Damaged Petals and Tenacity: Values Expressed in Fourth Generation Rap

by

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ABSTRACT

Employing ethnographic content analysis of 110 top Hip-Hop songs of 2004-2014 from Billboard and BET awards, this study investigated the most popular value themes of 4th generation Hip-Hop music and compared the messages of female and male rap artists. The 12 most frequently referenced messages included: 1) Celebration of Personal Success (77%), 2) Urban Consciousness, Identity, and Pride (68.8%), 3) Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power (62.1%), 4) Recreational Drug Use (54.9%), 5) Ready and Willing to Become Violent (48.8%), 6) Sexual Objectification (48.2%), 7) Reappropriation of Stigma Labels (36.4%), 8) Drive and Ambition (28.5%), 9) Self-Objectification (28.5%), 10) Struggle and Resilience (20%), 11) Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex (15.1%), and 12) Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources (10.3%). Male and female rap artists expressed similar messages. However, female rap artists were more likely to reappropriate stigma labels, promote self-objectifying lyrics, and depict themselves as providing sex in exchange for resources in their lyrics than were male rap artists. Male rap artists were more likely to sexually objectify others in their lyrics and depict themselves as providing resources in exchange for sex than were their female counterparts. Implications for counseling and suggestions for future research are discussed.

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Introduction

Hip-Hop culture and music originated in the popular block parties of the 1970s in the Bronx, NY (Powell, 1991; Remes, 1991; Rose, 1994). This cultural phenomenon was originally produced and consumed mainly by Latino and African American urban youth (Allen, 2005; Ayazi-Hashjin, 1999; Ciardiello, 2003; Kitwana, 2002). Hip-Hop music has become synonymous with rap, thus I will use the terms interchangeably throughout this text. Rapping is the act of speaking lyrics in rhyme over instrumental or Hip-Hop music (Remes, 1991; Richardson & Scott, 2002). The term Hip-Hop can be used to describe the urban street culture of marginalized youth based on the "core four" elements of rapping, break dancing, DJing, and graffiti art (Alridge & Stewart, 2005; Hager, 1984). As Hip-Hop music rose in popularity during the 1980s and 1990s, it was included in the *Billboard* tracking system. By the early 1990s, Hip-Hop music became one of the most popular and highest selling genres of music with Americans purchasing over $1.8 billion worth of rap music by the year 2000 (Rose, 2001). Rap music transitioned from a small subculture genre in NY to an international genre reaching millions of fans in over 75 countries, selling roughly $10 billion dollars in luxury and trend goods a year and representing $780 billion dollars of purchasing power in the United States alone (Chang & Watkins, 2007). It is undeniable that Hip-Hop culture and Rap music have become an influential cultural phenomenon.

Rap music lyrics and themes are widely controversial. On the broadest level, disagreement often centers on the explicit content of rap lyrics and the young potentially impressionable audience who is exposed to the messages within the lyrics. More specifically, critics (Dixon et al., 2009; Herd, 2008; Herd, 2009; Kubrin, 2005; Weitzer &

Kubrin, 2009) are concerned with the misogynistic, violent, substance use, and crime-glorifying content present in some Rap music. Rap advocates (Lightstone, 2012; McDonnell, 1992; Travis Jr., 2013; Tyson et al., 2012) celebrate the empowering qualities of the music as a communication medium for historically marginalized and oppressed populations and its successful use as a pedagogical technique. Further debate centers on whether the content of Rap music simply reflects or actually influences values, behaviors, and attitudes. The messages included in music can reflect as well as influence the values and worldview of its listeners. Due to the widespread appeal of Rap music, it is important to understand the messages contained in the most popular lyrics in order to comprehend more fully the values and worldview shared by its listeners. That is the goal of this study. In the following review I will first review the literature on the messages conveyed in popular music during the past half-century. Then I will describe Hip-Hop culture and music. This will be followed by a summary of the value messages found within Hip-Hop and Rap songs. I will then discuss the themes found in female rap artists' music. Finally, the review section will end with the purpose and rationale of the study.

Themes in Popular Music

Content analysis of popular music forms have produced literature that is insightful to the lives of the performers and consumers. Ostlund and Kinnier (1997) content analyzed four decades of popular music from the 1950s through the 1980s. They found that 73% of the top 25 songs across all decades focused on the theme of romantic love. The authors recommended that future research analyze and compare other decades of genres or subcategories of popular music as well. Similarly, Van Sickel (2005) conducted a thematic content analysis of the No. 1 country songs from 1960 through the year 2000.

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Van Sickel reported that the majority of country songs in his analysis dealt with interpersonal problems, romantic love, marital relationships, and freedom. Further he found that contrary to perceptions of commercialized country music, very few of the songs he reviewed were political or advanced concepts of religion, conservative politics, male dominance, or patriotism.

