Leaving a Mark on Hip-Hop: A Look into Music and Creative Expression

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Leaving a Mark on Hip-Hop:  
A Look into Music and Creative Expression  
by  
Jameelee Sparrow Ford  

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in  
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
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May 2009  

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies
For over twenty years, Hip-Hop music has shaped the faces, feelings and attitudes of the urban community. Hip-Hop music has turned into something more than just a musical genre. It has surpassed what American society thought music could be. Hip-Hop has turned into a trend of fashion, style, communication and a way of shaping today’s younger generation. Today’s youth, have truly taken on a new aspect of creative expression. The concept of this journal is to express this generation’s feelings on Hip-Hop and how it has influenced them. A creative explosion and revolution is taking place right in front of the American culture. I believe it is important for those who are culturally different to understand that this Hip-Hop trend has affected an entire generation of people from ages 18-25.
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Dates of Approval:

__________________________
Cyndi Burnett
Lecturer

__________________________
Jameelee S. Ford
DEDICATION

To my late Grandma Fannie Belle Sparrow Ford, I love you and I want you to know that I will always remember the great advice you gave me about life and the encouragement that you gave me every step of the way. All that I do is for you.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for leading me to the International Center for Studies in Creativity Department. Without his guidance, I may have never had such a wonderful experience meeting great professors and students through this program.

I also want to thank my “ma” and “daddy” for their support and encouragement throughout my whole life, but mostly importantly over the past two years. Their love and wisdom have always encouraged me to want more out of life.

I want to thank my Master’s Project Professor, Cyndi Burnett for her motherly guidance and reassuring personality. Without her help and support, I may have never rekindled my passion for writing.

To the students that came into the program with me, Diego, Shawn, April, Aaron and Marybeth. Your wonderful personalities have truly made this a wonderful journey for me and I will miss you all as I go off and experience this journey called “life.”

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge “fate”. For this exact moment and place in time has happened for a reason and for that, I thank you.
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Section One
Background to the Project

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to rekindle my love for writing and to incorporate that with my current passion for Hip-Hop music. My intended goal was to write a story focusing on my love for music. Not only did I want to capture my thoughts and feelings about Hip-Hop, but I wanted to get some insight from other people in the urban communities who have the same passion for music and creativity. As a result, I compiled a journal of creative expression pieces in relation to the influence of music on today’s generation of college students.

Description and Background

The inspiration for this Hip-Hop journal came from a book-signing event which took place in late February of 2009. The event centered on a book created for the First Lady Michelle Obama. In this book, there were over 200 poems, letters and reflections from women all across the country expressing their feelings towards the first African-American family in the White House. I thought this book was such a great idea because it gave a diverse group of women the chance to share their feelings and thoughts about such an important time in American history. With this, I knew that I wanted to capture the feelings and thoughts of those who were affected and influenced by the power of Hip-Hop music.

In this journal, I took a number of college students from different cultural organizations on the Buffalo State College campus and asked them to express themselves in regard to the influences that the Hip-Hop culture has had on their creative expression.
The journal contains stories, interviews, songs, artwork and photographs revolving around people’s love for the Hip-Hop culture.

*Rational for Selection*

Not only am I passionate about writing, I am also very passionate about music. I grew up during a time when New York City began this musical genre known as Hip-Hop. When rap was lyrical poetry and R&B music was the voice and feeling of the people. As a young girl, I grew up on Hip-Hip music and it became my passion at the age of three and since then I have not looked back. I have also grown to understand that music, style and dance is the face of the urban community. I want others to know how this Hip-Hop trend has positively affected creative expression in today’s generation of young people. It will allow the world to better understand the cultural differences that the urban community faces when confronted with the ambiguity of Hip-Hop.

*What it Represents Creatively*

I believe the overall project and process has added to the world of creativity. This project has helped me to rekindle my own creative passion for writing and my love for the Hip-Hop culture. This journal also represents the creative outlets of many different students on the Buffalo State College campus. This journal takes a deeper reflection into how music has shaped people’s personalities and their creative expression.

What I have written adds to the world of creativity by exposing a wide-array of people to a culture of music that has influenced a whole generation of people and their creative expression.

My wish is that this journal will encourage and inspire others to express their creativity through any avenue possible.
Section Two
Pertinent Literature

Introduction

This section contains a review of literature that delves into creative expression and the influence of Hip-Hop music on today’s urban generation of college students. The literature selected will give a better understanding of how the urban community’s personalities and lifestyles have been shaped by a genre of music.

Much of the literature that I looked at focused on the beginning stages of the Hip-Hop genre. Many of the stories that I read looked at Hip-Hop as a rebellious outlet that went against what society was doing at the time. Hip-Hop music was about the expression of self-power through music, MCing, graffiti, break dancing and style of dress.

Selected Bibliography


New York, New York: Macmillan.

This book delved into the history of the Hip-Hop movement and how Hip-Hop not only affected the local hang-out spot, but people on a global level from grassroots organizations in Brazil to East African music groups. Hip-Hop started off as an era of empowerment and nonviolence and took a look into a movement that was much more than the black people. It was about understanding and expressing the struggle and politics of the black community.

This story looked at the beginning of Hip-Hop music when it began in the Bronx, New York and talked with some of the pioneers of the Hip-Hop era. It spoke about different stories of how Hip-Hop was about youth rebellion and a generation movement. This book also had interviews from different artists such as Afrika Bambaataa, Chuck D and Ice Cube, all who contributed to the start of the Hip-Hop movement.


This book looked into the struggle of the black community and the crisis that the current Hip-Hop generation is facing. Michael Eric Dyson, who is a strong black political and social advocate for the Hip-Hop culture, looked at how Hip-Hop is considered a cultural art form. Through creative expression he has shed light on the struggle of the black community. The book also identified other rappers such as Jay-Z, Nas and Tupac and the cultural significance that they have on Hip-Hop music and black people.


This book spoke about the Hispanic and black cultures of New York City and how hip-hop music has influenced urban creative expression. Many Hip-Hop art forms such as dance, singing and acting have come from traditional cultural art forms such as Jazz music, blues and African dance. The Hip-Hop culture came from different aspects of black, Hispanic and West Indian cultures.

**Other Sources**

Dyson, M.E. (2004). *That’s the joint! Ch. 7 the culture of hip-hop.* New York, New York:


Section Three
Process Plan

Introduction

This section will look into how my process plan and timeline have changed and developed over time.

