Burman, 1993). From a feminist standpoint, skepticism towards positivism was centralized on challenges to male-dominated research practices (Hollway, 1989). Humanists pioneered the paradigm shift from a quantitative method to a more qualitative research methodology (Morgan, 1983).

Sociological theories like symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and critical psychology, which include social constructionism studies of rhetoric have all been seen as significant moments of the methodological critique of positivist social science research (Shefer, 1999, p.114).

Wilkinson (1998) also speak of Personal Construct Theory in psychology and the development of action research and participatory methodologies as important developments in the emergence of these qualitative methods. These qualitative methodologies have also occurred as part of the broader feminist project with a specific focus on the personal, experiential instances of women and the recognition of the political role of the researcher (Banister et al., 1996).

Feminists amongst others have rapidly taken the anti-positivist qualitative movement forward. A feminist framework that is primarily concerned with the voice of the women being researched informs this research. In the following, the focus lies on exemplifying why feminists are critical of positivistic methods and have turned to qualitative phenomenological methodologies.

4.2 Qualitative research

Qualitative methodologists argue that a humanistic,

subjective exploration of reality is more appropriate in social research. Yet, Walker (1996) suggests that the subject of inquiry is inherently complex and understanding this complexity is part of the research brief. The techniques used in the qualitative approach are usually associated with 'what things exist' rather than to determine 'how many such things there are' (Walker, 1996).

Qualitative investigations are concerned with the nature of social phenomena under investigation (Maso, 1989).

Qualitative researchers therefore occupy themselves with such phenomena as group interaction, situations, and problems with the similarities of differences and (causal) relationships between elements of such phenomena (Maso, 1989). Therefore, the qualitative researcher focuses on the context and integrity of material and do not build on quantitative accounts only.

There are five characteristics of qualitative research which Bogdan and Bilken (1982) identify. Firstly, they mention that qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting, which is the direct source of the data, and the researcher is the key research instrument. Secondly, qualitative research is descriptive. The data is collected in the form of words or images rather than numbers. Thirdly,

qualitative research is concerned with the process rather than the outcomes or products of the research. In other words, this implies that the gendered, multicultural situated researcher perceives the world with a set of ideas (theories or ontology's) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that are examined in specific ways (methodology). The qualitative researcher's data is often criticized as being biased and unreliable, or invalid (Banister et al., 1996). Hence, qualitative researchers go to great lengths to justify and motivate why their particular methodological frameworks are used.

Fourthly, qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). In other words, they do not search for information that could be proved or disapproved by hypothesizing before entering the field. The theory develops from the bottom up; as in the classic example of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Lastly, qualitative researchers are interested in the ways different people make sense out of their lives. They are concerned with participants perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982), rather than the construction of universal laws of social behaviour (Mouton & Marais, 1990).

Furthermore, Smaling (1992a) elaborates those qualitative four key aspects of empirical qualitative research. These are:

- (i) the nature of the study;
- (ii) method of data collection;
- (iii) method of data analysis and
- (iv) the research design.

At the outset, the world is defined or experienced by the participants in the study. Subsequently, methods of data collection are open and flexible. According to Walker (1985), qualitative methods yield large volumes of exceedingly rich data, obtained from a limited number of individuals. Photography, interviews (group and individual), observation, field notes, life stories and projective techniques like the Rorschach technique, are but a few methods of data collection employed by the qualitative researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Banister et al., 1996; Fontana & Frey, 1994; Walker, 1996).

Qualitative analysis is by no means similar to that of quantitative analysis. Walker (1996) says that data analysis does not include representation of an empirical, numerical or mathematical system, but rather interpretative, creative and personal. Various qualitative data analysis

methods exist, for instance, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, text analysis, to mention a few (Wilkinson, 1998). Lastly, a qualitative research design implies an interactive, cyclical relationship between the data collection and analysis. These two processes alternate continuously and influence each other.

Qualitative researchers face the brunt of many critics. Like, not being 'scientific' enough or objective or even valid (Banister, et al, 1996). There have been many alternative ways in which qualitative researchers have argued for validity, such as the use of self-reflexivity, triangulation, amongst others.

The decision to employ qualitative methodology for this thesis has been influenced by the argument that qualitative methods permit a considerable amount of flexibility. For instance, it has been well argued how the use of qualitative methods create the space for one to view sensitive issues such as sexuality and domestic violence (Griffin 1986; Potgieter, 1997). The emphasis that qualitative researchers (Potgieter, 1997; Shefer, 1999) place on people's experiences persuaded me further to utilize this method. An interesting account depicted in Billig's (1978) research of contemporary British Fascism in which he states that a

quantitative approach would only have revealed the surface characteristic of the group's ideology, highlights another reason for my option to utilize the qualitative method. In the light of Billig's argument, I agree with him that quantitative methodology would not have provided a deep analysis of women's participation in rap music culture.

4.3 A FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITATIVE FEMINIST RESEARCH

METHODOLOGY

Feminist research has been based on women's own knowledge and experience. Such emphasis may be understood as spurred on by the silence of women's perspectives and women's experiences in traditional social science research in which men have largely carried out research and as argued, for men's benefit (Shefer, 1998, p.125).

Feminist research is not 'orthodox' in terms of traditionally accepted research parlance, in that it challenges conventional approaches to address the research question, such as preserving the distance between the researcher and the researched, and the patriarchal bias evident in the construction of most methodological theory (Pilcher, 1996). The challenges feminist researchers face are particularly relevant in that the participants for this research project were both men and women drawn from a culture that is male dominated. Mies (1993) believes that the condescending study of women as a dominated, exploited

and oppressed group, needs to be turned around, with research being used for them, not as an instrument of dominance and legitimization of (essentially male) power elites. Mies also challenges women scholars to 'take their struggles to the street' and participate in the social struggles of the feminist movement.

Very simply, to do feminist research is to put the social construction of gender at the center of one's inquiry. Whether looking at 'math genes' or false dualism's in the patriarchal construction of 'rationality', feminist researchers see gender as a basic organizing principle, which profoundly shapes or mediates the concrete conditions of our lives (Holland, 1995, p.101).

According to Holland, feminism is among other things, a form of attention, and a lens that brings into focus particular questions. Banister (et. al., 1996) argues that feminist research is a theory that connects experience and action. What makes feminist research 'feminist', is a challenge to the scientism that refuses to address the relations between knowledge and knowledge-generating practices (Banister, et al., 1996).

Another way of identifying feminist research is when the researcher illustrates a commitment to a specific epistemology; that is, a theoretical and political analysis that critiques dominant conceptions of knowledge, and poses questions about the gendered orientation of, and criteria for knowledge (Hollway, 1989, p.12).

In addition, power, and a corresponding attention to reflexive issues in the form of theorizing and transforming the process of academic production, including the position and responsibilities of the researcher is what defines the feminist researcher.

The rationale behind using this method is clear. There was no doubt that I would conduct this study using the focus group and interview method of data collection. Feminist psychology has always provided an important insight as to how one should approach a study of this nature. This thesis argues that there exists a silence of women's voices within rap music culture. As such, utilizing a feminist framework and focus groups and interviews as a tool to help women 'make themselves heard' would be the best route to determine the root causes of women's silence.

According to contemporary researchers like Banister (et al., 1996) feminist research approaches have put much emphasis on the process of research, particularly in the relations between the researcher and the researched. According to Hollway, (1989) feminist methodological interventions focus on experience, in terms of whose experience is represented and validated within research. Reflexivity, as a critique of objectivity, itself is seen as a particular kind of

subjectivity (Hollway, 1989). Feminist researchers however, have given much more attention to self-reflexivity that include reflections on the researcher's social identity, investments in the research, ideological commitments, the researchers role in the research process and the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

4.4 CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST RESEARCH

The research approach that seeks to analyze how signs and images have powers to create particular representations of people and objects that underlie our experience of these people and objects, is called social constructionism (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999, p.147, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Positivist researchers often think that qualitative research is of the interpretive variety described earlier in this chapter, and consider such research useful for exploratory purposes. However, Terre Blanche and Durrheim, (1999, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) argue that they find it more difficult to pigeonhole social constructionist research.

Social constructionist methods, like their interpretive counterparts, are qualitative and concerned with meaning. On the one hand, interpretive approaches (referred to as romantic hermeneutics) treat people as though they were the

origin of their thoughts, feelings and experiences were the products of systems of meaning that exist at a social rather than an individual level (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). On the other hand, social constructionist approaches, sometimes referred to as critical hermeneutics, treat people as though their thoughts, feelings and experiences were the products of systems of meaning that exist at a social rather than an individual level (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). However, the most noticeable difference between the interpretive approach and social constructionism is ontological (Gergen, 1994). In other words, they have different assumptions about the nature of the reality that is to be understood. At the epistemological and methodological level these two methods may seem identical because both assume that one can only understand the social reality by accounting meaning and also, both draws on qualitative methods (Gergen, 1994).

4.4.1 The social constructionist emphasis on language

Social constructionism takes language seriously, but in a very dissimilar way compared to the interpretive approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Both positivism and interpretive research work by privileging what is outside language, such

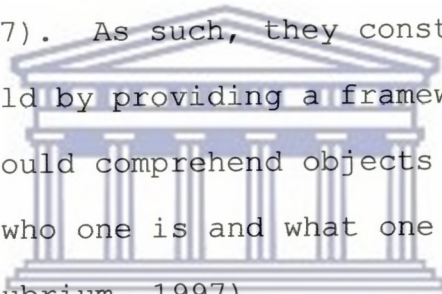
as objective facts or subjective experiences, or over language itself, which means using language only as a window onto some other reality (Silverman, 2000). The emphasis on language in social constructionism is one reason why this study places itself within a social constructionist perspective. Social constructionism holds that the social life experienced by people is fundamentally constituted in language and that language itself should therefore be the object of study. Therefore, in comparison to positivism and interpretive research, social constructionism does not treat language as if it were "neutral and transparent" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

On the other hand, social constructionism should not be confused with linguistics, which is concerned with the technical structure of language (Silverman, 1998a). According to Wetherell (1998) social constructionism is concerned with broader aspects of social meaning encoded in language. Social constructionist researchers often focus on language, like the language used by male rappers, which is the case in this study (Watson, 1997); the stories that women tell to express why they do not participate in the rap culture (Maynard & Purvis, 1994); or even the strategies used by journalists when reporting on the harsh effects rap lyrics have on the manner in which young men treat young

women (Morgan, 1998). However, at this point it is necessary to emphasize that

...constructionist research is not about language *per se*, but about interpreting the social world as a kind of language, that is, as a system of meanings and practices that construct reality (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p.13, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

For example, the raps articulated by rap artists express their feelings about their real life situations. So, social constructionists want to flag the idea that representations of reality are structured like a language or a system of signs (Gubrium, 1997). As such, they construct particular versions of the world by providing a framework or system through which one could comprehend objects and practices as well as understand who one is and what one does in relation to these systems (Gubrium, 1997).



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In evaluation of most research paradigms, constructionism is probably the most attuned to the real-world political consequences of texts, including the texts used by social science researchers (Parker & Burman, 1993). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claim that it is therefore ironic that it should be the most prone to styling itself as a form of "armchair critique" (p.169).

4.5 SELF-REFLEXIVITY

Despite such equality in difference between the investigator and the investigated concerning experience and knowledge, in the male-defined concept of science the investigator has the exclusive right to objectification of knowledge. His right is based on the principle that the investigator possesses scientific skill (Wilkinson, 1988, p.276-277).

Feminist methodology is essentially about leveling the potential power imbalance between researched and researcher. This could only mean that self-reflexivity is a significant and central component of qualitative researcher. Hallway (1989) contributes to this discussion and says that the "researcher's own positioning in a social context and the significance of reflexivity in the research process have been underlined in feminist research" (p.151). Personal reflexivity is about acknowledging who you are, your individuality as a researcher and how your personal interests and values influence the process of research from initial idea to outcome (Callaway, 1981).

The self-reflexivity of researchers holds significant challenges. By this I mean that as social science researchers we need to develop a "reflexive quality, be critically subjective, able to empathize with participants, yet be aware of our own experiences in order to achieve a resonance between subjectivity and objectivity" (Kitzinger and Perkins, 1993, p.12). One method that seemed to have

helped Hallway (1989) overcome this challenge of self-reflectivity is keeping a journal. Clearly there are many more methods of heightening ones awareness to gain balance between interaction with the researched and ones' own understanding of the issues at hand. Examples of these methods are found in the work of Wilkinson, (1988), Hallway, (1989) and Marshall and Rossman, (1989).

The self-reflexive process also highlights in particular the power relations that are inherent in the research process itself. In locating myself as a researcher in relation to my research, I spent a lot of time thinking about the difference in power and inequality that were present and came out of the study.

The rap culture in Cape Town has not been documented vigorously. This is probably so because the many journalists and culturalists who had an interest in the rapid growth of this genre have been met with a very defensive posture by the participants. As an observer, before attempting to research the culture, rappers told me that the rap culture does not share a very popular status because of it being compared to gangsterism. Thus, they assume that the media or researchers are persisting to portray negative images about the rap culture. In many

instances this is true. It is to this end that my task was very difficult throughout the entire research process. It was very challenging to recruit volunteer participants because of the defensive or protective 'nature' of rappers towards *their* culture. In all fairness to the rap community, I have heard many parents comment negatively on the existence of the rap culture. So, in essence, I was in a very uncomfortable place because *my* parents and colleagues could not understand why I would want to study the rap culture as a psychology scholar and rappers were wary that I would misinterpret *their* culture. So when strangers asked me what my thesis topic was I felt embarrassed and hesitant. Sometimes I even said: "I am studying women in music." I then found myself rambling off trying to contextualize the research. This was usually in vain because at the end of the conversation I found them walking away frowning.

4.5.1 Reflections on difference in power and inequality

Over the years, there has been much debate around who should do research on whom and consequently speak on behalf of whom (Shefer, 1999). As I mentioned earlier, feminist researchers were uncomfortable with males researching female issues. However, even when women are researching female

issues, this does not mean that other pertinent issues of race and class do not come forth (Hallway, 1989).

I was well aware of these debates when I first started this research. I thought of my own identity as a Black, urban woman in my mid-twenties, middle class and English-speaking, researching and representing the experiences of Black young men and women, many of them of working class, rural backgrounds whose first language were predominantly Afrikaans. I carried a deep concern and ambivalence about my intention to 'represent' the experiences of a group of people with whom I only have two things in common, and that is the passion for the hip hop culture and the colour of my skin. Yet, because of the other differences mentioned, I felt like there was an unequal power relationship in a range of historical contextual lines including class, age, education and occupational status.

Even though I highlight my concerns about representation, it should also be noted that it is important to document the rap culture in South Africa as it has rarely been done. Moreover, thinking skeptically about the power the researcher has over the input given by the participants, one wonders if it is possible to ever be anything but 'other' to the participants of one's research (Shefer, 1999). A good

instance of this is when the data has been collected and I find myself alone interpreting what the participants have said, using my own ideological perspective, and making interpretations from my particular social location. It is in this exact instant that an unequal power between the researched and the researcher exists. However, some (e.g., Stanely, 1990; Strebel, 1995) argue that being on the border of the participants' realm of experience may even have benefits, such as allowing more objectivity in interpreting.

4.5.2 Personal history and investment in the research

Another aspect of self-reflexivity relates to ones own investments in the research, as Shefer (1998, p.158) articulates it.



Central to my notion of self-reflexivity is that I ask myself the question 'why do you want to do this research? And what are you going to get out of it?' Finding a starting point to answer such questions proved difficult. I found myself writing and rewriting my investments in the research. Eventually it became evident to me that there are multiple self-location stories possible in my self-reflexive moment.

