

# Hip Hop Meets Music Video: The New Millennium Minstrel Show

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*Back in the 1800s through the early 1900s up to the 1950s, African Americans were defined visually in the minstrel shows that were wildly popular in all areas of society. With a critical look one can say that crass commercialization spearheaded by the rise of music video has done the same to Hip Hop. First, mainstream culture ate up the two pure art forms, graffiti and breaking, then music video turned rapping into a visual form as well, one that has gone on to be used to reflect a whole culture. By dwelling on the visual, the true meaning and message of Hip Hop are ignored, casting practitioners of the culture as mere caricatures in the mainstream. By comparing the work of minstrelsy to Hip Hop music video one can see how commercialization of Hip Hop through music video has bred a new form of minstrel show perpetuating misleading images that are absorbed by mainstream culture clouding outsider knowledge of what really constitutes Hip Hop.*

*A media culture has emerged in which images, sounds, and spectacles help produce the fabric of everyday life, dominating leisure time, shaping political views and social behavior, and providing the materials out of which people forge their very identities*

-Douglas Kellner, 1995

Quickly coming up on its thirtieth birthday, Hip Hop<sup>1</sup> should heed Kellner's words as a warning. As a

culture defined by the voices of a mostly African American community left to be ignored in the South Bronx of New York, Hip Hop must pay careful attention to the changes in American media culture over the past fifteen to twenty years. The rise of music video changed the way the music industry does business and has come to embrace Hip Hop, flooding it onto MTV and into the homes of millions the world over. However this embrace may actually be more of a death grip. By defining specific styles and settings as standard, music video has commoditized Hip Hop and brought about the emergence of frequent imitators claiming those standards as their own. Like the minstrel shows from the 1800s into the 1950s, music video helped define an image of blackness that acts as a badge to be worn. Both black and white artists follow strict visual codes to "be Hip Hop," a direct identity correlation that harkens back to the minstrel shows, only sans the blackface.

## **The Work of Minstrelsy**

From the early days of the antebellum South to well into the 1950s minstrelsy was a part huge part of the American entertainment industry drawing enormous crowds both white and black to the theatre and their own television sets. However there is little innocence to be found in the framing of this entertainment form. Ulterior motives were always at work, shaping

attitudes, constructing public opinion, and creating identity for those it claimed to embrace. Minstrelsy acts as one of the most overt and striking examples of a conscious effort of force-identification. Much of the work of minstrelsy went into the identification of African American people, establishing attitudes that still resonate in today's society. Making use of elements in Southern ante-bellum life, minstrelsy was supposedly based on black experience.<sup>ii</sup> In his book *Tambo and Bones: A History of the American Minstrel Stage*, Carl Wittke explains the origins of Minstrelsy, "The origin of American minstrelsy may be found in the singing and dancing of the slaves of the Southern plantations of ante-bellum days; at least this may be considered its prototype."<sup>iii</sup> Though apparently based on "real-life" experiences of African Americans, minstrelsy grew into a popular form far removed from life on a plantation. Wittke explains that what ultimately became minstrelsy as we know it today was based entirely on second-hand observation of outwardly visual expressions, "From the pathos and humor of the Negroes, their superstitions and their religious fervor, their plaintive and their hilarious melodies, their peculiarities of manner, dress and speech, the white minstrel built his performance."<sup>iv</sup> Perpetuating a representation based on the inherently visual with little regard for a genuine picture of black life, minstrelsy spread a much removed view of black life across the nation, "In the process of adapting this type to the theatre, the stage Negro became quite a different person from the model on which he was formed. More specifically, the plantation type which got into minstrelsy apparently was calculated to give the impression that all

Negroes were lazy, shiftless fellows, careless of the morrow...he always was distinguished by an unusually large mouth and a peculiar kind of broad grin; he dressed in gaudy colors and in a flashy style...this, in the main, was the Negro of the joke-book tradition and more especially of the minstrel tradition and undoubtedly he was a somewhat different individual from the one to be found in real life in the Southern states. But it was this type of darky that the white minstrels strove to imitate or, better stated perhaps, created and perpetuated."<sup>v</sup>