The initial part of my planning process was very slow for me because I had difficulty diverging on topic ideas. What slowed my diverging thought process down in the beginning was my lack of incubation time and the need for support from other people. In the beginning, I felt that I needed to work on this process alone. After some time, I realized that I needed to involve people and resources around me. To start in the thinking process, I asked for some help from peers, friends and co-workers, who helped me to begin my own incubation process. After a few days, I was able to develop the idea of music and creative expression from a CRS 635 Change Leadership course discussion forum class. Once I had a concept that I wanted to work with, this gave me the opportunity to converge on ideas for my product topic.

When I first began my concept paper, I had a totally different vision in mind. My first vision for my project was to produce and edit a video documentary about the influence of music on college-age students. I was very excited about this product because it would give me a change to sharpen my computer and technology skills. In the beginning stages of this concept for my product, I was going to interview a number of students on the Buffalo State College campus. I wanted to take footage of different activities, events and programs that dealt with creative expression and Hip-Hop music. As I began to look deeper into my timeline for this product, I realized that I didn’t have full motivation and decided to remove myself from the topic idea until I had a new
insight into the direction that I wanted my project to go. Much of the process that I went through before I changed my topic came with very little incubation time. While I was excited about the topic, I knew that my product needed some more diverging.

For the next few weeks, I didn’t do anything with my timeline because I needed more time for the development of a revised idea. Toward the middle part of this process, I began using my work environment and major-related courses to help develop a product idea for creative expression and Hip-Hop. It wasn’t until the end of February that I went to a book-signing event for two local African-American authors that gave me the motivation that I needed. The two authors put together a journal called *Go, Tell Michelle* (2009), for First Lady Michelle Obama which contained over 200 letters, poems and reflections from a diverse group of women all over the country. Both women were able to put the journal together within less than three months so the First Lady could have a copy after the inauguration of President Barack Obama. This particular event was the defining moment in my process plan because this idea gave me the motivation to do a journal about the love and influence of Hip-Hop on a generation of people. I thought this would be a great idea because it not only gave me a chance to share my love, but it also gave the people around me the chance to express themselves.

After this turning point in my process plan, I went back through and revamped my concept paper to reflect the changes from a video documentary to a journal. I knew that I wanted to stick with music and creative expression, but I also wanted to add my passion for writing into the final product. Once I made the final decision to develop the journal, I went back through and reworked my timeline to reflect the changes and new ideas that I wanted to develop. During this part of the process plan, I mainly focused on the
strengthening solution stage of the CPS process because I had a basic topic in my head even though I knew that I needed to strengthen my product topic to something more workable and passionate for me.

Overall, this entire process has really helped me to bring out my creative ability. The steps that I have taken, since the beginning of my project in January, have encouraged me to use my intuitive insights to bring about the creativity that I’ve always had, but forgot about so long ago. Most importantly, the CPS process and intuitive tools that I have learned helped me greatly throughout this process because they have taught me to be more open-minded and confident in myself and my creative ideas.
**Final Project Timeline**

January
- Diverge on ideas for project
- Converge on topic: Hip-Hop and Creative Expression
- Decide on product result: Hip-Hop documentary from Students on the Buffalo State College campus.
- Generate questions to ask students
- Write Concept Paper
- Research production and design background information
- Find Broadcast students to help in the filming/editing of the documentary

Total hours: 17

February
- Brainstorm on Hip-Hop execute the project
- Diverge on documentary layout
- Write first section of Hip-Hop introduction
- Gain new insight on Hip-Hop modify my product result from a book signing for local Buffalo authors
- Modify product to reflect a Hip-Hop journal, instead of a video documentary
- Re-do concept paper to reflect the product result changes
- Begin writing my story about my love of Hip-Hop music

Total Hours: 20

March
- Research literature around the Hip-Hop Culture and Creative Expression
- Draft letters to students asking them to contribute to my project
- Email Multimedia Department at Buffalo State College to contract a student to sketch a design for the front cover of the journal
- Begin organizing the layout of the journal
- Work on the first three sections of the Master’s Project

Total Hours: 30

April
- Begin sections 4,5,6 of the Master’s project
- Collect student pieces to put into the journal
- Begin constructing the body of the journal
- Send the journal to a possible printing company to have the journal bound in a book format (by the end of April)
- Complete and review all sections of the Master’s Project and final product

Total Hours: 45
May

- Prepare final presentation for Master’s Project CRS 690 class
- Present Master’s Project to the Wednesday night CRS 690 class
- Sign, and hand in complete Master’s Project

Total Hours: 10

Overall Hours: 122 hours
Section Four
Outcomes

Introduction

This section reviews my creative product and the steps that I took to organize the final pieces and outline from my creative expression journal.

Over the past few months, my intended goal was to create a journal that was dedicated to the influence of Hip-Hop music and culture on today’s generation of college students. Overall, I created a journal that had some pieces of artwork, reflection and pictures from other students, but mainly I focused on my love of music and how I have been influenced by Hip-Hop since I was a young child.

When I first began this project, I just knew that I wanted to see how students were exercising their creative expression. After talking with a number of students, I realized that many of them didn’t even recognize how they were influenced by Hip-Hop until I had brought it to their attention. It was really interesting to see how many students had subconsciously expressed themselves through their dress and communication with each other.

Final Product

For my final project, I designed a creative expressions journal called, Leaving my mark on Hip-Hop: A look into music and creative expression (see Appendix C). The journal contains a number of stories, letters, pictures, songs and other pieces from me and other students about the influence of the Hip-Hop culture on our lives. Not only did I ask Buffalo State College students to participate, but I also went into the Buffalo urban community and took numerous pictures that I believed reflected the Hip-Hop culture.
This insert below is part of a short story about my childhood and some of the first memories that I had about Hip-Hop.

Hip-Hop, Hip-Hop. I can remember when I was four years old trying to sing Hip-Hop. At the time, I probably couldn’t even spell Hip-Hop. But that didn’t stop me from surrounding myself with music. I never realized it at the time, but I grew up in an era that changed my culture forever. A time where the Adidas brand was the urban community’s spokes person and everybody had a fresh pair of white tennis shoes. Where colorful sweat suits with Kangoo hats and big black sunglasses made a statement and 10lb boom boxes were man’s shoulder jewelry. A time where high-top fades were the “in” thing and four-knuckle gold rings and ten inch gold chains could be seen from down the block. I remember growing up in a time where music was music and all we had to do was listen and feel the rhythm of the words. I remember a time where girls wore high-top red Reebok sneakers, pony-tails to the side of their heads and large gold hoop-earrings as round as an orange (in my head I’m thinking about LL Cool J’s song *Around the Way Girl*). I remember warm summer nights hanging out on the block, seeing young kids riding on their bikes listening to LL Cool J, Slick-Rick and Doug E. Fresh. I remember family cookouts when we used to listen to Mary J, Janet and Michael. Oh boy did I love Michael, who wouldn’t? Every song he ever had was a hit (Ford, 2009).