Thematic analysis of popular music has provided information on the experience of substance use. For example, one comprehensive study of popular music focused on messages regarding substance use, motivations for use, and the consequences of use in the top *Billboard* songs of 2005 (Primack et al., 2008). The authors noted that 41% of the songs referred to the use of illegal and legal substances. Alcohol was the substance most often mentioned, followed by marijuana. Findings based on genre revealed that Rap music referred to substance use more frequently than all other genres included in the study (Primack et al., 2008). The most common motivations presented for substance use in Rap music included: peer/social pressure, desire for sexual encounters, and coping with financial troubles. While substance use was depicted as an emotional coping tool more frequently in rock, pop, and country music than in R&B/Hip-Hop music. Similarly, motivations for substance use also varied by genre, with desire for sexual encounters and financial troubles mentioned most frequently in R&B/Hip-Hop music and a pattern of addiction most frequently represented in rock songs. Perhaps most importantly, Primack et al. (2008) examined the consequences of substance use across genres; findings revealed that positive consequences were promoted in 48% of the total songs with only 16% of the complete sample documenting the negative consequences of substance use.

Analysis of popular music lyrical content has also been used to investigate issues regarding sexualization of women and shifts in permissive attitudes. In 2007 the American Psychological Association urged researchers to investigate the sexualization of women in media. Hall, West, and Hill (2012) responded to that call by examining this sexualization in popular music lyrics in the top *Billboard Hot 100* charts for the ending year of six decades spanning from 1959 through 2009 (e.g., 1959, 1969, 1979, etc.). Hall et al. (2012) found racial differences in sexual references. Non-White artists produced significantly more degrading and sexual lyrics referring more frequently to the act of giving/receiving sexual activity, sexual responsiveness, penile-vaginal sex, and oral sex across the six decades. In contrast, White artists included more references to hugging, embracing, and kissing behaviors in their music. Hall et al. (2012) noted that the more sexually explicit lyrical content of non-White artists may reflect the historically hypersexualized stereotypes under which non-White's are perceived and the higher frequency of media consumption by Black and Hispanic youth that might create, and reinforce, hypersexual sociocultural norms.

Similarly, Madanikia and Bartholomew (2014) examined themes of love and lust in popular music in the top 40 songs of the *Billboard Year End Hot Top 100* singles charts. The authors examined the charts in 5 year increments from 1971 through 2011 (e.g., 1971, 1976, 1981, etc.) comparing artist gender and musical genre. The analysis revealed a decrease in "love" themes over the 40 year period. Love and lust themes were distinguished based on how interrelated the themes were with one other, thus, love themes represented messages mostly focused on love and caring but were also inclusive of love messages that expressed sexual desire. Love only themes included only messages

focused on caring and romance without any mention of sexual desire; this distinction was also applied to the lust and lust only themes (Madanikia & Bartholomew, 2014). Hip-Hop music was associated with fewer love themes (24% vs. 67%), fewer love-only themes (i.e., themes absent of lust; 5% vs. 46%), more lust themes (74% vs. 34%) and more lust-only themes (55% vs. 14%) than the combined respective percentages of all other genres examined (i.e., pop, rock, dance, country, alternative, rock, R&B/soul, and other) . Contrastingly, Rock music was found to include fewer general-lust themes (25% vs. 42%) and lust only themes (6% vs. 22%) than the other genres combined. Additionally the comparison by year revealed a higher representation of love-only themes from the 1970s through the 1990s, a progression post 1990 towards combined themes of love and lust, and an increase in lust-only (i.e., absence of interrelated love themes) themes after the year 2001. Madanikia and Bartholomew (2014) interpret these findings as a potential reflection of the increasing cultural acceptance of casual non-monogamous extramarital sex.

Hip-Hop Culture and Rap music

Hip-Hop culture began in the 1970s in Bronx, NY from urban Latino and African American youth (Allen, 2005; Ayazi-Hashjin, 1999; Ciardiello, 2003; Kitwana, 2002). Hoch (2006, p. 349) explains the multi-facetted social conditions that were present at the time,

"The end of the Civil Rights Movement in the late 1960s, the turmoil of the militarized political movements (Black Panthers, Brown Berets, Young Lords, etc.), urban blight and the advent of Reaganomics, the digital age, an exploding prison population, epidemics of crack, guns and AIDS—all of these forces converged to create a socioeconomic landscape unlike any other in history. That situation, combined with New York's inner-city demographics—Southern blacks living alongside Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Jamaicans and a handful of working-poor whites, all of whom drew upon

both inherited and appropriated cultures in the face of urban decay and accelerated technology— created a legacy of art forms and language that would wind up being inherited by all races, colors and classes around the world."

Hoch (2006) captures the urban climate that created a community for expression during the post-industrial era of mainly low-income and poverty stricken youth. The new alternative youth culture that was forming included elements of the larger African American and African cultures (Floyd, 1995; Remes, 1991; Rose, 1994; Stapleton, 1998; Stephens, 1991). Two key elements relate to African American culture; 'playing the dozens' (Powell, 1991) and a 'tell it like it is' protest style against social injustice (Remes, 1991). The former refers to a tradition showcasing verbal skill and superiority in the form of creating the best insult toward a verbal sparring partner, and its influence is showcased when rappers engage in "battling or freestyle competitions." The protest style in Rap music mirrors Negro folksongs and spirituals' focus on suffering, spirituality, and hopes for freedom and describes the Black experience. Lastly, the narration of stories and history through the use of entertaining spoken and sung word emulates the role of griots in African communities (Fernando, 1994). Griots were poets, oral historians, and storytellers in West African cultures (Powell, 1991). They served many roles in their communities including composing music, educating others, serving as ambassadors, or advising. Kuwahara (1992) argues that rappers are urban griots, who disseminate critical information about young Black identity through their lyrics on social issues. Further, rappers hold respected positions in their communities for their oral skill and knowledge (Fernando, 1994).