Regardless of the fact that the image being presented was severely altered from the real, maintaining that warped image was paramount to minstrel success. By adorning themselves in the constructed guise of the "plantation darky" black minstrels could become wealthy only at the cost of further perpetuating a skewed image. Shaw states, "Being a minstrel gave an entertainer stature, class, and importance; a measure of financial stability; and, most of all, mobility, an opportunity to travel not only in this country but, at times, throughout the world. The minstrel show afforded black songwriters, singers, musicians, comics, and impersonators the first large-scale opportunity to enter American show business."<sup>vi</sup> In an odd way, authenticity played an important role in minstrel success, but it was an authenticity rooted in the third-hand representation in which minstrelsy functioned. In the 1927 film *The Jazz Singer*<sup>vii</sup> Al Jolson plays a blackface minstrel shunned by his Jewish family. Late in the film, Jolson "blacks-up" in preparation for a performance. After finishing the burnt-cork process, he stares into his dressing room mirror.

Slowly the reflected image changes to that of a black social gathering with much singing and dancing. Then the image reflects a Jewish mass only to return to Jolson's blackened face. This scene seems to suggest that Jolson becomes black, that by putting on the outward trappings, he can be authentic. In *Black Popular Music in America* Arnold Shaw discusses the concept of authenticity in its relationship to the minstrel audience, "Seeking to distinguish their performers from blackface whites, Brooker and Clayton publicized them as men who 'were slaves in Macon' and who 'spent their former lives in bondage.' Critics responded favorably to the claim of authenticity, showering praise on 'the genuine plantation darkies' as 'great delineators of genuine darky life in the South.'"<sup>viii</sup> Here one can see how audiences reacted to the trappings of authenticity. Despite actually being black, these minstrels would be dressed the same, painted up the same as all other blackface minstrels. They're realness was defined solely by marketing and only continued the tradition of the "plantation darky" as a true representation of black life in America as Marian Hannah Winter describes, "The negro performer found that unless he fitted himself into the mold cast for him as typical he could get no work. This represents one facet of a vast attempt at justification of the slave system long propounded-the cliché that plantation life for the Negro had been a joyous lark, that happy, lazy Negroes spent their days dancing, singing, and indulging in childish pranks, with occasional cotton-picking, and that the Negroes were wistfully lonely to be back at said plantations, which they were convinced constituted the happy land of

Dixie. A Negro who had left the plantation or local mill was selected as the butt of ridicule-in the character of the 'dandy nigger'- who squandered his earnings on flashy clothes and scorned his own people."<sup>ix</sup> In addition, location was also vastly important for the success of the minstrel show. Sets were often designed with the most stereotypical places in mind that further helped to situate the minstrel image of blackness. Wittke explains, "The scenic 'sets' for these first parts were fairly stereotyped during the early years of American minstrelsy. Negro cabins by the cotton patch, levees piled high with cotton bales, river boats, and other scenes of the Southland, were popular always, and most appropriate to the kind of performance the original minstrel companies gave."<sup>x</sup> By setting up an identity and location, blackface minstrels could then speak from under a different guise which provided some of the most compelling effects of minstrel performance.