This particular passage of my story was the most important to me because this was a time when Hip-Hop was not main stream and the whole world didn’t know who or what Hip-Hop was. For some reason, when I was younger, I felt that Hip-Hop was just mine and no one else’s. This story really brings back great memories of what Hip-Hop was. The next piece is a letter that I wrote to Hip-Hop in regard to my feelings about how Hip-Hop has changed over the years.

Dear Hip-Hop,

It has been twenty years since we first met, and I am still as much in love with you then as I am now. I remember you more than I could remember my school work. No one could quite understand what it was that made me love you so much, but I did. Even now, though you have changed, I can still see that your heart is still the same. You still make me laugh and smile when I think about the old days and the times that we had together. There is so much to you that so many people don’t understand, but it’s okay because your loyal fans do. Even though I have to share you with millions of other people, I will not be selfish because they need to
know who you are and what you have done for the world of music. Your beats, your rhymes, your lyrics have opened up my eyes to what you are about despite what the unknown say. I can even remember the first day we met. My little black radio introduced me to you through the sounds of Michael Jackson, Mary J. and many more who are also in love with you. Can you remember those days when you were still mine, when “they” didn’t have you yet? When you were still true to your soul? I know that you had no other choice but to change because “they” forced you to. It’s okay that some of them have left you behind, but I will never leave your side no matter how much you change. What keeps me going is knowing that, if you and I had never met, I wouldn’t be who I am today. Although you seem so distance now, I know that you will come back around and we will reminisce on the old days when I first fell in love with Hip-Hop.

All my love,
One of your most loyal fans (Ford, 2009).

While I wanted to focus on my writing, I also wanted to add other items into my journal such as pictures of things that were originally created from the Hip-Hop culture such as turn tables for “Djing” and graffiti.

These two pictures represent how music was listened to back when Hip-Hop music began in the late 1970’s and early 80’s (Chang, 2005).
The following pictures are graffiti images of past Hip-Hop icons, Biggie “Big Papa” Smalls and Tupac Shakur. I took these pictures in the heart of the Buffalo City urban community. The graffiti images are a major expression not only for the respect of the Hip-Hop culture, but for the musical artists who gave their lives for the love of Hip-Hop music.

(Appendix C)
Section Five
Key Learning’s

Introduction

This section looks at the progress that I have made over the past few months and describes the growth that I have made within myself and the process of creativity.

During this whole process, I was very nervous about the product that I wanted to create. I was very unsure about what I wanted to create because I didn’t see myself as being a creative person. I had gone through three semesters of creativity classes and I still felt that I didn’t have a creative bone in my body. Although these were my initial feelings, this overall process has truly helped me to find myself and embrace the talents and skills that I have. Ultimately, I have learned that I am creative and I do have the skills to think and develop creatively.

Content-Learning’s

Completing this process really opened up my eyes to a different side of Hip-Hop music and the Hip-Hop culture. When I first began this project, I only really knew about my perceptions of Hip-Hop and how it influenced me most of my life. As I began to ask other students, who were born in New York City, about how they felt, I got a totally different response. Their passions were just as great as mine, but they could really speak about the rap artists, singers and the environment of Hip-Hop because they were in the heart of the urban revolution. It became more obvious to me that Hip-Hop has influenced so many others outside of the urban community. Hip-Hop music was originally meant to unify and connect people from all different backgrounds. Hip-Hop music was a movement for the people and for their voices which weren’t being heard. It was a creative
outlet that allowed young black and Hispanic kids to express themselves through breakdancing, rapping, graffiti writing and so much more. I have learned that the Hip-Hop culture is a part of American culture that was intended to give back to the communities where it was first started. It really encouraged me to see how this generation uses Hip-Hop music and culture to express themselves through drawing, song writing and reflection. The Hip-Hop movement started over 25 years ago and is still a big influence in kids lives today.

Creating this journal helped me to confront my longtime passion for writing. After writing my story about my memories of Hip-Hop growing up, I began to feel the same love for writing that I had more than ten years ago. I realized that I need to write every day no matter what thoughts come to my mind. I have also learned that writing is nothing more than my everyday thoughts on paper and I owe it to myself to keep my passion for writing alive.

Process-Learning’s

When I first began to work on my Master’s Project at the International Creative Studies Department at Buffalo State College in Buffalo, New York, I couldn’t converge on a topic that I had a passion for. I remember my CRS 690 Professor, Cyndi Burnett talking about a project that I was excited about and that would motivate me constantly to work on. When my professor mentioned the world “passion,” in some ways I was embarrassed. While everyone seemed to be working on their own passion, I had nothing. This one particular class brought back empty feelings of not having a passion for over ten years. While sitting at the wood table in the Chase Hall 235 conference room, I couldn’t
remember having a passion at all. Nothing in high school or college sparked my dreams or goals in life. I came to the realization that I may have had to work on a project that I was just content with. These feelings really changed my excitement about my final project. I wanted the spark and passion of my fellow classmates and not until now, was I ever charged with the task of having to express my passion or even think about what really mattered to me in life. In so many ways, it seemed as though fate had brought me to this point in my life where I had no other choice but to focus on me and what I wanted. After a day or so of incubating and diverging, I came to the conclusion that I wanted to incorporate my unknown passion of music into my project. The concept of music came so natural to me that I never thought of it as my passion. When I got this idea in my mind, I was more than excited because now I was going to work on something that I had loved since I was three years old. I told myself that I was going to create a documentary on Hip-Hop music and today’s generation. But through later insights, I realized that I needed to dig deeper into myself and find my true passion that I had as a child.