The core components of Hip-Hop culture are breaking (break dancing), emceeing (the act of rapping), graffiti art, and djing (the mixing and scratching of recorded audio),

otherwise referred to as BEGD (Allen, 2005; Ayazi-Hashjin, 1999). Additions to these "core four" include beat boxing (the creation of musical sounds with one's voice), street fashion, street language, street knowledge, and street entrepreneurialism. The expanded nine elements are also represented by the acronym BEGDBFLKE (KRS-One, 2000). One of the most controversial components of Hip-Hop culture is rapping or emceeing and its corresponding product—Rap music. The act of rapping can be described as a fluent, lively speech, marked by personal style that represents a rhyming street talk between speech and song that is normally spoken with minimal musical accompaniment (Remes, 1991). Rapping is particularly tied to the experience of "street life" representing a space outside of school, church, and home where youth learn techniques to face the obstacles of life through their interactions with friends and enemies under minimal control of adults and authorities (Remes, 1991). Remes (1991) explains three primary and two secondary functions of rap. Rap's primary functions include: 1) an initial attempt to redirect gang related violence during the mid-1970s through a focus on development of musical skill, 2) an avenue through which youth can escape the ghetto through the money they can make from the art form, and 3) a position in the Black community through which they can communicate grievances and warnings to their fellow members. The secondary functions of rap include: 1) an expressive function that expresses style, personality, identity, and individuality, and 2) a directive function that uses rap lyrics to inform and move people towards action.

Values Expressed in Rap music

Kubrin (2005a) content analyzed 403 songs from platinum selling rap albums from 1992-2000 in order to examine the relationship between the "street code" and rap

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lyrics. He found respect (68% of the songs), violence (65% of the songs), and material wealth (58% of the songs) were the most prevalent themes present in rap lyrics. The two most espoused functions of violent imagery in rap lyrics were: 1) to establish social identity and reputation, and 2) to exert social control. Kurbin explained how themes regarding violent social identities often include names for their violent personas (e.g., assassins, mercenary soldiers, killas, etc.), descriptions of rapper's past violent acts and violent potential, references to mental instability that indicates dangerousness, and the ownership or access to guns that can be used to commit violence. Additionally, Kurbin noted that violence is included in lyrics as a form of social control. This control is mainly harnessed by expressing disapproval or punishment for being challenged by others (i.e., disrespect), when one's family or friends have been victimized, in order to ward off personal victimization, and/or for "snitching" (i.e., cooperating with the police). Kurbin (2005a) argued that rap lyrics, "Provide an implicit recipe for how to create a violent, but viable, street identity" (p. 372) as well as justification for and prescriptions for violence when the "street code" is violated.

Herd (2009) investigated changes in violence depicted in rap lyrics from 1979-1997. She noted an increase in violence from 27% of songs from 1979-1984 to 60% of songs from 1994-1997. Over the study period, positive portrayals of violence increased and negative portrayals decreased, from 0 to 45% and 50 to 13% respectively. Glamour and wealth became increasingly associated with violence (from 6 to 21 %). Further, between 1979 and 1997 violence became increasingly linked with gang life; 93% of gangster rap lyrics in the sample contained references to violence. Herd (2009) interpreted the findings within the context of the structural conditions of the ghettos (e.g.,

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decreased economic opportunities, oppressive social conditions, drug trade/ war on drugs, police brutality, etc.) and the music industry's promotion of violent rap music in order to obtain popularity and increase sales.

Hunnicutt and Andrews (2009) analyzed rap songs topping the *Billboard* charts from 1989-2000 for references to homicide. In their review of 329 songs nearly one third of the sample contained references to homicide. Comparisons between the percentage of references to homicide between the first three-year interval (1989-1991) and the last three-year interval (1998-2000) revealed an increasing trend from 29% to 42%. Three categories captured the majority of references to homicide: 1) the glorification of killing, 2) moralizing tales about the damage caused by death and the need for societal change, and/or 3) homicide as a metaphor for superior rap skills. Some rappers glorified and normalized homicide as a form of obtaining and maintaining respect. This method of managing confrontation was referenced almost exclusively in relation to conflict with other men. Conversely, cautionary tales of homicide included eulogies of lost friends and family members, messages against gang violence, and emphasized death as a consequence of a criminal lifestyle. Additionally, the use of homicidal lyrics to represent non homicidal characteristics and talents was observed. Metaphors for rap skill fused lyrical skill and violence together representing the winner of a rap battle as having "killed" or "murdered" his competition. Some rappers used the metaphor as an alternative to actual violence stating they would rather let the "rhyme hit them". In a separate study, Herd (2009) found that the relationship between violence and drugs in Rap music lyrics from 1979-1997 increased fivefold---from 6 to 30 percent and songs with drug references were more than twice as likely to contain violent lyrics when compared to other songs.