For all its blatant offensive representations, minstrelsy did provide an outlet for social critique, however it was one stunted by the guise of blackface. Anything stated in this form could ultimately be disregarded. Robert Toll states, "From the beginning of minstrelsy, one of the functions of the blackface had been to give the minstrel a position similar to the classic fool. Set apart from the society, believed to be mentally inferior and immature, black characters could express serious criticism without compelling the listener to take them seriously. Through the antics and opinions of these characters, audiences could laugh at some of their own difficulties and anxieties while being assured that someone was more ignorant and worse off than they."<sup>xi</sup> In

this way, minstrelsy served a function of relieving fear for white audiences. By presenting black people as a series of popular stereotypes, white audiences could gloss over black identity without ever needing to find out the truth. Bell Hooks discusses this, "Stereotypes, however inaccurate, are one form of representation. Like fictions, they are created to serve as substitutions, standing in for what is real. They are there not to tell it like it is but to invite and encourage pretense. They are a fantasy, a projection onto the Other that makes them less threatening. Stereotypes abound when there is distance. They are an invention, a pretense that no one knows when the steps that would make real knowing possible cannot be taken—are not allowed."<sup>xii</sup> Minstrelsy can then be viewed as a struggle over white anxiety and as a measure to curtail it. Melvin Ely states, "Two closely allied ways to disarm an adversary—or at least to manage one's fear and resentment of him—are to laugh at him and to love him. To portray the Afro-American male as a lazy, shuffling, watermelon-stealing 'coon', or as a ridiculous imitator of white sophistication, provided an antidote to white men's fear of him."<sup>xiii</sup> By appropriating slave songs into an entertainment medium that would ultimately parody them, the power of those songs and black life in general could be diluted in mainstream knowledge. By laying out how minstrelsy functioned to position African American culture and style, one can begin to notice similarities between the institution of minstrel entertainment and current trends in Hip Hop.

### **Minstrelsy and The Images of Hip Hop Music Video**

Originating from the streets, parks, and gymnasiums of the South Bronx, Hip Hop has survived for nearly thirty years, however, new technologies and entertainment trends in the last twenty to fifteen years have brought a crippling weight to bear on the culture, echoing the stereotypes and misdirection that were prevalent in the time of the minstrel show. For those looking with critical spectacles at the ready, a great rift can be seen as having formed in the realm of Hip Hop authenticity. A commercial direction in Hip Hop music has torn the culture from its roots and threatens to overtake it completely. The factor at the lead of this corporate Hip Hop direction is the music video.

Before the advent of television, from which music video sprang, people were left to their own personal experience to make sense of things. Jerry Mander argues, "Throughout the hundreds of thousands of generations of human existence, whatever we saw with our eyes was concrete and reliable. Experience was directly between us and the natural environment. Nonmediated. Nonprocessed. Not altered by other humans."<sup>xiv</sup> This statement is so important to truly understanding Hip Hop at its origins. Before music video if you were seeing Hip Hop you were at the gymnasium, the block party, the park jam. Just as before the minstrel show if you were seeing black life in the Southern ante-bellum plantation you were there witnessing it. In both these instances, the physical immediacy is important for truly understanding the meaning, music, and styles that came from these areas. However, Mander continues, "Now, with electronic media, our senses are removed a step further from the source. The very images that

we see can be altered and are. They are framed, ripped out of context, edited, re-created, sped up, slowed down and interrupted by other images.<sup>xv</sup> Representations of African Americans as slow-witted “coons” in the minstrel shows reflect this sort of mediation. They weren’t concerned with reality for the most part, merely presenting an entertaining image to their audiences, framing an understandable and acceptable identity for its performers. For this reason the music video shares a certain kinship with the minstrel show when it comes to Hip Hop music videos.

At their essence, Hip Hop and music video are opposites. Early Hip Hop was all about the social gathering, the party, the show. As Greg Dimitriadis explains in *Performing Identity/Performing Culture*, “Hip-Hop began as a situated cultural practice, one dependent on a whole series of artistic activities or competencies. Dance, music, and graffiti were all equally important in helping to sustain the event.”<sup>xvi</sup> Part of the power of Hip Hop lies in the live performance, the energy it exudes, that’s where the real feeling and meaning comes from. However music video nearly killed the concept of the live performance as Banks explains, “The advent of MTV accelerated the labels’ curtailment of their funding of touring as label executives discovered video music could provide broad exposure of their artists at a cost much less than that incurred by live tours. Further, a video clip played on MTV could be viewed by millions of potential record buyers, while live tours might reach several hundred thousand people at best.”<sup>xvii</sup> Like the minstrel shows of yesteryear, music video leeches the power from the music, removing it from its source, its place of origin. Slave songs held little