My final project in my Master’s program in many ways forced me to re-activate memories and feelings of a passion that I had buried away. When confronted with this challenge, I thought my CPS training would fall into place, but it seemed to leave me thoughtless. While I knew that I wanted to focus on my passion for music, I began to have strong feelings about adding something else to my project. I sat down and tried and tried to diverge on ideas for creative products. Although I was in a program geared toward creative expression, I still couldn’t grasp the fact that I could create any product I wanted. Could it be that at this point in my life I was granted sole ownership over my creation? Could my thoughts, feelings and opinions be expressed in any form possible?
While many would say this was a great opportunity to be as creative as I wanted, to me I had no clue where to start. So many times before in my academic career I was never awarded autonomy over my own work and I knew making a final project decision would be a challenge in itself.

Over the next few weeks, I found myself doing a lot of incubating. It wasn’t until I attended my Holistic Approaches to Creative Problem Solving class (CRS 594), that I gained true insight into my Master’s project. This particular class was so important in my decision making process for my project topic that it helped me to realize I am creative and I could use my passion to be more expressive. On the first day of this class, we focused on being more mindful and being in the present with our thoughts and actions. We also looked at allowing ourselves to have intuitive insights. After this class, I began to realize how mindless I had been and how I allowed my thoughts to run wild causing me to miss vital intuitive insights. But on this particular Saturday, I began thinking about my project and about the challenges I was having and it came to me. My professor began talking about passion and wanted to know what sparked my excitement as a child. I could remember telling her with such excitement that I used to love to write and make stories. As a child, I wanted to be an author and that’s all I wanted to do. When these thoughts came back into my mind during this class, I received an insight that said to work on my passion of music with my childhood passion for writing. Before this class, I have never quite paid attention to my insights until now and it was the greatest feeling in the world. The last story that I wrote was when I was 13 years-old. It has been almost eleven years since I put a pen to paper and let my imagination paint a picture of monsters and detectives, witches and pool parties. Eleven years have passed since I told myself that I
was creative and could do and be anything that I wanted. Eleven years since writing gave me an enormous amount of joy and excitement. Eleven years later, I have picked up that pen and let my childhood guide me back to that place that I once loved and wished I had never left. This was my opportunity to make things right with my passion and to welcome writing back into my life. This was my chance to make a pact with myself to never leave nor forsake my love again, to make sure that I would always find the time to write, and love the childhood imagination that I was born with.

While going through this process, much key learnings came from my actual product. When I began to structure the layout of the journal, I saw that this project was more about my passion and love for music. While it was nice to get other people’s perspective on my topic, it came down to the fact that I needed to express more in-depth my love for the Hip-Hop culture. This journal really helped me to realize how important music has been in my life and in the things that I do. When talking with other people and getting their insights into the Hip-Hop culture, I came to the conclusion that Hip-Hop is so engrained into the urban culture and community that people may not realize how they have been affected. Hip-Hop is a way of life, a way of being, and an outlet for the black culture. Hip-Hop is a brand name, a clothing style and a way of communicating that has connected and brought together not only the urban community, but many cultures all over the world.

During this whole experience, I used many different creativity skills that I learned throughout my Master’s program. I combined traditional CPS skills of brainstorming, incubating and converging (strengthening solutions). I used traditional brainstorming to generate options for my project idea. I also involved other people (almost like a resource
group) to help me think of unique ideas that I could use. Along with brainstorming, I allowed for a lot of incubation time because I knew that I needed a well thought out idea that I could support. In the beginning of the process, I felt that I could use traditional converging tools to come to a grounded idea, but later in the process I realized that there was a lot more to this creative process than just converging. With that, I decided to use some other tools and resources that were not formally taught in the Creative Studies program. While going through the process and completing my product, I found myself relying more on holistic tools to Creative Problem Solving (CPS) (Goldberg(2006) and F&B (2008) as cited by Bissett (2008). Different techniques such as proper breathing, mediation and mindfulness allowed me to tap into my own creative ability. The content of my journal came from using different tools that helped me to formulate my product idea. I incorporated different intuitive tools such as Glass of Water (Bissett, 2008), Head, Heart, Gut (Francisco & Burnett, 2008), and Facts, Feelings, Hunches (Personal communication with Cyndi Burnett, 2009). All of these tools relied on me to use my inner thoughts and feelings to determine certain outcomes for my project.

Overall, I thought the process worked well, but there were a few things that I would have done differently. While going through this process, I felt that I had my idea more developed than I did. I became comfortable in the fact that I knew a lot already about the topic and didn’t need as much time to incubate. With that in mind, I learned how a lot of things in my project could have gone differently, if I had initially put more time and energy into my work. I should have given myself more time to promote my project to the students so they would have enough time to incubate and create a piece that
was effective. I should have started the layout of the journal much earlier than I did so that I had enough time to make changes or add items, if needed.
Section Six
Conclusion

Introduction

This section looks at my overall experience and the process I went through in developing a creative product.

Overall, I learned a great deal about myself while going through this project class. In the beginning of this process, I felt very lost because I didn’t know that I had the capabilities or the talent to develop something which was creative. With the help of my professor and the encouragement and support of my classmates, I found confidence to realize that I am creative in my own way. For many people in this program, creativity may come easy to them or they may develop creative skills early on. As for me, I needed to go through this entire program and come almost close to the end to realize that I have learned a lot about myself and my creative skills. I am grateful that I was able to go through this process with its up’s and down’s because now I have a greater appreciation for creativity and the power it has on people’s lives. Not only did I enjoy learning about myself, but I enjoyed going through the process of actually creating my product. It wasn’t until I came into the project class that I realized how I could do anything that I wanted. It brought excitement to me when I found out that I could develop a product based on music and writing. It was really interesting to see people’s reaction when I told them about my product and what I wanted to develop. They had never been asked about influences on their creative expression. It made me feel great to know how I could brainstorm an idea that seemed to be unique in its concept for a Master’s project. I enjoyed going into the urban Buffalo community and taking pictures and talking to people about the Hip-Hop culture. I had the most fun writing a story about growing up and remembering all of the
songs and things I did that were related to Hip-Hop music. I was also intrigued by how other people express themselves through their personal insights into the Hip-Hop culture.

One thing that stood out to me, when I finished this process, was that creativity really works. It’s more about the process than the product because I truly learned a great deal about my creative process in the last few months of my Master’s program.

Next Steps

Because of this project class, I have rekindled my love for writing and I would like to begin writing short stories that could possibly be published. I would like to use my creativity skills to help other students, whether college or younger, find their passions and to guide them in expressing their creativity through any avenue possible. I would like to learn more about Hip-Hop music and travel to different radio stations and music companies in order to incorporate my creativity skills with modern day Hip-Hop music.
References


Appendix A
Concept Paper
Title of Concept Paper:
How Has the Hip-Hop Era Influenced Creative Expression In Today’s Generation?