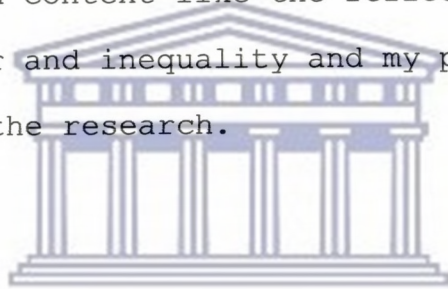
I locate myself within the realms of a feminist framework and it is this conscious political stance that made me revisit and resist judging the male participants and siding with the female participants. I knew that I could not

reveal this 'sense of self' to my participants because of the risk that it would have had a negative impact on the outcomes of the research. In essence, my philosophical and political stance has always guided me to areas which were marginalized and hence, the study of women in rap music. I have a keen sense of gender and other forms of psychological oppression. I chose this study because I wanted to positively contribute to the upliftment of the hip hop culture in South Africa and address the lack of women participating in rap music. I am aware of the voyeurism in my interest in women in rap music. I also realize that for male hip hoppers to talk about the lack of women participating in the rap culture may seem like making 'confessions' to an outsider. The researched does not owe me anything and so I value the response or 'confessions' of both male and female participants. They opened up to me and whether the participants did this consciously or unconsciously, the fact remains that they contributed to change.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This chapter presented the methodological framework for this research. Most of the central debates in this chapter were around the shift from positivism to a more qualitative

framework within which thesis is located. Also, the significance of locating the self within the research was another fundamental discussion point. Feminist researchers think of their work as being accountable, not only in terms of clarity or confession, but also in relation to broader emancipatory and transformative goals, and current discussions are preoccupied with what this means in practice (Banister, et al., 1996). Therefore, this chapter has also highlighted the anxieties and discomforts I experienced within the research context like the reflections on difference in power and inequality and my personal history and investment in the research.



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CHAPTER FIVE

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The research process

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and critically reflects on the research carried out. The traditional categories of the research procedure are presented, including the aims and significance of the study, participants, methods and procedures, and data analysis. In conclusion, I present a critical reflection on the research process.

5.1 THE STUDY

5.1.1 Aims of the study and research questions

The study was concerned with why women are not well represented both as actors and subjects in rap music. In other words, the investigation was interested in deconstructing the dynamics of male domination within rap music culture in the Cape Town area. It therefore aimed to:

- Explore what perceptions keep women from actively participating in rap culture. Here I explored reasons why women are not actively engaged in hip hop activities

such as getting on the stage and rapping. It was important to explore not only women's experience of remaining passive recipients of the rap culture, but also the resistance that some of them expressed towards the dominant male rap culture;

- Explore whether the scarcity of women in rap music in South Africa relates to gender discrimination. In this respect participants were asked whether they think that a difference in power and an unequal status between men and women in rap music culture exist and how this impacts on women's participation;
- Explore how women are represented in the rap music culture. Here I explored how some women participate in the culture and what challenges they face.
- Explore what perceptions of female emcees exist within rap music culture by both women and men.

5.1.2 Sample

A snowball sampling technique was deployed. This technique involved the recruitment of self-identified hip hoppers through social network groups (Banister et al., 1996.). I

approached rappers at events, which initiated the sampling process. As a result, a sample size of 27 rappers volunteered to participate in the research. I have conducted the research with a very small sample size. This is so because the rap community is a very small network of people, especially in Cape Town. According to Hollway (1989), the size of a sample could be justified by the belief that the information derived from any participant is valid because that account is a product of the social domain. This could mean that the size of the sample does not necessarily validate or invalidate the research outcomes. However, this sample does not claim representativeness of all rappers in Cape Town because the aim is not to generate universal laws of prediction and control. Validity of this research is achieved by internal coherence and by the ecological familiarity that the data has with everyday life (Douglas, 1970).

The participants were drawn from a wide range of different sources including people I met at hip hop events that I attended and phone interviews that I received in response to a radio interview I had. The participants for this study were aged between 13 and 30. Some of the participants were from economically disadvantaged areas, including Mitchell's Plain and Belhar. Others were from affluent areas in

Bellville and Kraaifontein. Majority of the participants were Afrikaans speaking, with the exception of a few English language speakers.

Focus Group1 included a mixed group of men and women, representing rap music culture in Cape Town. All these participants were rap artists. There were 8 participants from Mitchell's Plain and Belhar, four women and four men between the ages of 15 and 25 years. The participants in this group were all Black, who came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and their educational background varies from grade 9 to 12. Focus Group2 comprised of 8 men from Belhar aged 15 to 25. Three of these participants were not rap artists, whereas the rest were. The educational background ranged from grade 9-11. Focus Group3 consisted of 8 women from Belhar, Bellville and Kraaifontein aged 16 to 18. All these participants were female rappers at the time of the focus group discussion. The level of education in this group varied between grade 10 and 12. In the telephonic interviews, there were 3 female participants from Mitchell's Plain between the ages of 24 and 29. Their educational background did differ from the focus group participants, because all of the participants who partook in the telephonic interviews have completed their high school education.

5.1.3 Research Methods

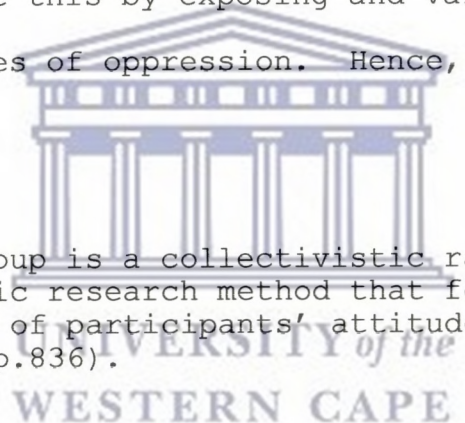
The methodological imperatives of the positivistic framework include the manipulation, measuring and specification of relationships between variables in order to test hypotheses about casual laws (Gatens, 1991). Those criteria necessitate the division of the participants characteristics into categories that are operationally definable, thereby fragmenting the identity of natural and social components (Danziger, 1986). By doing this, the epistemological paradigm fails to conceptualize gender identity as a socially constructed entity, which is neither innate nor essential (Vance, 1984). I acknowledge the various research methods and the serious limitations of this essentialist approach to research and this is what I challenge. Therefore, the feminist theoretical and methodological framework, in which this research is embedded, allows for the comprehension of biased and stereotyped perceptions and understandings. This thesis employed two qualitative research methods: focus groups and telephonic interviews.

5.1.4.1 FOCUS GROUPS

The major techniques used by qualitative researchers are

participant observation, individual interviews and focus groups (Madriz, 1998). Focus groups, or group interviews possess elements of the major qualitative techniques (Madriz, 1998). Focus groups allow the research participants to feel less threatened as some are in face-to-face interviews.

The voices of Black women have been silent for a long time in most research projects (Krueger, 1994). Focus group sessions can change this by exposing and validating women's everyday experiences of oppression. Hence, Madriz (1998) argues that:



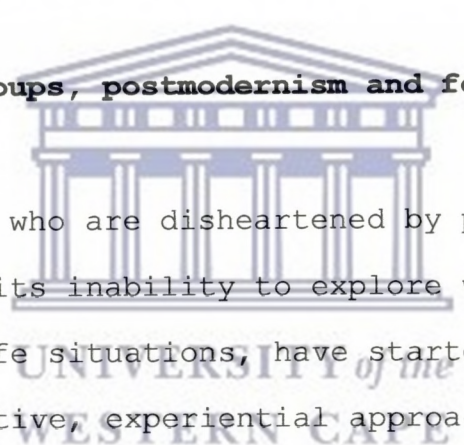
...the focus group is a collectivistic rather than an individualistic research method that focuses on the multivocality of participants' attitudes, experiences and beliefs (p.836).

The importance of focus groups is that they allow the researcher to observe the most significant sociological process: human interaction (Wilkinson, 1998).

It has been mentioned previously that focus groups were used as a method of data collection. Focus groups are one of the most appropriate techniques for this study as it provides a space for participant interaction and have advantages over individual interviews (Banister et al., 1994).

At this point it is vital to unpack the relationship between feminism and focus group studies. Feminists have devoted much time to interviews and other forms of qualitative data collection techniques like focus group sessions (Alasuutari, 1995). Focus groups are group discussions organized to explore a particular set of issues such as that of women's understandings of their position in rap music (Kitzinger, 1993).

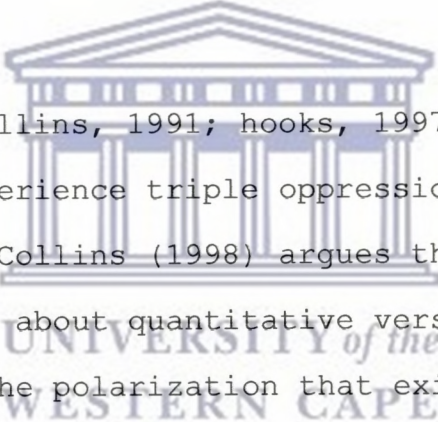
5.1.4.2 Focus groups, postmodernism and feminism



Feminist scholars, who are disheartened by positivistic research and with its inability to explore women's experiences and life situations, have started to advocate for a more integrative, experiential approach to research (Fontana & Frey, 1994). This approach considers women's experiences as a central area of investigation. Consequently, the focus group method empowers the participants and validates their voices and experiences (Madriz, 1998).

Keeping in mind that feminists are not homogenous, Olesen (1994) characterizes three types of feminist researchers. Firstly, she identifies standpoint research, which

emphasizes the need to focus on women's experiences in everyday life as it is familiar to them. Secondly, there is feminist empiricism that adheres to the standard practices of qualitative research. Thirdly, there is postmodern feminism, which centers around the stories and narratives and on the construction and reproduction of knowledge. Irrespective of these differences, feminists have come to agree on the diversity of women's issues and life experiences that are problematized and should be researched and documented.



Black feminists (Collins, 1991; hooks, 1997) argue that women of colour experience triple oppression based on race, class and gender. Collins (1998) argues that the contemporary debate about quantitative versus qualitative research reflects the polarization that exists between what is male, White, and scientific on one side and what is considered soft, subjective, female and Black on the other (in Madriz, 1999).

Madriz (1999) claims that focus groups not only represent a methodology that is consistent with the particularities and everyday experiences of Black women, but allows the researcher to listen to the voices of those who have been subjugated. Historically women of colour have used

catharsis as a way to deal with their oppression. For example, Gilkes (1994) argues that women's clubs were important places for women to learn from each other and how to challenge male domination. Hence, focus groups can become an empowering experience for women of colour particularly.

Breaking silence enables individual African-American women to reclaim humanity in a system that gains part of its strength by objectifying Black women (Collins, 1998, p.47).

According to Madriz (1998), the same could be said for all women, especially South African women. I decided to employ the focus group method for various theoretical and methodological reasons. The idea of the research was to interview participants of low socioeconomic backgrounds, because that is the profile of the women and men who are interested in rap music culture. Also, I knew that the participants would feel threatened by face-to-face interviews, so I decided that the best way to ease them into the research process, was to have several of the participants in one room at the same time. Collins (1990) illustrates that the systems of inequality of domination make women of colour and low-socioeconomic backgrounds particularly vulnerable, especially in the research situation.

The predominant use of quantitative methods in social science has resulted in individualistic research techniques. This individualism has permeated ethnographic studies and feminist research (Wilkinson, 1998). This observation made by Wilkinson is valid in terms conducting research with women of colour and low-socioeconomic backgrounds. Individualistic research methods place these women in "artificial, unfamiliar and even unsafe environments" (Wilkinson, 1998, p.123). Hence, focus groups create safe environments in which women can express themselves and give testimonies in front of women who understand and share similar experiences (Madriz, 1998).

Focus groups are very useful when researching a group of women like those who participate in the rap culture. Even though it has plenty of challenges, focus groups have enormous potential to uncover the complexity of individual life experiences (Wilkinson, 1998). The future of focus groups depends on the ability of the researcher to discern when it is appropriate to use the research method (Madriz, 1998). But, for social scientists who show a genuine interest in social change, "the hope embedded in the use of focus groups is that they may recognize that they may

contribute to some individuals' recognition and awareness of their own subjugation" (Madriz, 1998).

In the context of this study, the focus group as a technique was used in a non-threatening environment. It consequently generated detailed data about participants everyday experience and was critical, in obtaining the insights, perceptions and attitudes of people in a dynamic group interaction atmosphere (Wetherell, 1998). The research data obtained illustrates a pertinent distinction between that of any other method that would not have had the same level of group interaction that this study obtained. Shefer (1998) says that focus groups have been found to be particularly helpful in invoking in-depth discursive data and may have advantages over individual interviews in that they provide a form for a participants' interaction. Since this study is couched within a feminist and particularly a social constructionist framework, the focus group successfully provides a way of exploring the construction of meaning and the dynamic negotiation of meaning in context (Wilkinson, 1998).

Moreover, focus groups also support a more social constructionist framework, which this study employs. Focus groups have the potential to provide a way of exploring 'the

construction of meaning', which highlights the social interactive processes by which humans construct their worlds and themselves (Shefer, 1998). Given the dynamics of any social grouping, it is expected that when different views are being expressed, conflicts, contradictions and commonality would emerge. So, this not only allowed the need to obtain valuable information, but the debates may also have informed and conscientized the participants about the gender dynamics within rap music culture.

5.1.4.3 In-depth unstructured individual telephonic interviews

Unstructured interviews are usually used to ensure spontaneous discussion and accommodation of emerging issues. In the case of this study, participants were encouraged to talk about their experiences in, and opinions about, the position of women in rap music culture.

The advantage of interviews is that they provide an occasion where a relatively standard range of topics can be explored with each of the participants (Holland, 1995).

In-depth interviews have been one of the traditional means of eliciting qualitative data (Banister et al., 1996). This

research employed the unstructured telephonic interview method.

There are three main types of unstructured interviews that are commonly used in qualitative social research (Holland, 1995). These include the informal conversational type or in-depth interview, the unstructured interview using a schedule and the open-ended interview. This thesis used an unstructured interview with an interview schedule to ensure that all relevant sub-topics are covered. Although the interview schedule was used relatively consistently, some interviews adopted a more informal conversation type approach that resulted in a less systematic and consistent exploration of the research topic.

5.1.4.4 Procedures

In this research, I conducted three 45-minute focus group sessions using a vignette (see appendix 3). The vignette is a story of a young female emcee trying to succeed in the male dominated world of rap music. The vignette and related questions (see appendix 4) were distributed to the participants. The vignette was sketched according to a scenario similar to the life stories I have heard from

female emcees, during informal interactions at hip hop events.

Research questions are usually very threatening to the layperson and thus have a very sensitive and confrontational nature. In recognition of this, a television program captured the main debates regarding the lack of women's participation in the rap culture (see appendix 3). The vignette allows the interviewee to project their experiences and perception, by referring to the characters depicted in the vignette (Strebel, 1993). It seems as if the respondents were relieved to refer to the characters in the vignette rather than personalizing their experiences in the rap music culture. In fact, the experiences expressed by the participants corresponded very closely with that of the vignette.

Participants were fully aware of the aims and process of the research project, and that participation was voluntary. I facilitated all three focus groups. The focus groups were held on separate occasions, but all three were held at Eduardo Dos Santos Residence at the University of the Western Cape on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the last weekend of November 1999.

The focus group sessions were held in English, even though the participants spoke different home languages. This did have certain limitations, like the inability of Afrikaans speakers to express themselves fluently. However, this was remedied when the participants switched to Afrikaans and then a participant would help them translate it.