anti-establishment power being sung by white men in blackface who were essentially mocking them and their music for their own entertainment. Similarly through the mediated control of record executives and video production facilities, the music that results is further removed from the source, in part losing its bite due to censorship and marketing plans. Furthermore, the sheer visual reliance of music video creates a dangerous realm for Hip Hop to venture into. The first elements of Hip Hop to be assimilated into mainstream culture were graffiti and breaking. Both represent visual art forms that could be easily taken out of their anti-establishment contexts and ultimately were. Graffiti drew its power of voice through its illegality, it represented silenced people taking back their identity, shouting out that they were not going to be silenced. Graffiti was then assimilated into mainstream culture showing up in art galleries and on the walls of rich socialites who couldn’t understand the real work being done. Breaking lost its edge too. As a form of expression rooted in battling for street supremacy, when performers at the Olympics started pulling the same moves the battle lost its way. Breakers trained for films not for street battling, which neutralized its meaning. So the two most visual forms of Hip Hop were chewed up and spat out by a public which understood little of what these elements truly had to say. Now with music video the same thing can be seen happening to the music. The focus and economical drive behind music video pushes the music in a visual direction one that can be marketed and sold. A shift has certainly occurred, away from block parties where the music has some

meaning, toward a site of hollow flare and overt identification.

Music video is all about two things, selling an album along with an image, and forming a recognizable identity for the musician. Through “proper” wardrobe, make-up, sets, and flashy editing, a musical act receives their identity as a performer for the millions of people watching stations like MTV. In *Monopoly Television* Jack Banks discusses the identity work of the music video, “The visual images of music videos serve as ‘markers’ that position featured artists within a certain ‘stylistic community’ with its own unique apparel and accessories. The viewer can become a member of a desired style group like rap or grunge by purchasing the consumer products displayed in the music videos associated with a particular community.”<sup>xviii</sup> The result of the process is the formation of musician and music as commodity. Here it is no longer about the music like so many commercial artists claim, but rather the green at the end of the rainbow. MTV has always been at the forefront of music video production and distribution and is mostly responsible for its permanent status as a marketing tool. Banks states, “The channel received so much favorable publicity by 1983 that the conventional wisdom held that video music was no longer an option, but a necessity for commercial success. Record industry executives began to claim that an artist’s song needed an accompanying video clip in order to be a potential hit. Moreover, record labels considered airplay on MTV essential for a video clip to effectively promote an artist.”<sup>xix</sup> An artist is made strictly visual by music video giving them identifiable marks, the right clothes, hair, posse, and setting to cultivate an image

that can be sold. That revenue makes the video an ever so important cog in the music industry’s marketing machine. While this has come to effect all forms of music from country to heavy metal, Hip Hop has suffered greatest under the corporate pressure.

Two major themes upon which Hip Hop was based are identity and location. Hip Hop was started as a way to project the voice of people left to be ignored in the South Bronx to people outside the urban barrier. Emceeing, deejaying, breaking, graffiti all functioned as alternative voices that were used to draw attention to the community, to announce their existence and reclaim their identities as they saw fit, not to be written off as welfare wastes to the American economy. However the work performed by music video takes advantage of Hip Hop’s original voice, severely altering it in the process as can be seen in many Hip Hop music videos of the early to late nineties. Rose states, “Rap video has developed its own style and its own genre conventions. These conventions visualize hip hop style and usually affirm rap’s primary thematic concerns: identity and location.”<sup>xx</sup> Music video has a history of appropriating the very essence behind the work being done in Hip Hop. While by default music video brings “ghetto” imagery into diverse homes making people more aware of Hip Hop’s true location, it also has some serious negative effects. Rose continues, “MTV’s acceptance and gatekeeping of rap music has dramatically increased rap artists’ visibility to black, white, Asian, and Latino teenagers, but it has also inspired antirap censorship groups and fuels the media’s fixation on rap and violence...the return of the ghetto as a central black popular narrative has also