Name: Jameelee S. Ford          Date Submitted: February 11, 2009

Project Type: To strengthen my talent of nonfictional writing and to develop a personal written documentary on the influence of Hip-Hop on today’s generation.

What Is This Project About?

The purpose of my Master’s Project is to develop a personal, written story that will focus on today’s college generation in the element of a so-called “Hip-Hop” revolution. My written documentary will be presented in the third person and will focus on my life experience with Hip-Hop and those of my generation. I will also be including photos and interviews from Buffalo State College students for my story.

For the last twenty years, Hip-Hop music has shaped the faces, feelings and attitudes of the urban community. Hip-Hop music has turned into something more than just a musical genre. It has surpassed what American society thought music could be. Hip-Hop has turned into a trend of fashion, style, communication and a way of shaping today’s society. Today’s generation has truly taken on a new aspect of creative expression. The concept of this documentary will express this generations feeling on Hip-Hop and how it has influenced them. A creative explosion and revolution is taking place right in front of the American culture. I believe it’s important for those who are culturally different to understand that this Hip-Hop trend has affected an entire generation of people.

Rationale for Choice:

As a young person, I remember finding myself always wanting to write non-fictional stories. I had a very vivid imagination that I always wanted to capture on paper. I believed the power of the pen was one of the most effective ways to express my creativity. Unfortunately, as I grew older and my interests began to change, I found that I was losing my passion for writing. Up until the age of 13, I wanted to be a writer and develop stories like the Box Car Children or Nancy Drew. Now that it is more than ten years later since I wrote my last story, I feel that my Master’s Project will give me a great opportunity to rekindle my passion for writing.

I am very passionate about the content of my project because I am very passionate about music, as well. I grew up during a time when New York City began this musical genre known as Hip-Hop. It was an era when rap was lyrical poetry and R&B music was the
voice and feeling of the people. As a young girl, I grew up on Hip-Hip music and it became my passion at the age of three. Since then, I have not looked back. I have grown to understand that music, style and dance is the face of the urban community. This is what I want others to know: how the Hip-Hop trend has positively affected creative expression in today’s generation of young people. It will allow the world to better understand the cultural differences that the urban community faces when confronted with the ambiguity of Hip-Hop.

What Will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?

As a concluding result of my Master’s Project, I will develop a 20-30 page personal written documentary that will focus on college students in their cultural element of Hip-Hop expressed through music, dance, fashion style and communication.

What Criteria Will You Use to Measure The Effectiveness of Your Achievement?

I would like to determine the success of my written documentary on the completion of my story by my intended deadline. I will have a reading night where I will have a number of students read and fill-out a personal evaluation of my work.

Who Will be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?

The majority of my project will be conducted by me. I will be collecting photos and conducting interviews that will be used to develop my written documentary. My goal for this project is to influence and encourage other generations to develop their style of creative expression through any avenue possible.

When Will This Project Take Place?

I will begin working on collecting photos and developing interview questions for my written story in the beginning of February, 2009. I plan on collecting all content by the end of March 2009, so that I can begin to develop the actual storyline for my written documentary.

Where Will This Project Occur?

Most of my project will take place in areas that I feel are conducive to creativity and my creative process. I will be conducting work in the Buffalo State College Butler Library and at my personal residence in East Amherst, New York. I will also be conducting personal student interviews on the Buffalo State College campus, as well.

Why Is It Important to Do This?
This project is important because it will charge me with the task of rekindling my passion for writing. My project will also strengthen my writing skills for future use in the journalism and marketing fields.

I believe that music is an important part of the American culture. I believe my own personal insight and student interviews will capture a small view of how today’s generation expresses its creativity. I feel as if this story is important because many other cultures don’t understand the current music trend that is taking place. Before, our society was a place where politics, religion and service held more importance. But now, we live in an age where music and entertainment are a prime focus for everyday activities. My goal is to let other people know how music has changed my life, but also the lives of many others. I know that the data that I collect will be relevant and useful and could potentially encourage others to find different avenues to express their creativity.

**Personal Learning Goals:**

- Improve my writing skills
- Improve my communication skills
- To become a more creative person and to fully recognize my creative potential
- To stay focused and organized while collecting data for my story
- To become more mindful of the creative process for my entire project
- To rekindle my passion for creative writing

**How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?**

I plan to use numerous CPS strategies to help me fulfill my vision for my written documentary. The CPS Divergent and Convergent guidelines will be a foundation for the content that I decide to use for my story. I will have incubation time after each section of the story that I write as to make sure that I am going in the direction of my intended goal.

I will conduct numerous interviews from students on the Buffalo State College campus to gain personal insight from pre-determined questions that I have about the Hip-Hop Era. I will also do research in the field of music and creative expression to get more background data on how to connect my storyline to my project title.

Lastly, I will work with the Buffalo State College writing center, so I will effectively develop my creative thoughts on paper.

**Evaluation:**

After completion of my written story, I will have a designated time and place where I have students read my work and fill out a short evaluation form at the end. After the presentation of my story, I will have a debriefing session with the students to get extra data for possible use in the future. I will then base the overall evaluation on the quality of my work by the feedback that I get from the students.
Prepare Project Timeline:

January 26\textsuperscript{th}: Begin to diverge on ideas for project- 2 hours
January 28\textsuperscript{th}: Converge on topic: Hip-Hop and creative expression- 2 hours
February 2\textsuperscript{nd}: Brainstorm ideas on how to execute project- 2 hours
February 6\textsuperscript{th}: Get footage from Student Life event- 4 hours
February 7\textsuperscript{th}: review footage- 1 hour
February 11\textsuperscript{th}: Begin to generate storyline options- 1 hour
February 15\textsuperscript{th}: Begin to write the first section of the story- 3 hours
February 20\textsuperscript{th}: Begin conducting student interviews- 3 hours
February 23\textsuperscript{rd}: Review footage material for use in project- 2 hours
February 24-28\textsuperscript{th}: Continue to collect interview footage- 3 hours
March 1\textsuperscript{st}: Start second section of story- 3 hours
Rest of March: Finish story and incorporate other sources of information into the story- 10 hours
April: Finish editing- 3 hours
April 16\textsuperscript{th}: Final paper ready for viewing. Happy Birthday : )

Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

- Digital Camera
- Buffalo State College Writing Center
- Personal Interviews with Buffalo State College Students
- Google Scholar: Hip-Hop and Creativity,
- Literature:


Kitwana, B. (2003). \textit{The hip-hop generation: Young blacks and the crisis in african-
Appendix B
Memo to Buffalo State College Students
Buffalo State College Students

My name is Jameelee Ford and I am a second-year graduate student at the International Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College. I am currently working on my Master’s Project for my final task leading up to my graduation with a Master’s of Science in Creativity. As a part of my Master’s project, I want to focus on music and creative expression. I want to take a deeper look into Hip-Hop music and the influence that it has on today’s generation of college students.