At the end of each focus group session, a debriefing was conducted, the participants evaluated the focus group session and I thanked them for participating. The outcomes of the evaluation were discussed as they shared their experiences of my presence in facilitating the research and finally the problems or challenges that they experienced during the discussions. The participants were also encouraged to contact me if they needed to find out what the outcomes of the study were.

The in-depth unstructured individual interview method was used because it was convenient both for the participants and me. The three female rap artists I interviewed had a very tight schedule and did not have time to meet with me face to face. Although the interviews were conversational, and often ranged widely over 25 to 30 minutes long, I used the same interview guideline to facilitate focused responses (see appendix 2) in each case as I did with the focus group

participants. The imperative here was to keep to the schedule, while at the same time allowing the telephonic interview to flow while I followed up interesting lines of talk as they occurred (Holland, 1995).

Upon making contact with the participants, I first introduced the research project and myself. After they agreed to participate in the study, I asked them the interview questions outlined in appendix 2. With their permission, I recorded the interview using a telephonic answering device.

5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA



The audiotapes of the focus groups and interviews were transcribed verbatim. Thereafter I proceeded with the thematic coding of the data, as developed by Strauss (1990). In the interpretation of the material produced by the focus groups and interviews, thematic coding was applied utilizing a multi-step procedure. As a first orientation, a short description of each theme is produced, which was continuously rechecked and modified during the further interpretation of the themes (Flick, 1998). This theme description includes a statement that is typical for the

central theme, which is a short description of a statement made by the person with regard to the research question.

There are two main approaches to coding (Danziger, 1986). Pre-planned coding approaches tend to be used to guide a study that tests a hypothesis. The other coding technique is Post-analysis. After finishing the thematic analysis, a deepened thematic analysis is carried out in relation to the central aims of the research. The developed thematic structure also serves for comparing the focus groups with that of the in-depth unstructured telephonic interviews (Banister et al., 1996).

5.3 REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

I kept a journal throughout the research process, and so the reflections I discuss below not only reflect my feelings, thoughts and experiences, but are also based on the evaluations held in the focus groups at the end of each group session.

5.3.1 Dynamics in the focus group

5.3.1.1 Education and support

The female participants were generally relieved to be able

to talk about the absence of women in rap music culture, even though it created a sense of discomfort. They said that rappers should have general discussion forums to deal with these issues, for example:

I think hip hoppers should come together at least once a month and talk about really relevant issues that has a negative effect on the way we do things. Like when we have a jam, we should run workshops before the event and talk about certain things like why sisters are not representing...ya, I think that's important...(Man, mixed group, 2).

Strebel (1993, 1995) suggests that research and intervention should be combined to increase awareness have highlighted the educational values of the focus groups. The most educational component of this research is located within the sharing and exchange of opinions within the focus group sessions. For instance:

The part of the group that I like the most is when I felt the same as other women most of the times and especially the times we disagreed, that was fun too. I'm fairly new on the rap scene, so I learnt a lot about the culture too.

It is always difficult to measure the impact that the research has had on the participants, but from their responses and what they spoke about in the focus groups discussions, it appears that they are now more conscious

about gender relations within the rap community. For example, during the evaluation of the focus group, a male participant said:

I never realized that sisters felt such deep feelings about brothers intimidating them on the stage.. I haven't thought about the impact that it had on sisters' self-esteem. Now I will be more observant at rap music events.

This 'new' understanding may assist them in making the necessary changes.

5.3.1.2 Male and female contribution

As the primary focus of this study is centralized around the gendered 'subject', the most important discussions for the research results could be obtained in the mixed focus group discussion, where male and female participants had the opportunity to speak out on gender issues concerning them in rap music culture. Women spoke more freely about negative experiences within the hip hop culture in the all female group, but spoke neutrally in the mix group, the same with their counterparts.

5.3.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This thesis abided by the relevant human ethical guidelines

for research (Margaret, 2000). Informed consent from the participants was obtained before they took part in the research that might have influenced their willingness to participate and I answered all questions regarding the project. All participants had my professional avowal that their confidentiality and anonymity will always be maintained.

One ethical concern I always had throughout the research was my personal involvement as a participant of the hip hop culture and how that would influence the response from the participants. However, judging from the outcomes of the group discussions, this concern was subdued because it seems as if my identity as a researcher did not influence the validity of the research in a way that influenced the results drastically.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This chapter presented the research process and explored some of the dynamics that emerged during the data collection. The central component of this chapter was the elaboration of the aims and research questions, sampling, participants, method and procedure of the research. Different research instruments were utilized: focus groups

and in-depth unstructured telephonic interviews. Focus groups were employed because the group interview allows the researcher to bring together a small number of people to discuss topics on the research agenda.

Important analyses were made when I discussed the reflections of the research process. Not only did I reflect on the process but also during the evaluation part of the focus group discussions the participants spoke about their feelings in the group. The participants were confident that the group discussions gave them an opportunity to talk about issues negatively affecting the rap community. This is precisely what I hoped to achieve with this research project.



CHAPTER SIX

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Findings

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter discusses the findings of the in-depth unstructured telephonic interviews and the focus group discussions, which are informed by feminist social constructionist theory, and guided by the thematic analytic method, developed by Strauss (1987).

Themes and sub-themes that emerged from analyzing the data are discussed under the following headings.


- Gender discrimination in rap music culture and sub themes: power and masculinity, gender role socialization;
- Women's low self-esteem and low self-concept with the sub-theme language and power;
- Lack of support towards female emcees;
- Perceptions of female emcees and
- Representation of female emcees.

As the various themes were analyzed, the issue of male dominance and female silence in rap was prominent. In this chapter, these imbalances are presented by a paucity of quotes and responses from the men and women

participants. It is precisely the imbalance that forms part of the issues of gender discrimination in rap music that this study investigated.

In the following section, I present the discourses on the above themes as discussed by the women only group, then the mixed gender group and then the male only group. In the final section, I present the discussions that transpired with in-depth, individual telephonic interviews with female only participants.

6. The Findings



In regard to the female only group, seven broad categories with particular sub-themes emerged. They are as follows: 6.1) gender discrimination; (6.1.1) power and masculinity; (6.1.2) gender role socialization; (6.2) women's low self-esteem and low self-concept; (6.2.1) language and power; (6.3) negative perceptions of female rappers; (6.4) lack of female representation in the rap culture; (6.5) lack of support towards female rappers, is presented.

6.1 Gender discrimination in the rap music culture

Most of the participants in the female only group

strongly expressed the opinion that women are being discriminated against in rap music culture. For example:

Hip hop is a very competitive culture, and so I think that guys are scared that sisters will be bigger than them...so they try to exclude us (Female Group, 1, Female).

All I can say is that guys are supporting us sometimes you know, but I feel that they should stop intimidating us when we go on stage...(Female Group, 1, Female).

Int.: = You say guys intimidate you when you go on stage?

Yes! They intimidated me the last time there was an emcee battle at the Jam... I wanted to get on the mic next and then this one guy grabbed it and his friends laughed and made fun of me (Female Group, 1, Female).

I think that rap is portrayed by society in general as a male culture, right. Its true, I think because in Cape Town, who are the most popular hip hop outfits? They are POC, BVK and Black Noise, all male groups. These guys are legends, they started hip hop in Cape Town, and now people think it's just about males doing-for-self. I don't blame them...(Female Group, 1, Female).

...The hip hop culture has been and always will be a man thing...(Female Group, 1, Female).

Similarly in the mixed gendered group, both male and female participants viewed gender discrimination as playing a significant role in women's participation in rap music culture, even though discrimination was spoken about and conceptualized differently by the men and women.

I feel like people judge me when I talk about my passion for rap...like the other day when I was

rapping to myself... an occupational hazard (chuckles in the group), a couple of guys snared at me (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

I agree with the sister. I think that when guys think sisters can't rap...that's straight up wack, man. I know a couple of sisters who really have some skills, son. By discriminating against women in rap culture, brothers are just dividing the hip hop nation (Mixed Group, 2, Male).

Thanks for that brother...I support that...Apartheid created more than enough segregation amongst our people. The time has come to change that. I think hip hop can change that (Mixed Group, 2, Male).

Sisters are being discriminated against in rap music. Just look at the music videos...actually look at the hip hop scene in Cape Town. I don't know any sisters signed to record companies (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Hey, that's true, I don't know any sisters signed to record companies...[sigh] only brothers (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Why do you say that there is discrimination in hip hop? Do you know what hip hop is? Let me tell you... (Mixed Group, 2, Male)

Before he could proceed another female participant interrupted him and said:

Hold it right there. That's exactly why most women feel so left out of hip hop, because you think we don't know what hip hop is.

In the above excerpts the following words and phrases are indicative of the role gender discrimination plays in rap music culture: 'judge', 'segregate', 'divide' and 'left out'.

Prejudice is usually defined as:

"a judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without due examination" (Brown, 1988, p.6).

Definitions like this have led many social psychologists to emphasize features of 'incorrectness' or 'inaccuracy' in their attempts to define prejudice. Therefore the shift in definition:

"prejudice is an unjustified negative attitude toward an individual based solely on that individual's membership in a group" (Jones, 1992, p.7).

The above definition compliments the female participants' claim, "I feel like people judge me when I talk about my passion for rap". Because prejudice involves judgments by groups of other groups and can be shown to be affected by the objective relationships between those groups, it is appropriately regarded as a phenomenon originating in group processes (Brown, 1995). However, such a perspective is not incompatible with a social psychological analysis which is primarily concerned with individual perceptions, evaluations, and actions (Brown, 1995). For instance, this female participants' passion towards rap music is frowned upon by the out group which, is the dominant culture. Tajfel's (1982) distinction between interpersonal and intergroup behaviour which claims that all social interaction falls somewhere along a continuum of behaviour that is anchored by two

extremes. This distance may be useful in explaining the experience of this female participant.

The results reflect that these women feel that they are being discriminated against in rap music culture. This means that there is a need for change and intervention in rap music culture. Mulqueen (1992) argues that women today face conflict in terms of an innate motivation to be competent and the existing pattern of sex-role socialization that relegates women's expression of competence to spheres devalued by society. For instance, society views women as 'tomboys' when they get on stage and with a microphone express themselves.

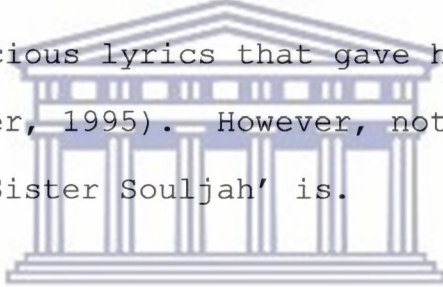
...My mother does not approve of me being part of a hip hop group. She says that its not feminine to be hopping around on a stage shouting at a crowd...I'm serious, she says I'm a tomboy (Female Group, 1, Female).

Most of my girlfriends are not very supportive of me rapping. They say that rapping is for wild women...women who are tomboyish, you know. But I don't think so, I believe that there is no prescribed notion of what it is to be male or female (Female, 2, Mixed Group).

I think guys who call women tomboys just because we can get on a stage and rap like them are just plain unfair and stupid. Because you know, they actually try to intimidate us by calling us tomboys (Female, Telephonic Interview).

These excerpts highlight two points. One way of viewing the above excerpts is that women are perceived as 'tomboys' by society when they choose to join the rap

industry. Another view could be that some of the participants felt that some of the men rappers undermine the impact that women artists can make on their audience. In much the same way that one of the above female participant's felt intimidated by the male artists at that particular hip hop event, so did 'Sister Souljah', a conscious academic and rap singer. Bill Clinton intimidated her during the Presidential elections in 1992 (Kellner, 1995). Bill Clinton attacked rap music for its violent lyrics in the presence of 'Sista Souljah' and Jesse Jackson. But she did not stand back. She yelled out socially conscious lyrics that gave her 15 minutes of media fame (Kellner, 1995). However, not all women are as confident as 'Sister Souljah' is.



...I know the culture is very male dominated, because there are very few women actively participating in the culture. I also know that the few sisters who are participating in the culture don't wanna step on toes...(Female Group, 1, Female)

In this excerpt, it seems as if this female participant has accepted and come to terms with the fact that she is part of a male dominated culture, and feels helpless about changing the status quo. This frame of mind is dangerous for the psychological development of women in rap music. Incongruent with the above excerpt, another female participant commented the following.

I honestly don't know why people are saying that women are being discriminated against in rap music.

All they are doing is dividing us as hip hoppers.
As a woman, I don't feel that I'm being
discriminated against.

Judging from this response, I got the impression that she
caused quite a heavy debate amongst the female
participants. Another participant responded to her
statement in an aggressive manner.

You see, [looking at the other female participants]
its mind states like this that keeps us women where
we are. How do you expect brothers to give us a
chance and respect that we can also rap or DJ
[looking at the female participant who made the
above statement]? (Mixed Group, 2, Female)

As Miller (1988) says, one can not expect strong gains
for women if the majority of women are not participating
in or enjoying the advantages in a specific cultural
context, it is clear that this participant does not
realize the serious implications of her comment. Her
disagreement with other female participants about the
gender discrimination that exist in rap music culture in
fact does not address the discrimination that other
females do experience in rap music culture. If she
chooses not to recognize the impacts that gender
discrimination in the culture have caused like the lack
of female participation, one cannot expect strong gains
for the women in rap music.

There was however clearly much resistance to the attempt

to ignore women's discrimination in rap music culture.

Another female participant added:

Ya, I think she's right. I think its great that you don't think that you are being discriminated against in hip hop, but just because you don't think that you are being discriminated against, doesn't mean that other sisters are not being discriminated against. Honestly, I think you are in denial. There is discrimination in rap music. Just accept it. We sisters have what it takes to make it in this industry...what we need to do is stand together and recognize what is keeping us from getting where we wanna be in the rap game (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Following this comment, there was an uncomfortable silence in the group. It seems as if this participant thinks that the success of female emcees stand together, there is a way to reshape the manner in which male emcees and the music industry in general treats women. The ability to overcome the gender stereotypes in rap music by challenging the status quo could be the best way in which female emcees could gain the respect of their male counterparts. However, issues of power expressed by the patriarchs in rap music culture suppress women's development within rap music culture.

Generally all of the female participants in this study agreed that gender discrimination does exist. On the other hand, the male only focus group argued that gender discrimination does not exist. When these male participants read the vignette, I got the impression that

they felt uncomfortable. Before we started with the questions, a participant said:

Naai man, dies somma nonsense [No man, this is utter nonsense] (Male Group, 3, Male).

Int.: Excuse me? Is there a problem?

I don't think that women in Cape Town experience this (he shyly laughs) (Male Group, 3, Male).

Another participant agreed:

Ya, you know there are some brothers who... no, I don't think so either (Male Group, 3, Male).

Int.: You sound a bit unsure.

No! Sister, definitely not (Male Group, 3, Male).

When I asked them why they thought that the scenario is not a true reflection of what is happening in Cape Town, a participant simply said:

Oh, well now, I wouldn't say that, sien jy [you see]. Sisters be trippin'... [laughter] (Male Group, 3, Male).

Int.: = What do you mean?

Well, basically I hear sometimes sisters complain that ya there is too few sisters into rap. That's true, you know. But that doesn't mean its our [men's] fault. We can't help it if they [women] don't wanna rap (Male Group, 3, Male).

From the above excerpts, it seems as if the male participants are arguing that if women are not

participating in the rap culture, it is not their fault, and it most certainly does not necessitate that women are being discriminated against. At this point I found that it was necessary to ask:

When would you say that someone is being discriminated against?