fulfilled national fantasies about the violence and danger that purportedly consume the poorest and most economically fragile communities of color.”<sup>xxi</sup> What audiences are left with is a narrow view of real life at the origin of Hip Hop, much like minstrelsy that had blackface performers singing and dancing in front of a plantation backdrop pining for the “good old days.” The perception being given by those videos does not genuinely suggest the critical analysis that is required if one is to understand the original doctrine of Hip Hop. The imagery directly presents a more dangerous and hardcore image, one easily sold to sofa-rebellion types.<sup>xxii</sup>

Many times the image presented in Hip Hop videos from the mid nineties and on into today is more frightening than anything else. A person once said “the more I saw of Tupac, the less I heard.”<sup>xxiii</sup> This statement really sets up how music video shapes the image of the performer. After joining the Death Row camp, Tupac Shakur was able to release big-budget videos that would see national airplay. The common vision of these videos was one where the rough and rugged<sup>xxiv</sup> was highlighted casting him as a very one-dimensional caricature. In the video for California Love<sup>xxv</sup>, Tupac rides with his crew decked out in post-apocalyptic, *Mad Max*<sup>xxvi</sup> gear and hanging out inside a *Thunderdome*-like structure that sits out in the middle of a desert. Their clothes and location suggests their hard nature, directly pointing out the ability to survive a nuclear holocaust. The video appears to be about being rough and tumble, or at least that’s the lasting image. Yet this characterization was only a single side of Tupac. Shortly after his passing, a video was released for Tupac’s aptly titled Changes.<sup>xxvii</sup> The

video contained still images of his life with emphasis on his days in court which were frequently published by the media but also shots of him in his community, hanging out with local kids, harkening back to the original doctrine of Hip Hop, aiding the community. It was a side of Tupac seldom seen, often overshadowed by the graphic depictions of guns and hardcore gear that are a genre convention in Hip Hop video. In memoriam people got to see a three-dimensional picture of Tupac, the record companies could make more money banking on his death as a stand-up activist than as another dead gang-banger. Unfortunately his real community ties were never truly expressed visually until then.

The control music video wields in the formation and creation of identity has allowed countless outsiders to attempt to sneak into the realm of Hip Hop. The particular expression of an ultra-identifiable persona and location has enabled multiple fakers to step up and ultimately pollute Hip Hop’s waters further. Such was the case with one of the most notorious commercial rap acts, Vanilla Ice as Rose explains, “In other cases, such as that of white rapper Vanilla Ice, the ghetto is a source of fabricated white authenticity. Controversy surrounding Ice, one of rap music’s most commercially successful artists, highlights the significance of ‘ghetto blackness’ as a model of ‘authenticity’ and hipness in rap music...Vanilla Ice’s desire to be a ‘white negro’...to ‘be black’ in order to validate his status as a rapper hints strongly at the degree to which ghetto-blackness is a critical code in rap music.”<sup>xxviii</sup> Not entirely unlike the minstrels of old, by adorning himself in a Miami Hurricanes sweatshirt and

dancing inside a burnt-out building covered with haphazard graffiti sprayed on it in his Ice Ice Baby<sup>xxix</sup> video, it is as if Ice was trying to stake his claim as legitimate. However, his appropriation of style and manner is about as authentic as Al Jolson's blackface hallucination in *The Jazz Singer*. Such displays only further warp the message of Hip Hop.