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Indeed, drug and substance use is a substantial theme in Rap music. Herd (2008) examined the changing role of drug use in rap lyrics from 1979-1997. During the study period, a six-fold increase of drug references was observed, from 11% in 1979 to 69% in 1993. Marijuana was the most referenced drug (69%) followed by cocaine (32%). Herd (2008) also found that the lyrics reflected an important trend, with references of marijuana more than doubling (33-82%) and cocaine references decreasing by nearly half (47-25%) from 1979-1997. Attitudes surrounding drug use reflected in Rap music became increasingly positive (16-58%) and less negative (68-25%) over the same time period. Additionally, Herd (2008) examined references to consequences of drug use in rap lyrics finding positive consequences (e.g., increased creativity, induced relaxation, economic gain through the sale of drugs, sexual activity, sociability, etc.) and negative consequences (e.g., addiction to drugs, health complications due to use, and criminal justice problems stemming from drug involvement) were represented with equal frequency (between 28-30%). Lastly, Herd (2008) found the increase in gangster and brag rap along with the decline in party and political/cultural rap over the time period significantly predicted drug references.

Kubrin (2005b) examined 403 rap songs from platinum selling albums from 1992-2000 and documented themes of nihilism. He found that nihilism was present in 25% of the songs and was discussed throughout the entire song not just in passing. Further, he noted that the theme of nihilism consisted of three subthemes: 1) bleak surroundings with little hope for future, 2) experiences of pervasive violence in the ghetto, and 3) a preoccupation with death and dying. Lyrics referencing the growing poverty and limited opportunities available in the ghetto describe a need to "hustle[34*]" or "do dirt" (e.g., sell

drugs, steal, etc.) in order to make a decent living. The prevalence of violence and death is represented in many rap lyrics through the honoring of lost loved ones. In addition to dedicating songs, rappers also share memories of the people they have lost and reveal information about how they cope with the loss and despair (e.g., drugs, alcohol, violent retaliation, spirituality, fantasizing about a better life, etc.). Further, Kubrin (2005b) noted a preoccupation with death and dying present in the nihilistic themes of rap lyrics. Paranoia and insecurity plague those who feel death approaching, and an acceptance and welcoming of death are expressed as a reprieve from the living conditions of the ghetto. Death is perceived as inextricable from street life, and/or a fearlessness of death promotes a tough image.

Much commentary has been made in the public media regarding misogyny and sexism in rap lyrics; however, few have empirically analyzed the phenomena. Weitzer and Kubrin (2009) systemically investigated the misogynistic portrayal of women in a representative sample of 403 rap songs of platinum albums from 1992-2000. Contrary to the critiques of pervasive misogyny in Rap music, the authors found that 22% of the song lyrics encouraged, condoned, objectified, exploited, or victimized women. In reviewing the nature and intensity of the misogynistic lyrics, five themes emerged: 1) derogatory naming and shaming of women (49%), 2) sexual objectification of women (67%), 3) distrust of women (47%), 4) legitimation of violence against women (18%), and 5) celebration of prostitution and pimping (20%). Wietzer and Kubrin (2009) interpreted the misogynistic rap content in the context of critical social influences: societal gender relations that promote male supremacy and resist feminism, the music industry's demand for and promotion of hardcore and provocative lyrics, and local neighborhood conditions

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where poor marginalized Black men lack conventional institutional avenues to assert their masculinity and win respect other than through violence and the sexual exploitation of women. Similarly, Armstrong (2001) reported 22% of lyrics in gangsta rap music contained violent and misogynistic themes from 1987 through 1993. Violent misogynistic themes in his sample consisted most frequently of assault (50%), murder (31%), and rape (11%); least frequent were references of rape and murder combined (7%). Armstrong (2001) interpreted the results as gangsta rap music's (music promoting gangster ideology) similarity to other European-American popular music's contribution to patriarchal and male hegemony as the genre is an almost exclusively male domain.

References to relationships with friends and family members provide a more human representation of rap artists while also explaining some rappers' motivations for capitalistic pursuits. Oware (2011b) analyzed the lyrics of the top 20 platinum selling rap albums of 2004-2009 for content regarding family relationships. Of the 391 songs reviewed, themes regarding marriage and family were the most referenced (13%), followed by references to their biological mothers (9%), biological fathers (8%), their own children (7%), and their babies' mother (4%). References regarding marriage and family were dominated by the value of placing family above unstable friendship and providing financially for one's family (Oware, 2011b). Similarly, references to rappers' mothers included a desire and a sense of obligation to protect, financially care for, spoil, and repay their mothers for the harsh circumstances she suffered during their upbringing. Fathers were not portrayed as overwhelmingly positive as mothers. Both positive and negative references were made regarding involved and absent fathers. Conversely, rappers' references to the mothers of their own children (i.e., baby mamas) were mainly