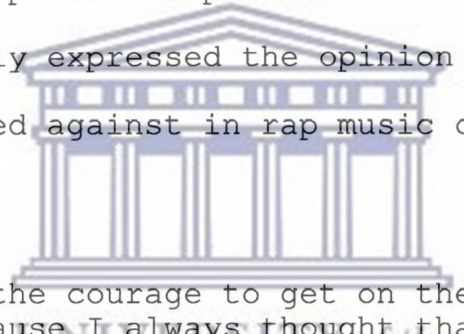
A participant replied:

Well, for those of you who don't know (laughter), discrimination is when you judge someone, like let's say during the apartheid era, we [black people] where discriminated or judged based on the colour of our skins. So, if you were black, you could only get a job as a bricklayer or something like that, you check (the other participants smiled and nodded) (Male Group, 3, Male).

The fact that most of the participants did not know what gender discrimination is could suggest that these men are not gender sensitive or gender conscious. In other words, their inability to recognize that gender discrimination exists in rap music culture is justified by the unawareness of the gender dynamics that prevails in the culture. The fact that most of the male participants are not aware of gender discrimination in rap music culture they assume the discriminatory role because they were not socialized in any different way. A possible explanation for the unawareness of gender discrimination could be that gender awareness is acquired through the socialization by their parents and from other

sources such as peer group influence and the usual channels of culture transmission (Brown, 1995). The frequent depiction of men and women in stereotypical roles in the media is a well-documented phenomenon (Durkin, 1985; Milner, 1983). Images of power and masculinity portrayed in music videos reproduce crude conventional stereotypes and it is with this in mind that the following section discusses a sub-theme on gender-role socialization.

All of the participants who partook in the telephonic interviews strongly expressed the opinion that women are being discriminated against in rap music culture. For example:



I never had the courage to get on the stage and rap, you know...because I always thought that rap was a male thing...but then one day I decided I need to make a move... that's when all the stress started, because there was not a lot of sisters to support me, I depended on the brothers and you know how that goes...(Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

Int.: Please...explain.

...Well, some brothers are very patient and help me when I'm stuck with lyrics and stuff but others are like "listen chick, you can't rap, give it up!" (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

Rap music to me is really a male thing, seriously. Its now recently that a lot of sisters are coming up... but they don't stay for long because the culture is not very receptive to female, you see (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

Gender discrimination...It's more common when you're on the way up...It's also how you handle yourself; you have to be tough...(Telephonic Interview, 4, Female)

With reference to the above excerpts, women definitely experience the glass ceiling effect within the rap industry. The "glass ceiling" effect is described as the barrier which keeps females from reaching high level positions in any given career (Fierman, 1990). The "glass ceiling" is a term coined in the early 1980's to describe the invisible barrier with which women came in contact when working up the corporate ladder. This form of discrimination has been depicted as a "barrier so subtle that it is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women and minorities from moving up in the management hierarchy" (Fierman, 1990, p.45). The glass ceiling women face in rap music industry is gender discrimination and according to Oumano (1996) gender discrimination is an equal-opportunity problem. This problem is not endemic to any specific type of company, be it music or otherwise. Rather, it is a problem promulgated by unhealthy individuals. The following excerpt illustrates how this becomes appropriate for women emcees.

...I think that because most producers are male and they also write some of our lyrics we actually give them more power than we realize... Because my producer is more creative than me and writes my lyrics, I don't have much input in what the outcome of the some is...You know sometimes I feel so, like there's something stopping me from getting where I want to be in my career as an emcee...Like whenever I think that I have it all, some guy comes and tells me otherwise...I know I shouldn't believe that I'm a women and men are better rappers, but how do I stop thinking that way? (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female)

Even though the glass ceiling that women face in rap music is not as subtle as Fierman (1990) mentions, it is strong and prohibits women rap artists advancing in their careers. The following excerpts explain.

I'm part of a male group... I sing... Some of my friends can rap, but they just do it for the fun... they will never rap at events (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

In my area, I don't really know a lot of female emcees...I know that there are some sisters hanging around at events... but I don't really ever see them rap...(Telephonic Interview, 4, Female)

Even when women gain access into group that consists of males predominantly, the men of the group consider them "outsiders" (Fierman, 1990). It is difficult, if not impossible, for a woman to be accepted into the "old-boys network", which is predominately male. Men feel more comfortable with other men and, therefore, are malevolent toward women who they usually perceive as intruders. Women also are at a disadvantage because they lack access to female "mentors", since most rappers are male. To boot, the female participants said, "brothers generally prefer brothers as their proteges" because such relationships usually feel more comfortable. Most males have difficulty taking on female proteges because they fear allegations of sexual relationships or sexual harassment, which would damage their credibility and integrity, and perhaps seriously derail their careers

(Fierman, 1990). For most of these male rappers it is simply too risky to mentor rising female executives when the situation could destroy their professional reputation, if not their careers. These phenomena increase the gender gap in rap music culture. In the following section, the gender-role socialization of women is discussed, with reference to the glass ceiling effect women rappers face.

6.1.1 Power and masculinity

Many feminists (Hollway, 1989; Millet, 1970; Russel, 1975) have discussed the link between power and masculinity. Significantly masculinity and identities of 'men as men', along with feelings of positive self esteem, are seen by women in relation to some kind of power as well as the demonstration of that power through domination. The perception women have of the positive self esteem with regard to power expressed by the men are demonstrated in the responses of the following participants.

Brothers have power to discriminate...power because they have more knowledge about the rap culture and the tools needed to succeed. You see rap has always been a man's game...its now recently that women are making a lot of noise...but who gave them a platform to make their voices heard? The brothers! (Female Group, 1, Female)

I agree with her... brothers have power...I'm not talking physical strength...they have power because they have access to resources, we [females] don't (Female Group, 1, Female).

Also, just to add...I think everyone will agree with me. Brothers don't only have power in terms of resources, but they have the power to rock a crowd. When you a sister and get on the stage... the crowd doesn't always react like you want...if you know what I am saying? (Female Group, 1, Female).

I know exactly what you are saying...my friend experienced that. Its like she went on the stage ne...em then like the guys went boo, until one rapper said hey give the sister a chance and then everyone calmed down and she started rapping. It didn't go very well as you can imagine...(Female Group, 1, Female)

The above excerpts could be an illustration of how the female participants view the power dynamics between men and women in rap music. A case in point is the "booing" of female rappers when they get on stage. In this way, insults are used by men to exert, restore or negotiate power with female rappers. On the other hand, positive images of masculinity are inherently linked to expression of domination (Kaufman, 1994). From the above excerpts, one gets the impression that men thus "boo" women off the stage to feel powerful. The statement made by one of the women participants, "brothers have power to discriminate" could suggest that the men in rap music discriminate against the women to feel masculine. The following extracts illustrate the play between power and masculinity in rap music culture further.

If you listen to some of the rap songs...well most rap songs and music videos are always portraying men in a very masculine way...like he's the "man" because he

drives a flashy car and have women do whatever he wants at the snap of his fingers! (Female Group, 1, Female)

Yes, I agree with the sister but to a certain extent. Yes, there are unfortunately many rappers who portray this masculine image in their videos because they think that's what sells records. However, there are also a lot of conscious brothers who don't think their life's mission is to oppress women...(Female Group, 1, Female)

I agree with both sisters, and if I could just add one more thing...I think it's because of this whole braggadocious attitude, that brothers think we are weak and they are more powerful than we are (Female Group, 1, Female).

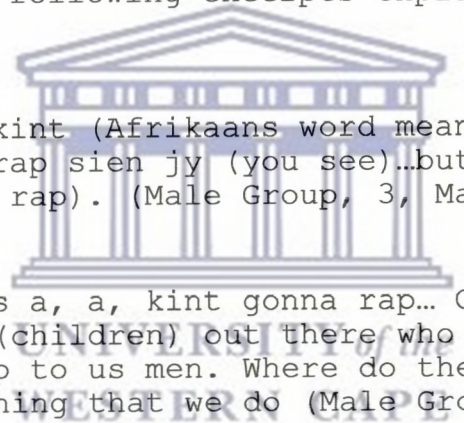
In view of the above excerpts, it seems as if gender discrimination in rap music culture is also an expression of a powerful male identity. In the next section, the link between power and language is discussed.

6.1.2 Power and Language

According to Anderson and Goolishian (1988), language creates intersubjective realities in a constantly changing, dynamic process. What people say to each other (and to themselves) circumscribes what is real and what is expected in their relationships. At the same time, their responses to each other and the range of options available to them are influenced by social circumstances and material conditions. Language teaches, below the level of consciousness and intentionality, a sense of power-in-relation (Harrison, 1985). Words represent

realities in the culture at large (Lerner, 1986). One of these realities is the continuing power differential between men and women. This and other power differentials are maintained and reinforced through their continual re-creation in a discourse that makes them appear "natural" so that they are perpetuated rather than questioned or challenged (Gavey, 1989).

The language used by male participants in the group discussion signifies the expressions of power through masculinity. The following excerpts explain this.



I know this kint (Afrikaans word meaning child) that's into rap sien jy (you see)...but she's wack (she can not rap). (Male Group, 3, Male)

Tell me...how's a, a, kint gonna rap... Ok I know there are kinnies (children) out there who are good, but leave that up to us men. Where do they get off with doing everything that we do (Male Group, 3, Male).

The words 'kint' and 'kinnies' exemplifies that these male participants view women in the same light as they do children. Children are dependent on adults and by mere reference to grown women as children, they subject women to verbal abuse. The use of language as a vehicle to exert masculine power is an avenue utilized by most rappers and expressed in their lyrics. In the following, gender role socialization is discussed in order to explain the way in which language and masculinity equates power and domination over women.

6.1.3 Gender role socialization

The literature on gender role socialization maintains that parents treat daughters and sons differently due to the patriarchal values of society, which elevate males over females in the social order (Lorber, 1994).

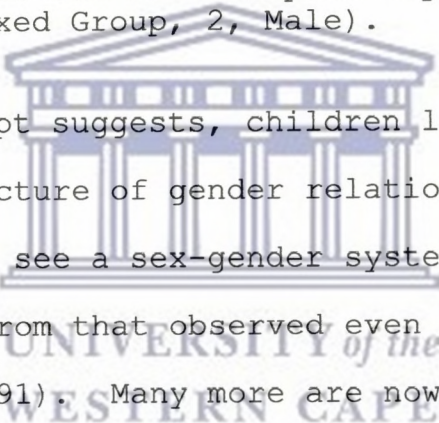
Socialization into expected gender roles is one of the most important lessons that young children learn. In addition to parents and teachers intentional efforts to shape gender roles, they are also learned from the mass media (television, radio, music, books, magazines and newspapers), to which children are exposed every day (Karen, Kaufman, Oskamp & Stuart, 1996).

Studies have linked gender differences in outcomes to socialization that traditionally has emphasized personal relationships, dependency, conformity, and submissiveness for females, versus personal achievement, autonomy, and assertiveness for males (Block, 1983; Alderfer, 1989). Further, females' experience a reduction in self-esteem during adolescence, negatively affecting their aspirations and attainments (Allen, 1997). This body of research suggests that parents may be involved with daughters and sons in ways that produce important gender differences (Carter & Peters, 1996). For instance, the following excerpt highlights how gender differences in

rap music culture constitutes a justification of gender discrimination.

Some brothers, not all, are really ass holes, sorry for my language...but I get really upset when I think about it. My friend once battled a brother at this jam and you know afterwards he said to her that he went easy on her because she's a woman. That's now really judgmental and pathetic...he's lying because her lyrics ripped him apart (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

...Look here ne, you say guys judge you when you rap and tease you...and say women can't rap. That's just because we were learnt to be better than girls in everything, you see (laughter from the group)... No, no sien jy (you see) my father always said that you can never trust a woman to do a man's job... so, rapping has always been our territory, how can sisters possibly challenge us on our own turf (Mixed Group, 2, Male).



As the above excerpt suggests, children learn in part by observing the structure of gender relations in the world around them. They see a sex-gender system that differs in some respects from that observed even a generation or two ago (Rubin, 1991). Many more are now at least partly raised in a single-mother family. Even if they live with both mother and father, the majority of their mothers are now employed at least part-time throughout much of their childhood. Children develop gender identity at a very young age; that is, by the age of three or four they know they are girls or boys, and they have begun to develop a notion of what that means (Allen, 1997). They may also develop a broader type of gender-group identification, meaning that they come to believe that they share certain perspectives or interests on the basis of their shared

gender. The amount of labour market gender segregation has changed to some degree and children are more likely to have a female doctor or be taken to school by a female bus driver than before, but the vast majority of women and men still work in gender-segregated jobs (Rubin, 1991). Even if employed, mothers do most of the housework and childcare. Hence, the statement made "my father always said that you can never trust a woman to do a man's job" justifies his tendency to discriminate against women because of their gender identity.

As a key determinant of social power, gender (defined here as sexual difference that is socially organized or constructed) is deeply implicated in the ways in which environments are constituted and experienced by women and by men. A gendered analysis thus affords a critical starting point for examining and reworking the assumptions embedded in environmental psychology's ecological perspective. In feminist psychology, "continual self-scrutiny, challenge, and revision are not only ethical imperatives, but the essence of practice" (Kemp, 2001, p.7). Such analyses are essential to the development of psychological discourse of more complex understandings of women's diverse environmental experiences and of the relationships between these experiences and women's roles, access to power and opportunities, and capacities for action (Kemp, 2001).

The following excerpts illustrate women's experiences, women's roles and access to opportunities.

...Actually, I think that the reason why us women are faced with so much resistance in the culture is because we are surrounded in an environment of...how can I say now...we, I mean I live in an area where rap music is the ultimate form of expression...for men. Most women just watch and clap hands or praise men. I actually like rapping, but because there's just a lot of men rapping all the time I feel intimidated (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

The way we were socialized man... I think that's what caused men to think that women don't have what it takes to rap (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

Karen, Kaufman, Oskamp and Stuart (1996) examined men's misogynistic attitudes toward women learnt during gender role socialization that contributes to men's violence toward women. Several studies (Bernard, 1981; Brush, 1990; Bartels, Braverman, Good, DeBord, Fitzgerald, O'Neil, Robertson and Stevens, 1995) have found that negative (or misogynistic) attitudes toward women are a common trait of abusers. The excerpt below explains how women experience negative attitudes toward them.

...Don't tell anyone, ne...but sometimes I think that some male rappers hate us (women)...when they like battle or lets say when they rhyme, do you wanna tell me that they can't find better words to rhyme with instead of using demeaning words like 'ho, bitch'? Or even uglier words I don't wanna mention...(Telephonic Interview, 4, Female)

I know one thing, the way women are treated in rap music, has a lot to do with people's backgrounds... Like when a guy has seen his mother and sisters being abused by his father...he might not know that that is wrong, because he knows no different (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

I don't like the way in which women are represented in rap music videos. It's almost like women selling their bodies just to get noticed on TV. I would prefer seeing a female DJ wrecking the decks than to see a porno-rap video. The way women are portrayed in rap videos has a lot to do with how men see women (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

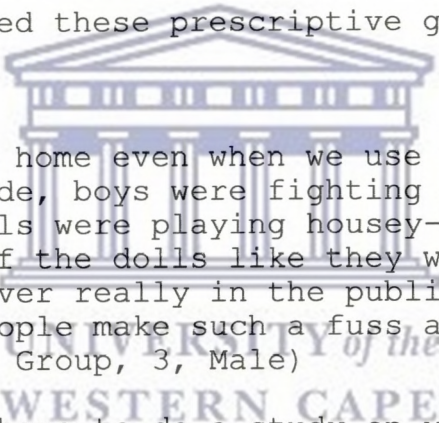
The above excerpts demonstrate women's frustrations toward the negative gender role socialization that exists in rap music culture. In one of the above excerpts, a participant articulated that she "actually like(s) rapping, but because there's just a lot of men rapping all the time", she feels "intimidated". Gender-role socialization and gender discrimination segregates men from women and contributes to an unhealthy relationship between the two sexes. Low self-esteem is usually a product of segregation or the pass of negative judgement from one person to the next.