As part of my project, I am going to create a personal journal of stories, poems and reflections on how Hip-Hop music has affected fashion, technology, communication, etc. In order to complete this journal, I want to include a number of student’s perspectives on this topic. If you could please answer the following questions in any creative form possible, and return to me by April 27, 2009, I would greatly appreciate it. The purpose of my project is to focus on creative expression and there is no wrong way to do this assignment. You can answer the questions directly or write a poem, develop a story, create piece of art work, or hand in photographs (which will be copied and returned), etc. If you would like to submit a piece, and would like to remain anonymous, please let me know.

If you have any questions, I can be contacted at (518) 225-6343 or by email at FordJS46@buffalostate.edu. Thank you in advance for your participation. Your creative piece will be added to my final project where you will be recognized for your work. Two copies of the Master’s Project will be placed in the Buffalo State College Butler Library for review.

How has the Hip-Hop era influenced Creative Expression in today’s generation?

1. When did you fall in love with Hip-Hop?
2. Hip-Hop has become a commodity that sells itself through music, clothes and technology. As a youth in today’s society how has this Hip-Hop trend influenced your creative expression?
3. How important is Hip-Hop to the urban culture?
4. What does President Barack Obama mean to Hip-Hop?
5. How has communication been influenced by Hip-Hop?

** Please include your name, college year, age and where you are from.

** These questions can be answered directly or indirectly, or not answered at all. If the topic of Hip-Hop and creative expression bring you in another direction, please feel free to let your intuition take you in that direction.
Appendix C
Leaving a Mark on Hip-Hop: A Look into Music and Creative Expression
Leaving a Mark on Hip-Hop: A Look into Music and Creative Expression

Created by Jameelee S. Ford
Works by various students

Hip-Hop drawings by
Mindy Zelma
Buffalo State College
Graduate Student
The inspiration for this book came from my love for music and writing. Growing up, I fell in love with Hip-Hop music and have seen the Hip-Hop culture grow over the last 20 plus years. I have such fond memories of the styles and lyrics that once were called the beginnings of Hip-Hop. The perspective of my journal takes a look at how Hip-Hop music has affected me and my creative expression. I also looked at other people and the environments around me and how they have been influenced by Hip-Hop music and the Hip-Hop culture.

The contents of this journal contain pictures, stories, reflections and drawings that are centered around the influence of Hip-Hop music. While this journal is only a small taste of what Hip-Hop has done for this generation of kids, it does represent a larger picture of what Hip-Hop has done for American culture. My goal is to encourage other students to find their creative passions and express them through any avenue possible. I encourage students to talk about their passions for music, writing, dancing, singing or whatever it may be. I want them to express to the world, the activities that influence them to be creative.
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* Hip-Hop expressed through Music
* Hip-Hop expressed through fashion
  * Special Thanks
Chapter 1: I Remember...

Hip-Hop, Hip-Hop. I can remember when I was four years old trying to sing Hip-Hop. At the time, I probably couldn’t even spell Hip-Hop. But that didn’t stop me from surrounding myself with music. I never realized it at the time, but I grew up in an era that changed my culture forever. A time where the Adidas brand was the urban community’s spokes person and everybody had a fresh pair of white tennis shoes. Where colorful sweat suits with Kangoo hats and big black sunglasses made a statement and 10lb boom boxes were man’s shoulder jewelry. A time where high-top fades were the “in” thing and four-knuckle gold rings could be seen from down the block and ten inch gold chains. I remember growing up in a time where music was music and all we had to do was listen and feel the rhythm of the words. I remember a time where girls wore high-top red Reebok sneakers, pony-tails to the side of their heads and large gold hoop-earrings as round as an orange (in my head I’m thinking about LL Cool J’s song Around the Way Girl). I remember warm summer nights hanging out on the block, seeing young kids riding on their bikes listening to LL Cool J, Slick-Rick and Doug E. Fresh. I remember family
cookouts when we used to listen to Mary J, Janet and Michael. Oh boy did I love Michael, who wouldn’t? Every song he ever had was a hit. Vaguely, I can remember when *Thriller* came out; I was about two years old. And even now I can still remember the nightmares I used to get when I would watch his music video when he turned in a scary werewolf. Who knew that these artists were “Hip-Hop” in the making.

Even though I was only a few years old, those days of Hip-Hop, when it was Hip-Hop, I will never forget because it was the best time to grow up. It was Jay-Z, Nas, Biggie Smalls, TuPac, Jodeci, SWV, Escape, NWA, Snoop Dog, H-Town, Boys to Men, Heavy D, Queen Latifah, and even MC Hammer who made some of the greatest music ever to be associated with Hip-Hop. Although some of these names may seem foreign to many, these were all the people that everybody on the block knew and I guess I was lucky enough to know them too.

As a young girl, music just seemed to come to me. My father grew up around music all of his life and played in a Jazz band long into the years after me and my older sister were born. I could vividly remember him telling me about the stories of all the great music that he had in his lifetime and how the Sugar Hill Gang started off this new wave of music now known as “Hip-Hop”. It was the Sugar Hill
Gangs song, *Rapper Delight* that set off a domino effect for the greatest rappers ever.

I could remember listening to music in my room on this tiny black radio with a cassette player. It amazes me now that in 2009 how old a cassette player is, but that was technology back then. And some of the greatest music ever to be heard came from my little black radio. I can even remember thinking I was DJ Jamee on the ones and twos making mixed-tapes off my little black radio. I would ask my dad to take me to Kmart to buy a ten pack of cassette tapes, so I could dub them on my stereo. I used to label the tapes with the themes of the music on them like, R&B mix, Rap mix, Fresh to def mix etc... Granted, today the I-Pod and online music have become the new technology when listening to music, but I will never trade in my cassette tapes for anything in the world.