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negative. They included portrayals of women interested in child support only for their own financial gain and instances of domestic violence between the estranged lovers. References to their own children, often referred to as "my seed", were positive and included an unrelenting dedication to their financial care and stability even if it meant engaging in illegal activity or risking their lives. This sensitivity is rarely discussed in the critiques of rap lyrics; it is a notable addition to the literature regarding interpersonal relationships in Hip-Hop culture and it adds a more nuanced perspective of the male rapper persona. Indeed, in a separate study, Oware (2011a) examined references to positive same-sex platonic bonds (i.e., homosociality) in 25 top selling albums of Black male rap artists. The author's analysis of 478 songs revealed that 37% of the songs depicted male comradery in at least one of the following ways: designating friends as family members, sharing their obtained resources (e.g., money, success, fame, lifestyle, etc.) with their friends, and lamenting the loss of friends to incarceration or death. Such representations are a departure from the normal "hard[30*]" and hyper masculine stereotypes associated with rappers.

According to McLeod (1999), authenticity is an important value of cultures, like Hip-Hop culture, that are threatened with assimilation by larger mainstream cultures. McLeod's analysis of the concept of authenticity in over 800 claims included a variety of mediums where the discourse of authenticity and hip-hop music occurred (e.g., Hip-Hop songs over a 6 year period, Hip-Hop magazines, internet discussion boards, interviews with Hip-Hop artists and insiders, etc.). He identified six semantic dimensions of authenticity. One dimension held a social-psychological focus on the value of individualism and the disapproval of conformity. The racial dimension equated the core

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of Hip-Hop culture to the Black and not the White community. A political-economic dimension pitted the street credibility of independently produced music against the commercialization of rap. Another dimension used gender-sexual terms to distinguish individuals as soft (i.e., representing undesirable feminine attributes) or hard[30*] (i.e., representing desirable male attributes) including heterosexual and homosexual references. The social-locational dimension identified authentic individuals as from "the street" or representative of their original community versus distancing oneself from one's community (e.g., representing the suburbs, selling their music to primarily White audiences). Lastly, McLeod (1999) identified a dimension of authenticity concerned with the purity and preservation of Hip-Hop culture (e.g., the old school) versus its dilution (e.g., mainstream commercialized music). Overall, authenticity in Hip-Hop culture was depicted as individuals who do not conform but stay true to themselves, represent the Black community, produce underground or non-commercialized music, represent desirable male attributes and heterosexuality, identify with the street urban community from which they came, and are knowledgeable about the core components and roots of Hip-Hop music and its traditions.

Messages from Female Rap Artists

Phillips, Reddick-Morgan, and Stephens (2005) examined feminism and womanism themes in rap lyrics of female rappers from 1976-2004. The authors provided qualitative examples of the themes they felt most represented the intersection between female rap artists' lyrics and feministic/womanistic messages. The three discursive strands selected to represent female rapper's dual oppositionality against sexism and against racism, classism, and raced sexism that affect both women and men of color were:

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1) defensive responses aimed toward men (e.g., demanding respect for women), 2), self-help, solidarity with, and empowerment messages for women, and 3) solidarity and defense of Black men against society at large (Phillips et al., 2005). Lyrics aimed at defending women from sexist assaults include attempts to restore respect for women through playful taunting, fantasies of revenge, and violent vigilante acts of justice against male perpetrators of violence and exploitation of women. Female empowerment messages contain critiques of behaviors (committed by others as well as women themselves) that allow for the continued oppression and disrespect of women as well as sisterly messages of inspiration and solidarity through common female struggles (e.g., domestic violence, experiences of disrespect, degradation of women, unfair beauty standards, etc.). Finally, solidarity and defense of Black men against societal oppression include celebrations of Black men regardless of financial status and/or involvement with criminal activity, willingness to help men in dangerous and illegal situations, and an unrelenting loyalty and ally in Black men's fight "against the system". However, Phillips et al. (2005) did note that significant variation existed amongst consciousness and activism employed by female rappers along the three discourses mentioned. Meaning female rappers varied greatly regarding the level of "consciousness" and empowerment they used in their lyrics.

Oware (2007) examined 44 songs by female rap artists topping the *Billboard* Top 100 and the *Billboard* Rhythm and Blues/Hip-Hop Charts during 1992-2000. The author found similarities between male and female artist messages including the use of bravado, alcohol and drug use, and verbally assaulting (i.e., dissin', signifying) perceived competitors. The braggadocio (i.e., bravado) of female rappers was present in each of the