From a male's point of view, the male only focus group discussion was centered around the role of society in prescribing how individual men and women relate to each other, as illustrated in the following excerpt.

I think we all were raised in different cultures...or lets say, we come from different backgrounds. My father for instance, believes that the man is the head of the house and a woman must stay home at take care of his children...and to be honest, I don't think brothers can deal with the thought that sisters are coming out and challenging brothers to rap (Male Group, 3, Male).

Yes, I agree. I was raised in the same background (Male Group, 3, Male).

In the above excerpts, the participants address social norms regarding gender in a very direct manner as mentioned by the above participant when he speaks about his father as gender insensitive. It seems as if this male participant justifies his behaviour by blaming his upbringing. Society regulates the interaction between men and women with each other through the modeling of gender roles. The male participants in the following excerpts articulated these prescriptive gender roles.



At school, at home even when we use to play with our friends outside, boys were fighting and playing rough and girls were playing housey-housey and taking care of the dolls like they were real babies. Women were never really in the public eye. Now you wonder why people make such a fuss about female rappers...(Male Group, 3, Male)

Ya, you even have to do a study on why women are not rapping as much as men (Male Group, 3, Male).

hooks (1997) interprets the normative gender roles expressed above as superiority written into those roles that allow men power over women. In the above excerpt it is also clear that the men are aware that the women in rap music culture are challenging normative gender roles in society and the men seem threatened. The struggle for the equality of women, in other words, feminism and the whole women's movement, makes men feel insecure and ultimately threatened (hooks, 1997).

Social scientists use the term "group consciousness" to refer to a politicized development of group identification, especially among socially subordinate groups (Miller, 1988, p.2). Group consciousness is usually said to include the beliefs that (1) a disparity of power or other resources exists between this group and others, (2) that disparity is illegitimate and based on systemic factors, and (3) the group should engage in some form of collective action to rectify the situation (Miller, 1988). Gender consciousness, therefore, is understood as women's beliefs that they are less powerful than men are and accorded fewer resources, that this inequality is illegitimate, and that they should engage in some form of collective action. For instance, women's studies scholars have long emphasized socialization, or the intergenerational transmission of social norms, cultural values, and patterns of behavior, as one key to understanding the relative status of women and men and the development of their individual understanding of the meaning of being female or male (hooks, 1997). This emphasis does not imply that individual learning is the primary cause of inequality within society, but rather it focuses attention on one important element: the way that individual women and men develop their relationship to the sex-gender system (Miller, 1988). Sex-gender systems are the structures of

social relationships and values revolving around people's existence as males and females in given societies (Miller, 1988).

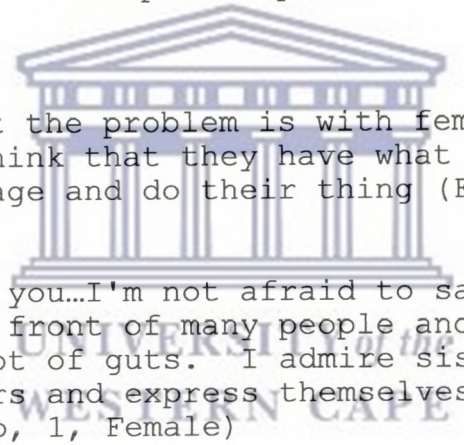
Attitudes expressed by the young adults in this group discussion, exemplifies that the deviation from traditional role norms for women weakens, especially among men. Even if they believe that, all other things being equal, women should be treated equally in education and employment, a substantial minority remains convinced that women should not become achievers in other realms beside the traditional female occupations like nurses and teachers. It is no wonder the feminist movement has devoted considerable effort to stimulate gender consciousness among women. The movement would necessarily draw most of its activists from the ranks of women with gender consciousness (Miller, 1981).

Low self-esteem is clearly related to a lack of gender consciousness and is discussed below.

6.2 Women's Low Self-esteem and Low Self-concept

Self-esteem is pride in one's pursuits and accomplishments. This prideful instance on doing for one-self is matched by shame at having others do for one (Allen, 1997, p.12).

In relation to the findings, Allen's definition of self-esteem is easily identified with women's position in rap music. Ironically, in Cape Town, hip hop's slogan is 'Do-For-Self'. It is an ironic motto because it seems as if the men are the only one's doing-for-self. This notion has serious implications for the psychological state of women in rap music culture. If a high self-esteem equates high self-worth, most of the female participants did not express a very high self-worth. Here are examples of low self-esteem and low self-worth articulated by the women participants.



You know what the problem is with female emcees, they don't think that they have what it takes to get up on the stage and do their thing (Female Group, 1, Female).

I agree with you...I'm not afraid to say that I am shy to get up in front of many people and start rapping... it takes a lot of guts. I admire sisters who stand up to brothers and express themselves lyrically... (Female Group, 1, Female)

This illustrates that it is difficult for women in rap music to express pride in their work as rap artists, because not only are they not doing-for-self, but there is a great amount of shame attached to their inability to succeed. The amount of shame that goes with low self-esteem could allow for other issues like low self-confidence to surface, illustrated by one of the participants below.

I always wrote poetry and I also admired other Female rap artists. But I never really thought that I could get on a stage and share my personal feelings with others, let alone stand on a stage and perform in front of people! But I actually came over that feeling. I used to be so depressed about not having the courage to stand up and make my voice heard. Then one day I met this other female emcee. She's good. She told me that I should go for it. It would make me feel much better about myself. She was right, I never looked back...(Female Group, 1, Female)

This is one good example of how women in rap music could cope with issues of low self-esteem. The support of their peers appears to play a significant role in helping them to regain their sense of self worth.

The history of female emcees trying to survive in rap music culture in comparison to the history of male emcees is reflective of gender and power inequalities in the culture. Clearly it is easier for males to succeed in the industry than for women.



There are very few examples where we as girls played to an audience of peers. Collectively many of the young men's activities was almost completely absent from the women's (Nehring, 1997, p.67).

In relation to rap music culture, Nehring's (1997) notion that women very rarely perform in front of a female audience, is quite right. The few women rappers that do exist perform their music to a predominantly male audience.

The lack of women participating in predominantly male music cultures like rock, heavy metal and hip hop, is one of the reasons why women artists are creating a "feminist public sphere" (Nehring, 1997, p.68). Women in rock are generating a gender-specific identity grounded in a consciousness of community and solidarity among women. Powers (1995), who is a member of Strong Women in Music (or SWIM), notes that the new wave of women in rock has also affected the production music in the United States and encourages women to get more involved in music at all levels. This is an important and essential development if a new prominence of women is to have a lasting impact. Fortunately female rock musicians have recently found a way to form an audience with other young women in punk rock music (Nehring, 1997). These kind of changes may play an important role in improving women's self-confidence. Similarly to rock music, female rap artists are merging with rhythm and blues artists, jazz and even rock artists which could further assist in improving women in rap music's confidence.

Women in popular music before punk music tended to take the role of singer/song writer, longhaired, pure voiced self-accompanied on acoustic guitar and linked with gender stereotypes like sensitive, passivity and sweetness. Others tend to model the images that their

male counterparts create and become one of the boys
(Nehring, 1997).

Most telephonically interviewed participants expressed
the same level of low self-esteem.

Before I joined the group, I was very shy and always
felt intimidated by the other rappers...Looking back
now I can say it is normal because the way those
guys fight over a mic, its scary (Telephonic
Interview, 4, Female).

I know why there are so few women in rap music. Its
because they don't have the courage and confidence
to stand up for themselves...they rather stay where
they are and be depressed because they can't rap in
front of people (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

Women are shy to get on the stage and rap because
they are afraid to be criticized (Telephonic
Interview, 4, Female).

The above excerpts illustrate that issues of low self-
esteem are a condition of impasse that may stem from a
gender discriminatory structure that exists within rap
music culture. In all fairness, gender discrimination
alone does not constitute for an absolute reason why
women in rap music have low self-esteem, as illustrated
by the participants below.

You know what, its not fair to imply that brothers put
us off from getting on the stage and doing our thing as
sisters, you know. We all come from different
backgrounds that could contribute to why we feel
insecure about ourselves or we don't have the necessary
confidence to get on stage and rap (Female Group, 1,
Female).

Ya, I think so too. Its like where I come from, the man
does all the public speaking. Like at weddings and
other special events. Its hard not to be gender role

conscious when you raised with specific prescribed gender roles (Female Group, 1, Female).

Feelings of low self-esteem and low self-concept also emerged in the mixed-gendered focus group. In this group the men and women stated that men discriminate against women rappers in order to feel better, or to boost their self-esteem. Significantly neither the men nor the women mentioned this when they were in single-sex groups. An illustration of low self-esteem and low self concept expressed by the female participants are illustrated in the following excerpts:

I know a lot of sisters who rap but they will never rap at a jam...they are too shy (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

I agree sisters don't think that they can make it (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

So who are you blaming, that's there own fault (Mixed Group, 2, Male).

No, sisters are shy because guys tease them and are always over critical (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Zimbardo's (1992) concept of self-esteem explains some of the above. His definition of self-esteem refers to the generalized evaluative attitude towards the self, which can strongly influence a person's thoughts, moods and behaviour. Zimbardo claims that evidence suggests that most people go out of their way to maintain self-esteem and to sustain the integrity of their self concept (Steele, 1988). For example, when female rappers

experience self-doubt about their ability to perform on stage, they engage in self-handicapping behaviour, which in other words, deliberately sabotages their performance. According to Jones and Berglas (1978), this line of thinking creates a 'ready-made excuse' for failure that does not implicate lack of ability. The lack of ability to perform is the behavioural confirmation that gender discriminating men expect. For instance:

I know I have the potential to go very far with my music. If I'm just given the opportunity, I will be as big as any other male emcee this side of the globe (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Sister, I don't doubt that you probably have the ability to rhyme, but there are sisters who think they can but just don't have the talent. Why don't you flex your lyrical skills so we know how you flow... (Mixed Group, 2, Male).

I don't have to prove anything to you (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

The roar of laughter by the men highlights the male participant's clear lack of respect or support for women in rap.

The manner in which women in rap music conduct themselves is an excellent instance of what female rappers think society expects them to rap about, and especially male rappers who inspect and question their presentation in the public eye. The above excerpt is an ideal example of how women rappers are belittled in the presence of male rappers. The statement: "I don't have to prove anything

to you," could also be interpreted to mean, that the female participant is confident and assertive.

The fact that the male participant in the above excerpt could put the female participant in an uncomfortable position signifies the power that the male participants held in the group discussion. In the next section, the negative perceptions of women in rap music are discussed.

6.3 Negative perceptions of women in rap music

The perceptual system provides the brain with its information about the world, and psychologists have often wondered whether one's personality or one's emotional state could affect that information gathering process. For example, would a poor person more likely be able to see a lost coin than a rich person? (Tyson, 1987, p.124).

Taking into account what Tyson (1987) argues, social constructionist theory would attribute the perceptual awareness of women rap music to the fact that women are socialized to think that they are being disadvantaged whenever they interact with a domineering male culture. In other words, because women have generally experienced gender discrimination in most social contexts, they can identify it whenever they perceive a difference in gender. There have been a number of demonstrations that this might be so. For example, social factors in perception like visual stimuli and the sense of space and positioning of the person, all contributes to the social

influences that impact on the way in which we perceive our world. Much like the hip hop scene in Cape Town, at least 95% of heavy metal participants are male (Hay, 2000), while the females are either absent or occupied the periphery. Similarly, at hip hop events, women are usually seen occupying the periphery, whereas males are on the stage. So, the fact that women often occupy the periphery, could indicate that they feel either intimidated by the males present or even threatened.

The female participants felt that men create an unfair perception of them. This is what they said:

Guys don't think that we are comparable to them when we grab the mic...(Female Group, 1, Female)

As female emcees, we don't get the chance to prove that we are good enough, if not better than the brothers (Female Group, 1, Female).

When we are recognized as female emcees, you will see how much other sisters will come out and make a noise (Female Group, 1, Female).

Similar to the all female group, all the female participants in the mixed-gendered group felt that men create perceptions which are derogatory to women in rap music culture. This is what they said:

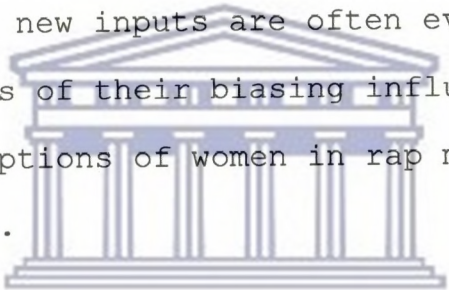
I'm sorry, but I have to mention this...the perceptions of women out there in general I mean, not only in hip hop is very, how can I say now...very low man (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

You mean there is a negative perception of

women(Mixed Group, 2, Female)?

Ya, em that's right, women are portrayed in a very negative light in rap music because society creates this sick perception that women are only good for sex (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

The above excerpts point out that there are many ways in which social variables may influence perception. Broad cultural influences set basic, accepted social categories that determine standards for beauty, fear, appropriateness, or unacceptability (Zimbardo, 1992). Socially learned attitudes can function as anchors or standards by which new inputs are often evaluated without conscious awareness of their biasing influence, much like the negative perceptions of women in rap music (Deregowski, 1980).



Curtis (1985, in Mulqueen, 1992) states that women's level of performance is inhibited when working with males. Most feminist theorists would agree with Curtis and add that, the gender roles created by society are usually very limiting for women. For example, male rappers are usually the most prominently featured at events compared to women and who come across as aggressive and in control. On the other hand, the female rappers, however, are generally viewed as 'tomboys', 'unlady-like' and second grade rappers. It is not surprising then that men are more likely to be icons in

the music industry than women are. Here is an example why:

It is very difficult to cut a record deal as a female hip hop artist. Kwaito is the flavour of the month. Record companies executives think that women in hip hop does not have what it takes to sell units. Women in Cape Town focus on positive messages, and that's not what sells. You have talk about gang fights and be aggressive in your lyrics to make it big. Guys are good at that (Female Group, 1, Female).

This excerpt clearly illustrates that record companies do not think that women will sell many records. Also, because most female artists (for example, Lauryn Hill, Queen Latifah, Queen Pen, Bahamadia and others) complain that the music industry is male dominated it is difficult for females to be signed to record labels. Consequently, most, if not all of the female emcees in the States have male mentors who 'discovered' them and made them famous. In the hip hop community in Cape Town, a similar experience is shared by female emcees. For instance, males manage most female emcees or female groups. There are cases in which male emcees are the authors of female emcees' lyrics. For example, this is what a female participant said:

I don't know if I should mention his name, but my manager is a very famous emcee in Cape Town. He is signed to Ruff Records. That's actually a problem because you see... he writes my lyrics and producers my beats so if he's out of town... which is most of the time, I hardly ever get any work done (Female Group, 1, Female).

Int: So how does that make you feel?

It makes me feel helpless, like he thinks I'm not able to go on without him (Female Group, 1, Female).

Int.: Has he said that to you?

No. But he implies it whenever I complain about him always being out of town (Female Group, 1, Female).

Given that male rappers are viewed as the 'pioneers' in the hip hop industry, it is obvious that female rappers would become famous with their help. Now that a new wave of feminist rappers are "getting on the stage" and "battling male rappers lyrically", men find it difficult not to perceive women as skilled rappers. Because "getting on the stage" is really to prove your man-hood, feminists and postmodernists examine cultural perceptions of gendered behaviours and expectations placed on choices available to both men and women.