By identifying their characters as shiftless and lazy, minstrel shows enabled social critique without the audience feeling compelled to take the act seriously. White men donning blackface could make critical statements about society without hurting the structure of the society. Current trends in Hip Hop demonstrate that it is trapped in the same situation. Not entirely unlike the blackface minstrels and Vanilla Ice before him, white rapper Eminem frequently launches verbal tirades in his music shining light on issues such as rape, murder, homophobia, and drug abuse but does so in the guise established by music video for one to "look" Hip Hop. If one were so inclined lines could easily be drawn between Eminem's work and the social critique of the blackface minstrels, white men using a stereotyped black guise to point out problems and worries in their society. Eminem makes statements about such issues only to take them back claiming that he was just kidding and not to be taken seriously. In Kill You<sup>xxx</sup> Eminem rhymes about killing women because they don't mean anything to him, saying he'll drag them in the woods "to paint the forest." Then at songs end he says "I'm just playin ladies, you know I love you." While one can take these songs for the value of brining such ideas as deadly unthinking male aggression into society's open thought, the fact that Eminem takes everything

back stifles the work being done in them. By donning a stereotyped black Hip Hop look to make these statements, it further casts Hip Hop as just a musical genre that can be ignored and in his case specifically, just vulgar misogynist drivel. Thus by casting performers as gun-toting thugs clamoring for cash or uncaring men who think nothing of anyone but themselves, there is no reason for anyone to take them seriously. For people inclined to do so, rappers can be written off as hoodlums with nothing to say. Unfortunately this comes to affect all of Hip Hop, even that which is not strictly commercial.

## Conclusions

The line between authentic Hip Hop and its commercial offshoot grows greyer by the day, continuing to silence the message Hip Hop carried when it was out in the streets and in the local gyms of the South Bronx. After bleeding dry graffiti and breaking, the appropriation of Hip Hop music by mainstream society has been slowly following the same path for over fifteen years. In music video the chief component is the image, far overshadowing all other elements as Lawrence Grossberg describes, "Music video is a billboard announcing a new media economy. The claim that the ratio between sound and vision, as sensorial relations to culture, is changing, is not the same as the common complaint that music video limits the imaginative freedom of its fans. Rather, I want to suggest that the popularity of music video has to be located in a larger context in which visual media images are competing with, if not displacing, music and aural images as the site of salvation and transcendence in rock

culture.”<sup>xxxi</sup> The same idea very much holds true for Hip Hop as well and that is a huge problem. It’s difficult to look beyond the gang-banging and bling-bling stylings that are common conventions in Hip Hop video and see anything but the stereotypical images staring back, those that work on the same level as the watermelon patch and over-elaborated speech patterns that ruled the minstrel stage. As Hip Hop continues so to does the identification cycle. More recently the ghettocentric and overt gangsta images have been replaced by more upscale cash-fueled imagery where rappers now resemble crime bosses rather than street thugs. The general concepts remain the same though; these crime bosses are not to be taken seriously either. By once again donning caricature identities rappers emulate the classic minstrel tradition of the ex-slave that moves into the city only to quickly squander all their money on material items. That figure was made to be laughed at and something similar can be said about the current crime lords of Hip Hop. Maybe if they’d only listened to KRS-One’s Love’s Gonna Get Ya,<sup>xxxii</sup> they’d understand how foolish all that bling-bling makes them look. Even if they have a real message for the Hip Hop community it will only be shaded by their one-dimensional act. Rose states, “Too often, white voyeuristic pleasure of black cultural imagery or such imagery’s role in the performance of ghetto crisis for the news media, are interpreted as their primary value.”<sup>xxxiii</sup> Indeed, ultimately the identity and location are misread and ill-represented effectively robbing Hip Hop of its visual community ties and message. Be it an invading white boy or a directionless black Hip Hopper, the roles that are played are laid out and enforced, for if

one is to make any real money in Hip Hop, they’ve got to bend to music video’s will. Unfortunately none of these roles reflect the parks, gyms, and block parties of Hip Hop’s origins, for they can’t uphold the illusion that is necessary for the New Millennium Minstrel Show.