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44 songs reviewed and invoked images of attractive, desirable, women who possessed

material objects others in their community could not obtain (e.g., designer clothing,

jewelry, luxury vehicles, etc.). On average each song reviewed contained 1.5 drug (e.g.,

marijuana) and alcohol (e.g., Hennessy) references. Female rap artists included

approximately three or less disses in their music aimed toward male and female rappers

alike. Also, similar to their male counterpart's misogynistic lyrics, the female rappers in

the sample included lyrics that were self-objectifying, self-exploitive, and derogatory and

demeaning to women. Female sexuality was presented as overt and under the will and

control of the female rapper, vulgar and graphic representation of the pleasure gained

from sexual exchange serve to combat hegemonic discourse that silences women's

sexuality and does not allow them to derive sexual pleasure. A derogatory term for

women (bitch) was found in the majority of the songs sampled; however, some female

rappers also used the word to represent a no-nonsense strong positive woman and a

woman who has superior lyrical and sexual skill. This reappropriation of the word bitch

is similar to the reclamation of the word nigga in male rap artists' lyrics. Reappropriation

is a process by which, " an ostracized group revalues an externally imposed negative

label or symbol by self-consciously referring to itself in terms of that label or symbol

(Galinsky, Hugenber, Grrom, & Bodenhausen, 2003, p. 231)" this process allows groups

to renegotiate the connotations of the group label, enhance positive group self-esteem,

and undermine its use as a weapon of interpersonal hostility by creating intergroup

relations that socially sanction its use by outgroup members (Galinsky et al., 2003;

Galinsky et al., 2013). Themes of female empowerment (e.g., Black womanhood) and

agency (e.g., female control in male/female relationships) were common, averaging one

reference per song. However, Oware (2007) argues that the reproduction of hegemonic paradigms present in his analysis of contradictory female rap lyrics further perpetuates the objectification and exploitation of women, even when feminism is being promoted within the same song. Oware (2007) noted that much scholarship exists on the ways women are oppressed by men in rap but encourages more research examining the way female rappers disempower themselves.

Summary

Previous research on values expressed in popular music has provided important information regarding artists and consumers alike. The research highlights the importance of romantic love, patterns and motivations for substance use, and changes in permissive sexual attitudes. Numerous content analyses of rap music have produced similar results, while providing insight regarding the subculture of Hip-Hop. Analysis of rap lyrics has documented themes of violence (Armstrong, 2001; Herd, 2009; Hunnicutt & Andrews, 2009; Kubrin, 2005a), respect (Kubrin, 2005a), misogyny (Armstrong, 2001;Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009), nihilism (Kubrin, 2005b), authenticity (McLeod, 1999), materialism (Kubrin, 2005a), and the role of friends and family (Oware, 2011a; Oware, 2011b) in the lyrics of male rappers. Further analysis over decades has allowed for the comparison of changes in the sexualization of lyrics (Madanikia & Bartholomew, 2014), substance use preferences (Herd, 2008; Primack et al., 2008), and violence/ homicidal references (Herd, 2009; Hunnicutt & Andrews, 2009). Preliminary research on the themes of female rap artists indicates contradictory messages of empowerment, solidarity, self-objectification, and self-exploitation (Oware, 2007); Phillips et al., 2005). The latter two themes provide initial support for some similarities between male and female rap artists thematic content.

Most systemic analyses have focused on the negative aspects of Rap music's lyrical content, yet both positive and negative messages may be present in the music that has become largely commercialized since the 1990s. Although outside the scope of this study, it is important to note the scholarship regarding the potential negative influence of Rap music lyrics and videos on the behavior, attitudes, and positive community promoting values of young adolescents is mixed (Allen, 2001; Crocker & Major, 1989; Johnson, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; Zillmann et al., 1995). For mental health professionals, in particular, it is important to become knowledgeable about the worldview of the Hip-Hop community and their internal cultural resources from reputable sources. Knowledge about the themes present in the most recent generation of rap songs can also provide valuable information regarding the sociopolitical (e.g., race, class, gender, ethnicity, poverty, marginalization, etc.) reality of clients. Otherwise, mental health professionals may provide unethical and detrimental care that relies on deficit based models, stereotypes, personal biases, and misinformed media representations to guide their practice. The counseling profession in particular has adopted multicultural competencies (Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992) that outline the areas of counselor knowledge, awareness, and skills necessary to work ethically with culturally diverse clients.

In order to better help youth who identify with Hip-Hop culture and consume Rap music, it is important to try to understand the values and messages they hear most frequently. Research has examined the messages contained in Rap music lyrics up to the year 2004. Most of this research represents themes and features of Rap music created by male artists. Less is known about the messages presented in female rap artists' lyrics.

Only a few studies (Oware, 2007; Phillips et al., 2005) have examined the messages and features of Rap music lyrics created by female artists but these studies do not examine music beyond the year 2004. No research has examined the latest comprehensive messages in Rap music lyrics from 2004 until the present (2014) or attempted to compare the messages between male and female artists. The purpose of this study was to examine the themes present in fourth generation rap music and compare the messages of male and female rap artists. This knowledge may prepare mental health professionals to work more effectively with culturally different clients who identify with Hip-Hop culture (e.g., urban minority youth) by allowing them to: 1) assess their personal biases towards the culture, 2) gain insight into their client's world view and the sociopolitical forces that have shaped it, and 3) use culturally specific knowledge to develop and assess culturally appropriate interventions; knowledge, awareness, and skills that align with the recommended multicultural competencies of the counseling profession (Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue et al., 1992).