I think that the negative perceptions of female rappers that exist could be because there are too few females representing the culture. Most of the participants support this view. For instance:

I actually think that things would be much better in hip hop if more sisters were representing. I mean, then it wouldn't look like we outsiders, trying to do what men do. Almost like female soccer players. Everyone knows that soccer has always been a man's game. Now we have female soccer groups, ag I mean players. People first didn't support them, but now more females are playing soccer and the game is growing. The same will happen in hip hop... I know (Female Group, 1, Female).

Brothers are putting us in a bad light. My own brother told me that I'm making a fool out of myself. Women can't rap or DJ, that's why there are so few women in hip hop (Female Group, 1, Female).

The above quotes, illustrate that because of the negative perceptions of women in rap music, women are weary to participate in the culture. The lack of female representation in rap culture are discussed in more detail below.

6.4 Lack of female representation in rap culture

The representation of women in any given culture is related to gender politics. A case in point is the representation in rap music that has a lot to do with the gender roles that women play in rap music. For example, Krenske (2000) argues that women gravitated toward the Heavy Metal setting in order to escape stifling adolescent situations, but unfortunately they were in turn exposed to gender discrimination in the Heavy Metal culture. Both the forceful corporeal practices of men and the highly gendered structures of power meant that women 'did' gender on men's terms. Women 'doing gender' on men's terms, could be interpreted as men defining what it means to be a women, in relation to the male tradition and experience in music (Cook, 1993). Similarly, representation in rap music culture has a lot to do with

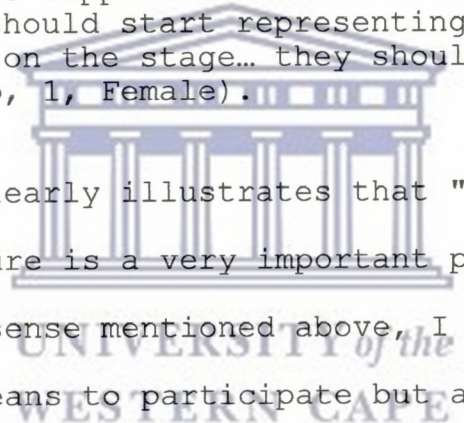
the gender roles that women play in the culture. The following is an illustration:

In my area, I don't really know a lot of female emcees... I know that there are some sisters hanging around at events... but I don't really ever see them rap...(Female Group, 1, Female)

I'm part of a male group... I sing... Some of my friends can rap, but they just do it for the fun... they will never rap at events (Female Group, 1, Female).

I know of a lot of sisters who can rap... but they just do it to impress their boyfriends, they not serious. I know about two sisters who take rapping seriously (Female Group, 1, Female).

I just want to support what that brother just said... and sisters should start representing more, you know... get up on the stage... they shouldn't be shy (Female Group, 1, Female).



This discussion clearly illustrates that "representation" in rap music culture is a very important part of gaining respect. In the sense mentioned above, I think that "representing," means to participate but also refers to how women are represented. This thesis has indicated on numerous occasions that women are not participating in the rap culture because they feel threatened by their male counterparts. "Representing" in rap music culture has been known by the participants to be a double bind for women. The following participants express this view:

It's not only the fact that sisters aren't representing hip hop on the stage... I remember a time when Cool Funk was launching their CD, they did a radio ad [advert]that requested only sexy, size 6 women to come to a particular venue dressed in bikinis to be part of their music video... and

sisters were representing! So, you see sisters do support the hip hop culture in their own way. Em, ya...talking about representing, everyone knows that the only women representing in rap music videos are half-naked...(Female Group, 1, Female)

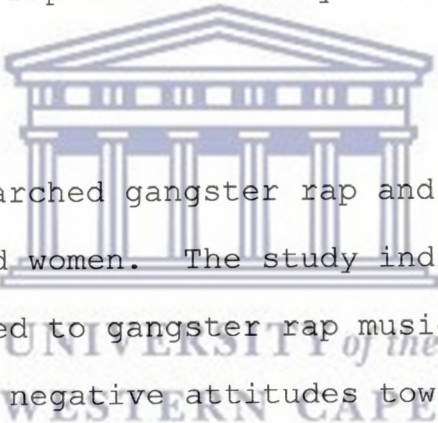
Excuse me, I don't like the way in which women are represented in rap music videos. It's almost like women selling their bodies just to get noticed on TV (Female Group, 1, Female).

Ya, I agree, I hate the way sisters represent on music videos. I would prefer seeing a female DJ wrecking the decks than to see a porno-rap video (Female Group, 1, Female).

In this instance, it seems as if women representing in music videos are seen as sex symbols and not respected at all. As MusicHound (1999) states, most female emcees either use their sexuality to 'make it' in the male dominated rap world or they tend to mimic the oppressor. Rap music, a product of black male tradition and experience, has defined the images of women (Cook, 1993).

One of the major criticisms against the rap music genre is the negative way in which women are portrayed. In fact, it seems as if women representing in music videos are seen as sex symbols and not respected at all. It seems as if rap music, a product of Black male tradition and experience, has defined the images of women (Cook, 1993). For instance, Black male rapper, Jay Z's award winning music video '*Big Pimpin*' exemplifies this 'sex-symbol' image of women. The reason why the music video enjoys popular status is because of the half-naked women portrayed in the video and the pimp lifestyle Jay-Z

illustrates in the music video objectifies women. According to Strauss (2000), pimping is illegal almost everywhere, because of the abusive way in which sex workers are manhandled¹ by their pimps. To add, Hay (2000) defines 'pimping' to mean the abuse of fellow human beings. This means that MTV exposes sexist artist who demean women in their videos, and rewards them for perpetuating negative gender stereotypes through misogynistic music. As MusicHound (1999) states, most female emcees either use their sexuality to 'make it' in the male dominated rap world or they tend to mimic the oppressor.



Wester (1997) researched gangster rap and its influences on attitudes toward women. The study indicated that participants exposed to gangster rap music had significantly more negative attitudes toward women than those who were not exposed to gangster rap did. Most rap lyrics make it easy to note why Wester's study is valid. The investigation found that misogynous rap facilitates sexually aggressive behaviour toward women. If one recalls the accusations of gang rape that led to the arrest of the late and famous gangster rapper, Tupac, these research results come as no surprise. By this Barongan means that misogynous rap music has a direct

¹ Pimps are usually abusive males (Kalof, 1999).

relationship with sexually aggressive behaviour towards women.

The most common images portrayed in rap music videos are disrespectful towards women and they are often described as objects to be sexually used and physically and verbally abused. Many studies (Seidman, 1992, Sherman and Dominick, 1993 and Vincent et al., 1987) emphasize the sexual innuendoes and suggestiveness, gender stereotypes and implicit aggression found in music videos and lyrical content. Evidence of this is in what Ballard and Coates (1995) found that the type of music and lyrical content significantly effects peoples' moods. Additionally, in a study of how exposure to nonviolent rap music influenced African American teenagers' perceptions of dating violence, different gender effects was found (Johnson, 1995). Rap music videos that portrayed women in sexually subordinate roles increased the young women's acceptance of teen dating violence, although these videos did not influence the boys acceptance of teen dating violence (Johnson, 1995).

An interesting contribution to the discussion around women's position in rap music was rooted in the controversy about men realizing that women are dependent on them for technical assistance, and it seems as if women felt that men take advantage of this. For example:

I just want to say that I think that because most producers are male and they also write some of our lyrics we actually give them more power than we realize... Because my producer is more creative than me and writes my lyrics, I don't have much input in what the outcome of some is...(Female Group, 1, Female)

...Ya, I know what you saying, sister, I have a similar experience with my producer. But you see in my case, my producer is also my boyfriend so he'll be like..hon, I'm only doing what's best for us. Sometimes I think that 'us' means him (Female Group, 1, Female).

Int: What do you mean?

No man, you see its like this. I wanna do a lot of conscious stuff. Like feminist shit... sorry. But I really like the music that Lauryn and Queen Latifah's about. But my boyfriend thinks that I should rather focus on happy, party music because everyone can relate to that. So, to be honest, I don't think that women get enough support from the men in rap music culture (Female Group, 1, Female).

In the above mentioned, the representation of women in rap music culture is emphasized in a negative light. The women are depicted as sex symbols and not respected for their lyrical skills. With this in mind, the following section of this chapter looks at the lack of support towards female rap artists in rap music culture.

6.5 Lack of support towards female rappers

Most of the female participants said that they have experienced a lack of support, from both men and women, when trying to express themselves lyrically on the microphone. When I asked participants why they thought

that female emcees need support from male participants in rap music culture this is what they replied:

I've noticed that there are no female emcees around who doesn't depend on the guys for beats [instrumental music] or other production things. I certainly do... Women need the support of men technically... I'd say women need men's support because that's just how hip hop in Cape Town's been ever since I can remember. Most men in hip hop have access to resources, like turn tables, whereas females don't. Or if they do, they don't know how to use the equipment (Female Group, 1, Female).

...Once, my friend got on the stage and rhymed right, the crowd was so quiet, they didn't even cheer or anything...they just started talking amongst themselves... she just went on rapping though. My point is that even the sisters were not cheering her on. Besides the whole sexist thing that exists in hip hop, there 's little unity and support coming from both sides [both sexes] (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

I just have one question in response to what the sister just said. Why don't you and the other female emcees get together and support each other? But that's not my point, its not only females who struggle with confidence issues, I know a lot of brothers who would rather rap in their bedrooms than on stage...(Mixed Female, 2, Female)

It is clear here that one of the participants felt frustrated that women need to depend on men for technical assistance. If the women in the rap community want to create positive role models and consequently encourage other women to actively participate in rap music, their task has become clear, as one of the participants stated:

The time has come for female emcees to get on the stage, grab a microphone, break the silence and make a lot of noise (Female Group, 1, Female).

In terms of females' upliftment and empowerment, a feminist framework, especially within the realms of feminist psychology is appropriate to encourage and capacitate women, particularly women in rap music. The yearn for an intervention was clear when participants said:

I know that brothers are really trying hard to make hip hop more accessible to the women. But... Not enough has been done to empower and support female emcees ya know. Members of POC and Black Noise often do workshops on lyric writing skills (Female Group, 1, Female).

I think that sisters should stand together and form all-female groups (Female Group, 1, Female).

...We as women need to network, help each other. Brothers should help too (Female Group, 1, Female).

Yes, I agree. They should organize workshops more often... I want to know more about hip hop (Female Group, 1, Female).

Interestingly, the central theme here being the lack of support women in rap music experience reflects the dependence women in rap music express. Dependence has been constructed as a trait of women, both to give power to the dominant group by defining women as helpless or weak and to give women the role of carriers of universal needs for dependence.

The current research and theory on women's psychology not only challenges dependence as a trait of women but also provides a basis for reconceptualizing dependence as

strength. For instance, Gilligan (1993) found that women understand dependence and responsibility in terms of survival and sacrifice for the good of others. This point could relate to the dependency women in rap have to men. The technological disadvantage women seemed to have inherited through the social construction of men as technologically more advanced than women.

6.6 A comparative look at the results

The above summary illustrates the central themes that emerged out of the focus group discussions and individual interviews. However, even though the themes mentioned emerged in all the discussions, the themes varied in context and conceptualization. Irrespective of the five main themes that emerged from all the interviews and discussions, two central themes significantly stand out, gender discrimination and issues of low self-esteem.

In the female only focus group, the category gender discrimination is conceptualized differently to the all-male group and the mixed gendered group. In sum, in the female only group, gender discrimination was viewed as the manner in which issues of power expressed by the patriarchy in rap music culture suppress women's development within rap music culture. The following excerpt illustrates this.

...We sisters have what it takes to make it in this industry...what we need to do is stand together and recognize what is keeping us from getting where we wanna be in the rap game (Female Group, 1, Female).

In the mixed group the following main words summarize the theme of gender discrimination that emerged: 'judge', 'segregate', 'divide' and 'left out'. These words all describe the level of prejudice in rap music culture in Cape Town. In the all male group most of the participants did not know what gender discrimination is. In other words, it seems as if their inability to recognize that gender discrimination exists in rap music culture is justified by the unawareness of the gender dynamics that prevails in the culture. Contrary to this, gender discrimination in the individual interviews were conceptualized similarly to the response that the women only group did. For instance, the participant in the individual interview said that "sometimes [she] feel(s) like there's something stopping [her] from getting where [she] want(s) to be in my career as an emcee". The participants in the female only focus group and individual interviews experience the 'glass ceiling' effect in rap music culture.

With regard to the other main theme that emerged, issues of low self-esteem have been expressed strongly by the

participants in the female only and mixed-gendered focus groups and from the discussions that emerged with the individual interviewees. All the female participants in this study agreed that they were too "shy to get up in front of many people and start rapping... it takes a lot of guts". Because there is a great amount of shame attached to women's inability to succeed, the participants found it difficult to "do-for-self", and so the appropriate role that these women assume is low self-esteem. The dilemma between women emcees' desire to express their competence as well as their femininity becomes all the more apparent when one examines male-female interactions.

6.7 Summary

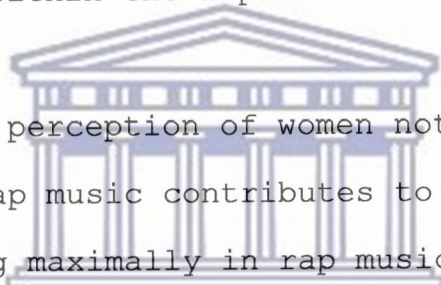


In the light of the above findings, the following main points summarize the data obtained from the research:

1. Gender discrimination in rap music culture has an influence on women's participation in rap music.
2. Issues of low self-esteem came out quite strongly during the thematic analysis.
3. The lack of support from the males within rap music culture contributes to the scarcity of women in rap music in Cape Town. Most of the participants felt

that the women were more dependent on the men for technical assistance. And it is this difference in power and an unequal status in rap music culture that minimizes the representation of women within the culture.

4. The lack of female representation in rap music culture could be attributed to their level of shyness and lack of self-confidence. Also, some participants disliked the way in which women were represented within the rap music videos.
5. The negative perception of women not being able to make it in rap music contributes to women not participating maximally in rap music culture.



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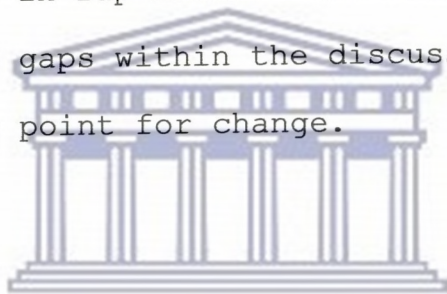
This summary attempted to collate the main themes that emerged from the research. In the following chapter a more detailed account of the findings is presented.

This summary attempted to collate the main themes that emerged from the research. In the following chapter a more detailed account of the findings is presented.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

When one reads through the outcomes of the thesis interwoven with the theoretical contentions, one realizes

the enormous task ahead. If the women in the rap community want to create positive role models and consequently encourage other women to actively participate in rap music, they have an important role to play in breaking the mould. The time has come for female emcees to 'get on the stage', 'grab a microphone', 'break the silence' and 'make a lot of noise'. In terms of women's upliftment and empowerment, a feminist framework, especially within the realms of psychology, is appropriate to encourage and capacitate women, particularly women in rap music. The resistance's, contradictions and gaps within the discussions, suggest a potential starting point for change.