In so many ways, Hip-Hop quietly crept into my life and truly changed the way that I saw music. I loved it more than I could remember loving anything else. I could remember hearing my older sister tell me, “Can’t we listen to something else?” I told her NO! with a big smile on my face, I couldn’t turn my back on Hip-Hop. It was way too important for me to let go. Hip-Hop to me was like a cold glass of freshly squeezed lemonade on a 90 degree day in
Georgia; it was just something that made me feel better and took the edge off. I need music, like a baby needs a hug when they’re sad. Hip-Hop was everything that I needed when everything else seemed to be too complex. It made me feel like superwoman on top of the world. As though I had some special musical power that nobody else could possess. I still find myself laughing at my mother’s words when I used to be in the kitchen helping her cook and I would be playing the music too loud, “Jamee! Would you please turn that nonsense off, it’s giving me a headache.” Even now, when I come home from school, I still hear her utter those same words. Back then and even now, music was just something that I needed.

It has been almost twenty years since I have fallen in love with Hip-Hop. It has been more than twenty years since a genre of music changed the way the urban community walked, talked and dressed. Even now, Hip-Hop has still changed the way people look at music, fashion and communication. Although music and Hip-Hop have changed, I will never forget the first day I met Hip-Hop and introduced myself.

-September 1989

Chapter two: Summer of ‘92
During my childhood, I spent a lot of time with my extended family. I spent most of my holidays and vacations with my aunts, uncles and cousins on my dad’s side. I loved spending time with them and truly enjoyed the summers when me, my mom, dad and sister would go to Maryland to visit my Aunt Deanna and my oldest cousins Ben and Alyson. I remember having a great time hanging out by the pool and eating fresh crabs from the Bay. But most importantly, I loved being outside listening to my music. Surprisingly enough, my aunt also had a little black radio that she would place out on the patio for us to use. They had the best radio stations in D.C. because they would play my music (which was new school at the time) and play what my parents would call “ol” school music. I guess it was the best of both worlds, because I just loved good music.

One memory that sticks out in my mind during this one particular summer was going into my aunt’s house looking for something to drink and as I began to open the refrigerator I started singing Mary J. Blige’s song You Remind me (1992) from her first album What’s the 411? For some reason that memory stuck in my mind because it reminded me of how in-tune I was with Hip-Hop and how it came so natural to me.
Not only did I grow up with the best of Hip-Hop, but I grew up with the best dances too (Just writing this story brought back a lot of memories that I had forgotten about.) I remember visiting my Aunt Joyce, Uncle Winn and my cousins Shayla and Scott in Westchester, New York. It was the greatest times because me, my sister Aricka and my older cousin Shayla were very close and we liked to do a lot of things together. I remember one night we decided to put on a dance program for our parents and it was the most hilarious thing we had ever done. I don’t know if too many people can remember it now, but we did the running-man whiling reciting a rap that we had all made up. Now that I look back on it, I don’t even know what I was thinking about. But at the time, that was just the power of hip-hop and the influence that music and dance had on my family.

Some of the greatest times that I had with my family were centered on music.

-July 1992
My Reflection of Hip-Hop

Hip-Hop in the 1990’s. Oh what an era. If I could bring back the 90’s I would be such a happier person. When I reflect on Hip-Hop, I find myself contemplating on my first true encounter with it. Hip-Hop and I first met officially when Notorious B.I.G (May God Rest His Soul) came on the scene with the smash hit “Juicy.” Hip-Hop and I have been friends ever since. It was not only music but a voice for the urban community of the world. B.I.G. said it best “Chillen wit my hooligan’s in Brooklyn”. Brooklyn was the place to be when Hip-Hop really took off. I am a Brooklyn baby and Hip-Hop was our life. We were influenced by the culture in numerous ways from fashion, to how we communicate (slang) with each other. It was a popular lifestyle. Fashion will never amount or looked the way it did in the 90’s again. Urban Culture and people used it to express themselves. Jordan’s’, flashy clothing, jerseys, fitted caps, clothes way too big for our waist was the fashion of the 90’s. Fashion was Flashy, Funky, and Fashionable.

Now, when I think about it, we were unified. There was a sense of community within the urban neighborhoods of Brooklyn. In the 90’s, Hip-Hop was a culture that all races and ages could and did connect with. Some may say that the culture of Hip-Hop is dead. I would not actually say that it’s dead, it just needs to be relived. The true essence of Hip-Hop is gone but I saw it come back alive during the 2008 Presidential Campaign. I saw rappers and singers come together and represent for President Obama.
Even though all the legends are gone (B.I.G. and Tupac), Hip-Hop can still come back like it was before and sweep the nation. It will take a lot of time, hard work and patience but it can be done.

I am an 80’s baby raised in the 90’s.
I am and will FOREVER be a true lover of Hip-Hip
I am Hip-Hop

Lamar Timmons-Long
Senior, Buffalo State College
21
Brooklyn, New York
I fell in love with Hip-Hop when I was very little. I remember sitting in the living room of my grandmother’s apartment watching TV and listening to SWV, Ice Cube and NWA just to name a few. Since my uncle was a teen at that time, whatever he was listening to, I was exposed to and I more or less grew into listening to Hip-Hop songs like “Creep”, “Breathe Again”, “Tell Me What You Want from Me”, and “Mama Said Knock You Out”. Listening to those songs makes me wish I was back in the 90’s again because Hip-Hop back then had more meaning, substance but most of all….quality. Just thinking about Hip-Hop music takes me back to the block on West 114 between 7th and 8th Ave in Harlem with the PAL program just hanging out. Everything then was more carefree than it is now.

I feel that Hip-Hop is applied in everything that I do from the way I dress, to the way I speak. It has influenced my whole life in general. Its poetry speaks to me in such volumes that it makes me view the world in a whole other light and perspective from the experience of another whether factual or fictional. I feel that Hip-Hop is an identity of its own, that it has a certain connection with people in one way or another, whether it is commercial or the love of the music in itself. Hip-Hop to me is a culture within itself that has been established early in the game and unfortunately is declining. The reason I say this is because I feel that the music created and made now-a-days is for the money and fame and not for the true love and passion they have for the genre. Only a certain amount
of artists now, who sing, write or produce music that it is well recognized and liked by a vast majority.

It is very important to urban culture because it is a sense of identity to people. Certain people feel that Hip-Hop is their lifestyle. I swear, if Hip-Hop could be in the Census you best to believe that people will circle it because it’s a background that people can identify themselves with. Its influence you can see from clothing, to music and even liquor, which is crazy. We even have Hip-Hop genre dedicated magazines such as Complex and VIBE and these magazines serve as mean for not only leisure but for recording of our history and movement as well.