Method

The lyrical emphasis of rap songs and the cultural context of Hip-Hop music lend itself well to ethnographic content analysis (ECA), also known as qualitative document analysis (QDA). Altheide (1987) distinguishes ECA as a method that:

- Is useful in documenting and understanding the communication of meaning.
- Is systemic and analytic, but not rigid.
- Involves a cyclical concept development, embedded in the constant comparison method as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967), where sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation occur reflexively.

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Reflexively refers to a flexible interactive approach that allows the data
collection, concept formation and interpretation stages to impact and alter one
another.

- Can be initially guided by categories and variables but allows and expects others
to emerge from the data.

- Reports numerical and narrative data rather than forcing data into predefined
categories.

- Codes data conceptually.

Employing ethnographic content analysis, the current study analyzed the most popular
rap songs by popular female and male rappers listed on the *Billboard* charts and/or the
Black Entertainment Television 's *(BET)* "Best Female Hip-Hop Artist Award" from
2004-2014 (i.e., the 4th generation).

The Songs

The top-ranking rap songs of each year were initially selected from *Billboard's*
annual "Hot Rap Songs" listing. The highest ranking five male and five female artist's
rap songs were selected for each year between 2004-2014 when available. *Billboard*
music charts represent the most popular singles in sales and radio play for each year.
These elements were important for my sample as I wanted to capture "mainstream" lyrics.
Song selections for the years 2004 and 2005 were made using *Billboard's* year-end
"R&B/Hip-Hop Songs" list because *Billboard's* "Hot Rap Songs" list was not introduced
before 2006. All male artists songs were selected from the two lists mentioned above.
Female rap artists were not as prevalent on these lists. The annual *Black Entertainment
Television (BET)* award list for the "Best Female Hip-Hop Artist" was used in situations

where 5 female rap artists could not be selected from the two Billboard lists referenced above. The winner on each annual *BET* list was selected based on sales and the quality of the music released during the eligibility period. Depending on the remaining number of female artists needed to select five female artist for each year the award winner and nominees were considered for song selection. As the *BET* "Best Female Hip-Hop Artist" awardee and nominee list only included artist name, a second process was required for song selection. Once the necessary remaining songs for each year were determined, the winner and corresponding nominees for each year were searched on *iTunes* for their most popular songs for the corresponding year (e.g., searching Nicki Minaj songs for 2008 and selecting the most popular song to include in the sample). *ITunes* is a product of Apple Inc. that among other uses serves a media player that keeps track of song ranking, popularity, and downloads. In instances where song popularity was equivalent, further *YouTube* searches were conducted in order to select the song with the most views (e.g., entering a search for both songs in to *YouTube* and selecting the song with the most views to include in the sample). *YouTube* is an online video-sharing platform where users can upload, watch, and share videos. Among other video statistics a counter of video views is available for each video. The uses of *iTunes* and *YouTube* to select the remaining song sample also met the intention of selecting "mainstream" lyrics as they are two of the currently most popular media players and video sharing sites available.

Lastly, in order to ensure that all artists included in the sample were Hip-Hop/rap artists and not crossover artists or collaborators, as is common in Hip-Hop music, I used the website ARTISTdirect (http://www.artistdirect.com) along with my personal knowledge to exclude songs not created by Hip-Hop/rap artists. ARTISTdirect is an

online resource that includes information on musical artists and groups including a genre categorization (e.g., Hip-Hop). This process resulted in a total of 110 rap songs; 55 from female rap artists and 55 from male rap artists; five male rap artists' and five female rap artists' songs for each year over the study period (2004-2014). The complete song list can be found in Appendix A (also see Discography).

A document with links to each of the 110 song lyrics was created and organized by sample year. Lyrics were obtained through rap lyric archive websites (e.g., http://www.lyrics.com). Many of the lyrics on these sites are uploaded by fans and may contain errors; I conducted validity checks by cross checking the song lyrics with multiple archive lyric websites and listening to each song as I reviewed the lyrics to check for errors. Once validity checks were completed for each of the 110 songs a second review of the songs was initiated to remove male lyrics from female songs and female lyrics from male songs. As collaborations are common in Hip-Hop music this step ensured that thematic coding would be completed only of same gender lyrics (e.g., only female rap artist's lyrics and only male rap artist lyrics).