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CHAPTER 7

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Central findings and Central trends

INTRODUCTION

To provide a succinct interpretation of the findings of this research is a challenging task, as the data provided many differing vantage points, contradictions and contextual nuances. In this final chapter, I attempt to draw out the key findings and conclusions for this study. In the following, I discuss both the male and female rappers resistance to changing the status quo of women in rap music. Then, based on the results, I present a debate on whether a change in rap music culture in the new millennium is to be expected. I also suggest what the findings mean for theory and practice. Finally, I consider the implications of the research process, its limitations and future research possibilities.

7.1 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

This study has found that the resistance to change the status quo in rap music culture was presented very subtly amongst both female and male participants. In other words, even though many of the women who were interviewed indicated that they are optimistic that the status quo in

rap music will change, little is done on their part to ensure this change. The following excerpt explains this in more detail.

Its hard being a rap artist and you depend on someone else for beats and stuff, you know...But as Lauryn Hill says, "change comes eventually"(Female Group, 1, Female).

Everyone says I have a tight flow, you know...but it's difficult for me to write my own lyrics. So, some of the guys write them. I wish there were more emcee workshops I could attend to improve my writing skills then I wouldn't rely on others to write my lyrics (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

As soon as women have access to resources and the appropriate skill required to be a good emcees...then things will change in the rap culture (Telephonic Interview, 4, Female).

The above views could suggest that male domination in rap music culture influences the choices available to women. The data therefore informs us that the resistance reflected in the above excerpts could be indicative of how women in rap are resisting change because of the various factors like the lack of access to resources and hence, the underdevelopment of skill.

The resistance to change was suggestive in some of the discussions among the male participants too. These excerpts explain:

...It's all good and well for male emcees to set up workshops and other hip hop forums but women should also take their own initiative...I mean there are sisters doing-for-themselves, but the majority wait around for others to do for them. That's not fair, we in this struggle together...(Male Group, 3, Male)

People don't realize it, but its very challenging to make it in the rap industry. So, its very difficult for male emcees to keep head above water and sometimes it feels as if female emcees want to weigh us down when they expect too much from us (Mixed Group, 2, Male).

The above excerpts indirectly indicate that starting out in the rap game is challenging, but ignores the fact that it is even more difficult for female artists. Feminists and postmodernists examine these cultural perceptions of gendered behaviours and expectations placed on choices available to men and women within a given culture (Biever, 1998). Instead of trusting dualities that pit all men against all women or simplistic theories that homogenize all women's experiences, feminist postmodernism challenges us to create alliances that allow us to work together. It also assists in constructing a new understanding of gender relations, class relations and race relations that will empower everyone (Lather, 1992). From the data collected, it seems as if peer support is what gives women the courage to challenge the status quo. For example:

I have actually seen some female hip hop artists forming all female groups...and that seems to help challenge the status quo in hip hop (Female Group, 1, Female).

...Female rap groups are very rare, there are one or two up and coming...they are very confident and it seems to help if you have the support of other women (Mixed Group, 2, Female).

Given this finding, it may be argued that the forming of woman's support forums will lead to the development of the female emcees. In other words, women should be encouraged to take charge of their own situation and make a change in their own lives, with the support of their peers. This sounds easier said than done, because in an environment where commerce rather than art prevails, it is doubtful that female rap artists, who are recording for major record companies, can truly empower other women (Bynoe, 2001). The male participants in rap music culture, who do not resist change should form forums and support each other and women as some of the male participants suggested.

7.2 CHANGE IN RAP MUSIC CULTURE IN THE YEAR 2001

In chapter two, I mentioned that because there was a significantly progressive change in the political climate in South Africa in 1990s, the hip hop culture was revitalized through the promotion of rapping. The rise of male rappers was overwhelming in comparison to that of female rappers. Female rappers like Mickey D, MC Square and 3rd Party were technically the pioneer female hip hop artists. However, precisely because they were the pioneer female rappers, they were faced with challenges. The lack of a platform to express themselves, the lack of opportunity within the industry and lack of support led

to the shortfall of these female artists. Generally, most male participants in this study stated that they would try to support female emcees more by planning regular workshops for them, to teach them more about the culture. But there are obvious dangers of reproducing a patronizing discourse towards women in such an approach.

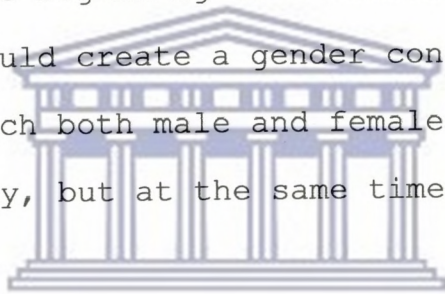
However, in the year 2001 the status of women in rap music in Cape Town remains unchanged. In all fairness, the culture is growing rapidly, but the sustainability of women rappers is vulnerable.

Women hip hop artists have started recording rap music, like EJ von Lyric and Miriam. The Ladybugs, an all female group, is also 'making their voices heard'. Given the fact that female rappers are making an attempt to record their music, female participation in the hip hop culture as a whole in Cape Town is still minimal although there has been some increase since a couple of years ago when female participation was almost non-existent.

7.3 CENTRAL FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THEORY AND PRACTICE

The findings of this research do not present an essentialist voice; instead, in keeping with feminist social constructionism, multiple voices and viewpoints of women and men were represented in this study. I realize

that no lived experience can ever be the same as another. In recognizing this, I hope that the research created an opportunity for the participants, both male and female, to question the way in which they conduct themselves and their attitudes towards each other, in terms of gender relations within rap music culture specifically, and the hip hop culture as a whole. In Cape Town, the hip hop community is very small, which means that the participants of the study will have contact with each other after the research process. I therefore hope that the research is the beginning of a conscientizing experience that would create a gender conscious environment in which both male and female hip hop artists can grow separately, but at the same time, in a unifying manner.



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In applying the feminist and social constructionist approaches to women in rap music as have been presented (in Chapter Two), one should now be able to consider the knowledge gained from the position of women in rap music to be interpreted as a limitation of a socially constructed gender regime. However, a social constructionist analysis of gender roles should allow for the possibility that both men and women have the right to choose a different voice, a more balanced cultural repertoire for both genders (Lather, 1992). In order to understand the societal constructed impasse of women in

rap music, a feminist social constructionist framework should be employed. In a nutshell, the feminist social constructionist framework suggests that because women are portrayed as unequal participants in rap music culture, it affects women's self-esteem and thus women lack the confidence to perform and make their voices heard. When I reflect on what the literature expects of contemporary women, particularly women in rap music, I conclude that it is expected of her to take the risk of expressing herself lyrically through her music, like Lauryn Hill did (Seymour, 1999). What sets Lauryn Hill aside from most female rappers, is her ability to overcome the gender stereotypes in rap music culture by challenging the status quo.



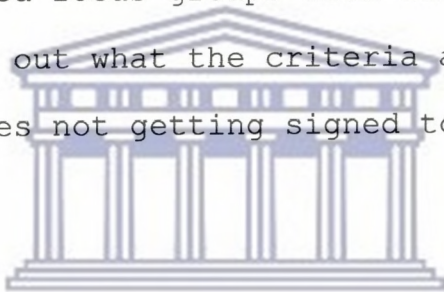
7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

7.4.1 Limitations of the study

Some limitations of this study have already been mentioned previously. However, to briefly recap, the following section of this chapter will reflect the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

The most important limitation of this study is that I could have used a more collaborative research method,

such as a participant observation study and utilizing the participants as co-researchers. Given that the hip hop community in Cape Town feel like 'lab specimens' whenever reporters or researchers enter their domain, it would have been more appropriate to collaborate with the participants. In this way, they could have been involved in observing the roles men and women play at events. This would not only have created awareness on their part, but the research process also serves as an empowering tool which they were part of. However, in retrospect, I could have conducted focus groups with record company executives to find out what the criteria and hence reason is for female emcees not getting signed to their record companies.



Another important limitation of the study is my own contribution to the outcomes of the research. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, I am not only doing the research on women in rap music as a social scientist, but because I want to contribute towards the upliftment of the culture in a positive way and this meant addressing the issue of gender discrimination.

There is little work of this nature in South Africa and so future research is not only important for academic purposes, but it could make significant contributions to hip hop culture as a whole.

7.4.2 Suggestions for future research

More psychological research is needed in the area of hip hop culture and its impact on women's mental health.

The research also opened up a Pandora's box that suggests that rap music culture is in the process of changing, irrespective of the fact that there were resistances from participants, which is to be suspected when dealing with sensitive issues like gender discrimination. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, little documented studies on rap music culture exist in South Africa. Other areas that need to be researched are women's contribution to DJ-ing, Spray Can art and break-dancing. These areas will not only benefit from social research but also aid to broaden knowledge production.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the plight of women in rap music. There is a way in which the literature and the findings of this thesis are interwoven that present an understanding that the task ahead for social science researchers and the hip hop community is insurmountable. At the same time, there are hopeful moments in the research that suggest that the

mechanisms for change to take place are already in the making. The resistances, contradictions and gaps within the discussions, suggest a potential starting point for change.

Returning to the opening pages of this study, I am reminded of the history of rap music in South Africa and how it has impacted on the development of women within the culture. I think back to the research process when I conducted the focus groups and interviews. The manner in which the male and female participants expressed their opinions and experiences in rap music culture, questions how much the socio-psychological history of the country, impacted on the culture. These moments of reflection grant me the insight to deepen my analysis of women in rap music, and to quote Miller in conclusion, "one cannot expect strong gains for women if all women are not enjoying the advantages" (Miller, 1976, p.7).

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WESTERN CAPE

APPENDIX ONE

CONVENTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP EXCERPTS

(Mixed group, 3) The first part describes the group in terms of whether it was a single sex group or included both men and women; the number is a coding system to differentiate the different groups held.

Int. Int. refers to the facilitator or interviewer in the group.

[] Material omitted.

... Pause.

= Speaker cuts in.

[text] Unclear, probably what was said.
Also additional or replaced word that was probably meant by the writer, or to make the excerpt read better and or make grammatical sense

APPENDIX TWO

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TELEPHONIC INTERVIEWS

- How long have you been an emcee?

- What inspired you to rhyme for the first time?

- There are not many recording female emcees in Cape Town. Why do you think female emcees are reluctant to participate in the hip hop culture?

- What has your experience been as one of the few female emcees in Cape Town?

- What do you think needs to be done to encourage female emcees to participate more actively in the hip hop culture?

- How do you think male emcees can help female emcees to grow with hip hop and in hip hop?

APPENDIX THREE

VIGNETTE

Patience is a 21-year old up and coming female emcee. She won 4 emcee battles in a row and decided that she wants to make a career out of hip hop music. Many male hip hoppers don't think that Patience can make it, and her parents think that she is a tomboy.

Nevertheless, Patience have contacted many record company executives and asked if they would listen to her demo tape. Unfortunately, they just said that she was not what they were looking for. Patience feels that she might as well give up on her dream of becoming the best female emcee in South Africa. The lack of support of her community and the men in the hip hop culture in addition to the lack of referral from record company executives, makes her feel despondent that she would ever make her dreams come true.

APPENDIX FOUR

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FOCUS GROUPS

- What are the relationships between men and women in hip hop usually like?
- What roles do men in hip hop play?
- What roles do women in hip hop play?
- Do you think that women are being discriminated against in hip hop. If so why, if not why not?
- Do you support the status quo situation of women in rap music? If so, how?
- What would be a constructive, positive relationship that women and men in hip hop could develop?

APPENDIX FIVE

LYRICS

Artist: Eminem

Album: Slim Shady LP

Song: My Name Is

Typed by: I'm Shady - An Eminem Website *

* this is the UNEDITED album version; MTV's video is different

Chorus: repeat 2X

Hi! My name is.. (what?) My name is.. (who?)

My name is.. {scratches} Slim Shady

Hi! My name is.. (huh?) My name is.. (what?)

My name is.. {scratches} Slim Shady

Ahem.. excuse me!

Can I have the attention of the class

for one second?

[Eminem]

Hi kids! Do you like violence? (Yeah yeah yeah!)

Wanna see me stick Nine Inch Nails through each one of my eyelids? (Uh-huh!)

Wanna copy me and do exactly like I did? (Yeah yeah!)

Try 'cid and get fucked up worse than my life is? (Huh?)

My brain's dead weight, I'm tryin to get my head straight but I can't figure out which Spice Girl I want to impregnate (Ummmm..)

And Dr. Dre said, "Slim Shady you a basehead!"

Uh-uhhh! "So why's your face red? Man you wasted!"

Well since age twelve, I've felt like I'm someone else

Cause I hung my original self from the top bunk with a belt

Got pissed off and ripped Pamela Lee's tits off

And smacked her so hard I knocked her clothes backwards

like Kris Kross

I smoke a fat pound of grass and fall on my ass

faster than a fat bitch who sat down too fast

C'mere slut! (Shady, wait a minute, that's my girl dog!)

I don't give a fuck, God sent me to piss the world off!

Chorus

[Eminem]

My English teacher wanted to flunk me in junior high

Thanks a lot, next semester I'll be thirty-five

I smacked him in his face with an eraser, chased him with
a stapler

and stapled his nuts to a stack of papers (Owwwwwww!)

Walked in the strip club, had my jacket zipped up

Flashed the bartender, then stuck my dick in the tip cup

Extraterrestrial, runnin over pedestrians

in a spaceship while they screamin at me: "LET'S JUST BE
FRIENDS!"

Ninety-nine percent of my life I was lied to

I just found out my mom does more dope than I do (Damn!)

I told her I'd grow up to be a famous rapper

Make a record about doin drugs and name it after her (Oh
thank you!)

You know you blew up when the women rush your stands

and try to touch your hands like some screamin Usher fans
(Aaahhhhhh!)

This guy at White Castle asked for my autograph

(Dude, can I get your autograph?)

So I signed it: 'Dear Dave, thanks for the support,

ASSHOLE!'

Chorus

[Eminem]

Stop the tape! This kid needs to be locked away! (Get
him!)

Dr. Dre, don't just stand there, OPERATE!

I'm not ready to leave, it's too scary to die (Fuck that!)

I'll have to be carried inside the cemetery and buried alive

(Huh yup!) Am I comin or goin? I can barely decide
I just drank a fifth of vodka -- dare me to drive? (Go ahead)

All my life I was very deprived

I ain't had a woman in years, and my palms are too hairy to hide

(Whoops!) Clothes ripped like the Incredible Hulk
(hachhh-too)

I spit when I talk, I'll fuck anything that walks
(C'mere)

When I was little I used to get so hungry I would throw fits

HOW YOU GONNA BREAST FEED ME MOM? (WAH!)

YOU AIN'T GOT NO TITS! (WAHHH!)

I lay awake and strap myself in the bed

Put a bulleproof vest on and shoot myself in the head
(BANG!)

I'm steamin mad (Arrrggghhh!)

And by the way when you see my dad? (Yeah?)