## Notes

<sup>i</sup> In this essay Hip Hop refers to the culture, the four elements (rapping, dee-jaying, graffiti, and breaking).

<sup>ii</sup> Minstrelsy was based on black life as described by Carl Wittke in *Tambo and Bones*.

<sup>iii</sup> Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones: A History of the American Minstrel Stage*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1968), 6.

<sup>iv</sup> Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones: A History of the American Minstrel Stage*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1968), 7.

<sup>v</sup> Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones: A History of the American Minstrel Stage*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1968), 7-9.

<sup>vi</sup> Arnold Shaw, *Black Popular Music in America*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 27.

<sup>vii</sup> *The Jazz Singer*. Dir. Alan Grosland, Perf. Al Jolson. Film. Warner Brothers, 1927.

<sup>viii</sup> Arnold Shaw, *Black Popular Music in America*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 27.

<sup>ix</sup> Marian Hannah Winter, “Juba and American Minstrelsy.” *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy*. Eds. Annemarie Bean, James V. Hatch, and Brooks McNamara. (London: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), 234.

<sup>x</sup> Carl Wittke, *Tambo and Bones: A History of the American Minstrel Stage*. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1968), 143.

<sup>xi</sup> Robert Toll, “Social Commentary in Late-Nineteenth-Century White Minstrelsy.” *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy*. Eds. Annemarie Bean, James V. Hatch, and Brooks McNamara. (London: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), 87.

<sup>xii</sup> bell hooks, “Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination.” *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*. Ed. Ruth Frankenberg. (London: Duke University Press, 1997), 170.

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<sup>xiii</sup> Melvin Patrick Ely, *The Adventures of Amos 'n Andy: A Social History of an American Phenomenon*. (New York: Maxwell MacMillan International, 1991), 105

<sup>xiv</sup> Jerry Mander, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*. (New York: Quill, 1978), 246.

<sup>xv</sup> Jerry Mander, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*. (New York: Quill, 1978), 248.

<sup>xvi</sup> Greg Dimitriadis, *Performing Identity/Performing Culture*. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2001), 16.

<sup>xvii</sup> Jack Banks, *Monopoly Television: MTV's Quest to Control the Music*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 42-43.

<sup>xviii</sup> Jack Banks, *Monopoly Television: MTV's Quest to Control the Music*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>xix</sup> Jack Banks, *Monopoly Television: MTV's Quest to Control the Music*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 42.

<sup>xx</sup> Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 9-10.

<sup>xxi</sup> Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 11.

<sup>xxii</sup> Those whose ire will be raised by such music but yet never get up off the couch to do anything. Hip Hop music can often inspire activism and yet commercially such efforts may be counter to the economy of the music industry so commercial rap very rarely goes beyond the lyrics.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Quote of a quote provided by Professor Andrew Ryan of George Mason University.

<sup>xxiv</sup> This convention is still common in Hip Hop music video and for many defines what the music is all about.

<sup>xxv</sup> *California Love*. Dir. Hype Williams. 1996.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Refers to the *Mad Max* trilogy of films starring Mel Gibson as an ex-cop attempting to survive in a post-apocalyptic wasteland.

<sup>xxvii</sup> *Changes*. Dir. ?. 1998.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 11-12.

<sup>xxix</sup> *Ice Ice Baby*. Dir.?. 1991.

<sup>xxx</sup> Eminem, "Kill You." *The Marshall Mathers LP*. Interscope Records: Aftermath, 2000.

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<sup>xxxi</sup> Lawrence Grossberg, "The Media Economy of Rock Culture: Cinema, Post-Modernity and Authenticity." *Sound and Vision: The Music Video Reader*. Eds. Simon Frith, Andrew Goodwin, Lawrence Grossberg. (New York: Routledge, 1993), 186.

<sup>xxxii</sup> KRS-One, "Love's Gonna Get Ya." *Criminal Minded*. Boogie Down Productions, 1986.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), 12.