President Barack Obama is the new revolution to Hip-Hop and all kinds of music in general. Many countries in the world acknowledge Obama for the history he has established in America. Come on, look at how many songs either talk about or refer to Obama:

- Dangerous (Remix)-Kardinal Offishall Feat. Sean Paul and Akon
- My President is Black, My Lambo’s Blue-Young Jeezy
- Barack Obama-Cocoa Tea
- We Need Barack-Mavado

He himself listens to Hip-Hop and that’s how you know how universal Hip-Hop is. It doesn’t matter what race, creed, or background one comes from. I feel that Hip-Hop has a place for everyone even for the people who aren’t avid listeners of it or do not listen to it. Just like Russell Simmons set the foundation for Hip-Hop music, I feel that Obama
whether directly or indirectly, can and will bring another innovation/addition/influence to Hip-Hop whether lyrically, musically or culturally.

It has been influenced in a lot of ways. Slang is in Webster’s dictionary! People in general acknowledge the language and are very well aware of it. You can hear it in a conversation, on the radio, in print and even instant messaging, it is everywhere. Hip-Hop is the language and form of expression and more words/phrases whether cool sounding or mediocre are being created all the time.
A Letter to My First Love

Dear Hip-Hop,

It has been twenty years since we first met and I am still as much in love with you then as I am now. I remember you more than I could remember my school work. No one could quite understand what it was that made me love you so much, but I did. Even now, though you have changed, I can still see that your heart is still the same. You still make me laugh and smile when I think about the old days and the times that we had together. There is so much to you that so many people don’t understand, but it’s okay though your loyal fans do. Even though I have to share you with millions of other people, I will not be selfish because they need to know who you are and what you have done for the world of music. Your beats, your rhymes, your lyrics have opened up my eyes to what you are about despite what the unknown say. I can even remember the first day we met. My little black radio introduced me to you through the sounds of Michael Jackson, Mary J. and many more who are also in love with you. Can you remember those days when you were still mine, when “they” didn’t have you yet? When you were still true to your soul? I know that you had no other choice but to change because “they” forced you to. It’s okay that some of them have left you behind, but I will never leave your side no matter how much you change. What keeps me going is knowing that, if you and I had never met, I wouldn’t be who I am today. Although you seem so distance now, I know that you will come back around and we will reminisce on the old days when I first feel in love with Hip-Hop.

All my love,
One of your most loyal fans

Jameelee Ford

“To me, Hip Hop says, “Come as you are.” We are family. It ain’t about security. It ain’t about bling-bling. It’s ain’t about how much your gun can shoot. It ain’t about $200 sneakers. It is not about me being better than you or you being better than me. It’s about you and me, connecting one to one. That’s why it has universal appeal. It has given people a way to understand their world.”

-DJ Kool Herc
Hip-Hop Expression in the Buffalo Community
It’s Just the Way We Talk....

**HIP-HOP WORDS THAT ARE USED AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION IN THE URBAN COMMUNITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s good?</th>
<th>How are you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holla bac</td>
<td>I will talk to you later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mos Definitely</td>
<td>Yes, of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fo’ Real</td>
<td>Seriously?!?!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa’ Show</td>
<td>Of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say Word</td>
<td>Are you serious?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop playing</td>
<td>Stop kidding around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s What’s up</td>
<td>That’s really good to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bling</td>
<td>Shiny jewelry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Boy</td>
<td>Really good friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balling</td>
<td>Showing off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swagger</td>
<td>Personal Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buggin</td>
<td>Acting out of character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bout It</td>
<td>Your not serious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What you Rocking</td>
<td>What are you wearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stunting 101</td>
<td>Faking what you have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You gets no love</td>
<td>You don’t get any respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-Jameelee Ford

“Hip-Hop took to the streets, the parks, the community centers, block parties. Hip-Hop represented the same freshness of view that drew me to Malcom X.”

- Rapper Kurtis Blow
Hip-Hop Expressed Through Music

Song: ExAFFECT
CD Entitled: Journey

By Terence Wayne
Buffalo State College Student

Lately, I’ve been thinking about you
Wondering if your soul is close or far
Memories of good times, quite a few
You still have a place in my heart, oh

Chorus:
Wanting to see your face right now, so don’t be
a stranger for long. Cause I am hoping and dreaming
of that you running to my arms

Wanting your body close to mine, don’t be afraid to
pass by. (spend some time) Spend some time with an
old friend, even if it’s only for one night

Now and then I find myself day dreaming of those
Sleepless nights we had, we had
Kissing, touching, caressing, loving, we did all
Wondering if we” meet again, though the world is small

Chorus

All I need is a second to turn hours into days, days, days, days
You know all I need is a moment, moment, yea, yea

Rap Verse:

Listen, you on my mind all the time. It’s hard to keep focus.
The kissing, caressing our bodies are soaking, and this is so
Explosive the way I be stroking. I’m turning you over. The sound
of your moaning. Hold up, I gotta pause for a moment. In case you
didn’t notice, you got your boy open. I can’t lie, it only took
one night so ma do me a favor, don’t be a stranger. You know
the location, I’ll be right here. Let me make this clear you ain’t gotta
be scared. Sweetheart, I want your mind to be worry free. I can’t
wait any longer, would you hurry please. I am so messed up that imam
need therapy or they gonna have to bury me. Listen to this part
me without you, I can’t live with my heart. The bottle is on ice, so I’m
ready when you are.
Turntables were used during the late 1970's and early 80's when Hip-Hop was first born. Kids in New York City would have competitions to see who the best turntable DJ was.

Modern day DJ's still use turntables to provide music for events and parties.

“Hip-Hop, like the black musical oxygen that preceded it—blues, gospel, jazz, soul—cannot be looked at in a vacuum because the artists owe their lives to the context of their births.”

-Rapper Kurtis Blow
On April 25, 2009, the Fashion Student Association (FSA) hosted a fashion show with the theme “Urban Decay”. During this fashion show students created outfits that expressed urban style and elegance.

The use of graffiti is used to show the essence of urban life in modern day fashion.
Special Thanks
(to the Buffalo State College students who contributed to this journal)

Ricza Lopez
Lamar Timmons-Long
Terence Wayne
Mindy Zelma
Jarrel Lyon
Maisha Drayton