Tell him that I slit his throat, in this dream I had

Chorus

Artist: EMINEM

Album: The Marchal Mathers Album

Song: The Way I am

Intro

Dre just let it run

Yeah yo can you turn the beat up a little bit

Yeah yo this song is for anyone...fuck it ... just shut up
and listen

Verse 1

Yeah yo I sit I back

With this pack of zig zags in this bag

And this weed it gives the shit needed to be the most
meanest emcee

on this earth since birth I've been cursed with this
curse its just cursing and it bezurk and bezar shit that
works and its sells and it hells and its sells to relieve
all tension dispensing me sick and the stress that been
eating me recently off with this chest and I rest to get
peacefully

but at least have the decency in you to leave me alone
when you freaks see me out in the streets when I'm eating
or feeding my daughter do not come and speak to me

I don't know you and no I don't owe you a mother-fucking
thing
I'm not Mr. Insinc, I'm not what your friends think I can
be a prick if you tick me my tank is on empty
No patience is in me and if you offend me I'm lifting you
ten feet
in the air I don't care who was there and who saw me
destroy you
Will call you a lawyer
File you a lawsuit
I'll smile in the courtroom
Buy you a wardrobe
I' tired of all y'all
I don't mean to be mean but that's all I can be It's just
me and



Chorus (X2)

I am whatever you say I am whatever you say I am
If I wasn't then why would I say I am
In the paper, the news everyday I am
Radio won't even play my jam

Verse 2

Sometimes I just feel like my father
I hate to be bothered with all of this nonsense

That's casting me out

Oh its just lyrical content that's all

This song could be conscious but its got such rotten
response

And all of this controversy circles me and it seems like
the media 'mediately points a finger at me

So I point one back at them but not the index, the pinky,
the ring or the thumb it's the one you put up when you
don't give a fuck when you won't just put up

with the bullshit they pull cause they fool the shit too
when dudes getting bullied or shoots up his school

When they blame it on Merilyn and the heroine and where
was the parents at

And look where its at

Middle America, now it's a tragedy, now it's so sad to
see

End up a classidy having its happening and

And they attack EMINEM cause I rap this way

But I'm glad cause they feed the fuel that I need for the
fire to burn and its burning and I just return and

Chorus

Verse 3

I'm so sick and tired of being admired that I wish that I

would just die or get fired and drop from my label and
stop with the fables
I'm not gonna be to top where my name is
Pigeon holin to some poppy sensation and cockney rotation
at rock 'n roll stations and just do not got the patience
to deal with this cocky Caucasians
who thinks I'm some Niger who just tries to be black
cause I talk with an accent and grab on my balls so they
always keep asking the same fucking questions
What school did I go to
What hood I grew up in
The why the who what when the where and the how
Till I'm grabbing my hair and I'm tarring it out
cause they driving me crazy
I can't take it I race and I pace and I stand and I sit
and I'm thankful for every fan that I get
but I can't take a shit
in the bathroom without someone standing by it
Knew I won't sign your autograph
you can call me an asshole I'm glad cause I am

Chorus to end

Artist: Jay Z, Featuring UGK
Album: Volume 3... The Life And Times of S. Carter
Song: Big Pimpin'

[Jay-Z]

You know I

Thug em

Fuck em

Love em

Leave em

Cause I don't fuckin' need em

Take em out the hood

Keep em looking good

But I don't fuckin' feed em

First time they fuss I'm breezin'

Talking 'bout

What's the reasons

I'm a pimp in every sense of the word, bitch

Better trust than believe em

In a cut where I keep em

'Til I need to nut

'Til I need to be the gut

Standing, deep deep then I'm picking em up

Let em play with the dick in the truck

Many chicks wanna put Jigga fist in cup

Divorce him and split his bucks



Just be cause you got good head

I'ma break fair

So you can be livin' it up

Shit I, prospered nothin'

Y'all be frontin'

Me give my heart to a woman

Not for nothin'

Never happened

I be forever mackin'

Hardcore than assassins

I got no passion

I got no patience

And I hate waitin'

Ho get your ass in

And let's RI-I-I-I-I-IDE

Check em out now

RI-I-I-I-I-IDE

Yeah

And let's RI-I-I-I-I-IDE

Check em out now

RI-I-I-I-I-IDE

Yeah

We doin'

Big pimpin

We spendin' cheese



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Check em out now

Big pimpin'

On B.L.A.D.'s

We doin'

Big pimpin' up in NYC

It's just that Jigga-man

Pimp-C and B.U.N.B.

Check em out now

[UGK]

Nigga it's the

Big southern rap pimp resario

Coming straight up out the black bar-io

Makes a Mil up off a sorry hoe

Then sit back and peep my scenario

Oops, my bad, that's my scenario

No I can't fuck with scary hoe

Now every time, every place, everywhere we go

Hoe's stop boy

And they say "There he go!"

Now these muthafuckas know we carry more heat than a
little bit

We don't pull it out over little shit

And if you catch a lick when I spit

Then it won't be a little hit

Go read a book you illiterate son of a bitches



They'll fuck your vocab
Don't be surprised if your hoe's there out with me
And you see us coming down your slab
Nigga ghetto fabulous so mad, you just can't take it
But nigga if you hate now, then you ain't wild
I'll get your bitch butt naked
Just break it
You gotta pay like you ain't wet with two pairs of
clothes on
Now get your ass to the back
As I fast to the track Timbaland let me spit my pro's on
Pump it up in the pro-zone
That's the track that we breaking these hoes on
Ain't the track that we flow's on
When the shit get's hot
Then the glock start poppin' like ozone
We keep hoes crunk like Trigga-man
Who really don't get no bigger man
Don't trip, let's flip, gettin' thrown on the flip
Then blow with the muthafuckin' Jigga-man
Fool

Hook 2:

We be

Big pimpin'

We spendin' cheese

We be

Big pimpin'

On B.L.A.D.'s

We be

Big pimpin' down in PAT

It's just that Jigga-man

Pimp-C and B.U.N.B.

Cause we be

Big pimpin'

Spendin' cheese

We be

Big pimpin'

On B.L.A.D.'s

We be

Big pimpin' down in PAT

It's just that Jigga-man

Pimp-C and B.U.N.B.

Nigga

Uh

Smoking out

Throwing up

Keeping' liter in my cup

On my fork I love the wood

In my hood, they call it buck

Everybody wanna ball



Hale brawls at the mall
If he up
Watch him fall
Nigga I can't fuck with y'all
If I wasn't rapping baby
I would still be ridin' Mercedes
Come and shine and sippin' bated
No rest, tell I get paid
Uh

Now what y'all know bout the Texas boys
Club Mendatta, candy, toys
Smoking weed
Talking noise



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We be
Big pimpin'
We spendin' cheese
We be
Big pimpin'
On B.L.A.D.'s
We be
Big pimpin' down in PAT
It's just that Jigga-man
Pimp-C and B.U.N.B.
Cause we be
Big pimpin'

Spendin' cheese

We be

Big pimpin'

On B.L.A.D.'s

We be

Big pimpin' down in PAT

It's just that Jigga-man

Pimp-C and B.U.N.B.

Nigga



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Artist: Lil' Kim f/ Mr. Brystal

Album: The Notorious KIM

Song: Suck My Dick

Uh, uh, uh

Uh, uh, uh

To all my motherfuckin' gettin' money hoes

Used to clothes

And all my ghetto bitches in the projects

Coming through like bulldozers

No, we ain't sober

Bum bitches know better than to start shit

Niggas love a hard bitch

One that get up in a nigga's ass quicker than an enema

Make a cat bleed then sprinkle it with vinegar

Kidnap the senator

Make him call his wife and say he never coming home

Kim got him in a zone beating they dicks

Even got some of these straight chicks rubbing their tits

*laughs

What? I'm loving this shit

Queen Bitch!

What bitch you know can thug it like this?

Imagine if I was dude and hittin' cats from the back

With no strings attached

Yeah nigga, picture that!

I treat y'all niggas like y'all treat us

No Doubt! Ay yo, yo

Come here so I can bust in ya mouth

1 - [Lil' Kim] (Mr. Bristol)

(Ay yo, come on here bitch)

Nigga FUCK YOU

(No, FUCK YOU BITCH)

Who you talking to?

(Why you actin' like a BITCH?)

Cause y'all niggas ain't shit

And if I was dude

I'd tell y'all to suck my dick



Repeat 1

[Lil' Kim]

No, no, no, no

All I wanna do is get my pussy sucked (Nigga!)

Count a million bucks in the back of an armor truck

While I get you fucked up off the T.O.N.Y.

The BX, the chron-chron

And the list goes on and on

(On and on and on)

Like Erykah Badu

Once he drink the Remi down
Ooh I got this nigga now
He asked me did I love him
I said what came to mind like niggas be doing
Yeah baby, I love you long time
Look I ain't tryin' to suck ya
I might not even fuck ya
Just lay me on this bed and give me some head
Got the camcord layin' in the drawer where he can't see
Can't wait to show my girls he sucked the piss out my
pussy
Been doin' this for years, no need to practice
Take lessons from the Queen and you'll know how to mack
this
Niggas know he gave me all his cake
I peeled the Benji's off and threw the singles back in
his face

Repeat 1 (2x)

[Lil' Kim]

I'mma keep it real

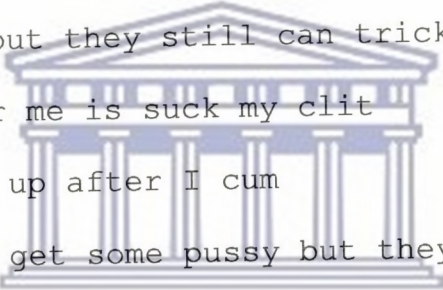
For the dough I might kill

I'm try-na see my face on a hundred dollar bill

Met this dude name Jaleel at this Abdulla fight

He said he'd pay me ten grand just to belly dance

Cum all on his pants
I met him at the studio
He showed up with his homeboy named Julio
I said 'Whoa! Who's the other guy?'
Hope you know you paying extra for this fuckin' third eye
Something about him, I knew he was a phony
Put the burner in his mouth
'Fool, Give me my money!'
He was just a nigga frontin' like he knew mad stars
In his homeboy's whips like he got mad cars
Niggas ain't shit but they still can trick
All they can do for me is suck my clit
I'm jumpin' up and up after I cum
Thinkin' they gon' get some pussy but they gets none



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Repeat 1 fade out

Artist: Lil' Kim f/ Mario 'Yellowman' Winans

Album: The Notorious K.I.M.

Song: Single Black Female

Yeah yeah yeah yeah

Yeah, and it don't stop

Yeah yeah, and it don't stop

Yeah, and it don't stop

B.I.G., rock-rock on

Uh huh, and it don't stop

Yeah yeah, and it don't stop

Yeah, and it don't stop

Queen Bee, rock-rock on



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[Lil' Kim]

Sometimes a gal forget cout, hoo hoo hoo hoo

Ain't that the truth, frontin' like they bulletproof

Lil' Kim this, Lil' Kim that

She wack, but stay bangin' Lil' Kim tracks

Your career is on the rocks again

Yeah, I'm back on top, what?

You forgot Queen Bitch, W-W-W-dot-com

Read the 27th Psalm, sing along

The Lord is the light of my salvation

Thou shall fear when He calls

So when you MC's come to eat up my flesh and blood
Ya'll all will stumble and fall (ha ha!)
Still that's not all, bitches have the goal
To be writin' my rhymes, said B.I.G. write my rhymes
My nigga gone now, so who writin' my rhymes?
No disrespect, ya'll bitches owe me publishing checks

[Mario] (Lil' Kim)

If I'll tell ya, I'll tell ya now

(Queen Bee, Queen Bee)

Would you keep, just keep on feelin' me

(Wha? What?)

If I tell ya, I'll tell ya how I feel

(If I tell ya how I feel)

Would you keep bringing out the best in me?

Stop stressin' me



[Lil' Kim]

Keep my jewels frozen like they've been in the freezer

Haters - if that don't please ya, I don't need ya

Even Mom Dukes live in an igloo

Bought my whole crew businesses for Christmas

Yeah, I see ya'll!

Colorful minks and things

Polars on ya shoulders, about a half in ya rings

Once, got to switch my pitch up

Pin-stripped suits BaGari specs
Black pearls around the neck
Come on, ya'll chicks can't be serious
How's the weather down there my dear, I'm just curious
Been the sex symbol since Jack B. Nimble
You can never be me, you can only resemble
Copped the presidential suites for weeks, ya'll just a
day out
One ass picture in a magazine, I gets a layout
My nigga gone now, so who writin' my rhymes?
No disrespect, ya'll bitches owe me publishing checks

[Mario] (Lil' Kim)

If I'll tell ya, I'll tell ya now

(Queen Bee, Queen Bee)

Would you keep, just keep on feelin' me

(Wha? What?)

If I tell ya, I'll tell ya how I feel

(If I tell ya how I feel)

Would you keep bringing out the best in me?

Stop stressin' me

[Mario]

Stop wastin' all of your time

Doin' all that rappin', cuttin' or writin'

Don't know that she's the Queen

Why can't you see?

Ya'll should just believe

Everyone's trying to tell you

[Lil' Kim]

If I talk freaky - then that's my business

If I dress freaky - then that's my business

Got hoes praticin' how to spit like this

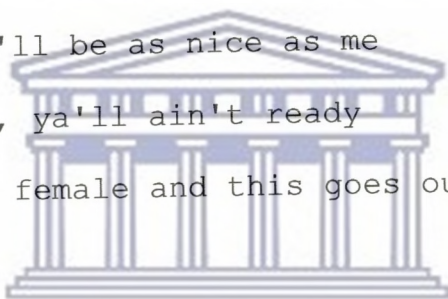
Sexy C-E-O makin' hits like this

HUH?! I know you pissed, but take some advice from me

In five years, you'll be as nice as me

But right now, nah, ya'll ain't ready

I'm a single black female and this goes out to heady



[Mario] (Lil' Kim)

If I'll tell ya, I'll tell ya now

(Queen Bee, Queen Bee)

Would you keep, just keep on feelin' me

(Wha? What?)

If I tell ya, I'll tell ya how I feel

(If I tell ya how I feel)

Would you keep bringing out the best in me?

Stop stressin' me

If I'll tell ya, I'll tell ya now

(Queen Bee, Queen Bee)

Would you keep, just keep on feelin' me

(Wha? What?)

If I tell ya, I'll tell ya how I feel

(If I tell ya how I feel)

Would you keep bringing out the best in me?

Stop stressin' me



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Artist: E.J von Lyric (Elouise Jones)

Album: YAA2000

Song: Now You Know

Verse 1

Say what

Ah, check check,

E.J. von Lyric bringin' you somethin' for the 2 triple 0

Ain't gonna tell yea what the subject matter is though

Figure it out for yea self

Yo, if you're snitch you carry me to help your ass

survive

I create beef between man and wife

Some use me to gain power and status

While others put me in the wrong hands

I could become detrimental to career matters

I leave your whole world shattered

Or your mental battered

But I still Iberians take me for granted

Cause I'm immortal

I evolve with time and become more advance, given chance

I could even be a benefit to politicians

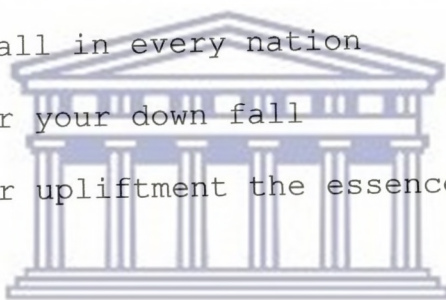
Give them insight to make decisions

Cause me mission is for you to get the bigger picture

From a religious frame of mind I could cause conflict
between leaders, brothers and sisters
Repercussions of my existence could mean death
While others would do anything to hide me
I have a funny way to show my face
Since whole lifestyle had a rapid pace
Hidden I would be a set back of a superior race

Chorus (X2)

I'm information on every radio station
In every book on call in every nation
I am the reason for your down fall
The reason for your upliftment the essence of
communication aha



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Now that you know my name are you familiar with the way
the use to twist me and feed me to my brain
Government agents will destroy if they can not employ me
Reward the one willing to exchange me
I have the power to make four positive while they shed
new light to change the perspective
I am the scientist the teacher the doctor's remedy
And was discover before any dominant clause

Chorus

Verse 3

You better consider me
Diabetes just may me HIV
I get spread around quite easily aha
You can even download me from your PC
Provoke on thought daily
Recreating conversation you can see that
I am essential to your mental
Cause I exist in knowledge overstanding all in general
No matter how you try to ignore me I'm in your face
And I'm the cause of what the world feels defeated aha

Chorus to end



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