Extraction of the Themes

Guided by the qualitative methods described by Altheide (1987), Glaser (1978), and Smith (1987), I read the lyrics of each of the songs and conducted line by line coding. I used an inductive approach, reading all the lyrics first, creating initial codes as they emerged from the data. Interpretations of urban slang terms were cross referenced with *The Rap Dictionary* (http://www.rapdict.org), an online dictionary of rap terms, and with *The Urban Dictionary* (http://www.urbandictionary.com), an online dictionary of urban terms, when clarification was needed (see Appendix B for examples). I created as many

initial codes as necessary to represent the full range of concepts present in the sample. As the songs ceased to provide data for new codes, I condensed, collapsed, and created broader conceptual thematic categories to organize the codes that emerged. Throughout the process I reviewed and revisited the lyrics in order to validate or challenge the final list of thematic categories until I was unable to create new codes and categories. This process resulted in eight larger themes and 10 subthemes. I then met with a graduate research assistant who is familiar with the Rap music of the last ten years and had her review a random sub sample of the songs selected (n = 22; 11 songs from each gender artist; 1 male and 1 female song from each year) documenting notes regarding the categories she viewed were emerging from the data. We then compared the categories and themes she had observed and the list of eight themes and 10 subthemes I had created. We discussed the prevalence as well as saturation and appropriateness of my conceptual themes and underlying codes based on discrepancies and similarities in our observations. We came to a consensus regarding revisions resulting in a final list of 12 themes. After this meeting I created a codebook (see Appendix C) with the final list of themes, thematic definitions, and instructions for coding in order to train two undergraduate research assistants for the final analysis.

Two research assistants were recruited who were familiar with Rap music of the last ten years. Both research assistants shared the following five expert qualities: 1) identified with Hip-Hop culture, 2) listened predominantly to Hip-Hop music, 3) were born in urbanized areas that were distinctive to rap history (i.e., Queens, New York, and Oakland, California), 4) belonged to marginalized minority groups, and 5) were either current musical artists or former artists. One research assistant was a 28 year old African-

American male rap artist. The other research assistant was a 37 year old Puerto Rican male and former musical artist of a rock/rap fusion group. This author also served as a coder and shared four of the five expert qualities referenced above. This author identifies with Hip-Hop culture, listens predominantly to Hip-Hop music, was born in an urbanized area that is distinctive to rap history (i.e., Compton, California), and belongs to a marginalized minority group (i.e., Mexican/Cuban American).

The research assistants were trained by this researcher using the aforementioned codebook. Each theme had specific instructions regarding the requirements for it to be considered present. The general requirement for presence of a theme was an explicitly written, strongly implied, and overt personal endorsement of the message. Theme specific instructions were also included (e.g., do not code reappropriation of female stigma labels in male artist lyrics; do not code reappropriation of minority stigma labels for non-minority artists). The assistants and this researcher coded the 110 song lyrics independently for the presence or absence of the themes. The songs were numbered from 1-110 starting with the female artist's songs in 2004 and ending with the male artists songs of 2014. This was done to ensure the songs were coded in the same order by each of the raters and to facilitate inter coder reliability validity checks. The songs were coded in 25 song increments (i.e., songs 1-25, songs 26-50, songs 27-75, songs 76-100, songs 100-110) in order to conduct validity checks; comparing inter-coder reliability at each increment. In order to promote fidelity to the code book after each set of 25 songs the research assistants received a refresher training of the codebook before submitting their final ratings for that song increment. Final inter-coder reliability was calculated between all three raters for all 110 songs in the sample.

As this researcher served as a coder, trainer, and validity checker, this researcher's ratings were not allowed to be changed after completing the refresher training as were the other two research assistant's ratings.

Analyses

This is both a descriptive and comparative study. Excerpts of lyrics are used to provide a more rich representation of themes and thematic patterns. Percentages are used to describe how frequently the themes appeared in the complete sample of songs. Percentages based on gender (i.e., percentage of males and females who included a theme in their lyrics) are used to describe how frequently the themes appeared in male and female rap artists' lyrics. Fliess Kappa is used as a measure of inter rater reliability. Chi-Square analyses compare the use of themes by male and female rap artists.

Percentages were calculated by counting each rater as one third. Thus, the presence of a theme could be counted as 0 (i.e., no coders rated the theme was present), .33 (i.e., one of the three coders rated the theme as present), .67 (i.e., two of the three coders rated the theme as present), or 1 (i.e., all three coders rated the theme as present). Percentages of theme presence across the song sample was calculated by summing theme presence and dividing by the number of songs in the complete sample (N = 110). Similarly percentages of theme by gender across the gendered song sub sample (i.e., the percent of female artists who endorsed a message out of all female artists' songs and the percent of male artists who endorsed a message out of all male artists' songs) was calculated by summing theme presence and dividing by the number of songs for that gendered sub sample (n = 55).

Rater Reliability

Fliess Kappa coefficients were used to measure the level of inter- rater agreement. Kappas for the three raters ranged from .64 to .87 with an overall Kappa of .77 (see Table 1). According to Landis and Koch (1977) these coefficients are considered substantial to almost perfect.

Messages from All Rap Artists

The 12 most frequently referenced themes or messages are listed in Table 1. The percentage of songs that referenced each theme ranged from 77% (Celebration of Personal Success) to 10.3% (Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources). The following is a description and examples of each of the themes descending in order of their frequency. Notes are also included here regarding the definitions of each theme. Additional examples of lyrics for each theme can be found in Table 2 and definitions of slang terms used throughout this text can be found in Appendix B.

1. **Celebration of Personal Success.** This message was referenced in 77% of the songs in the sample. This thematic category included lyrics aimed at celebrating, boasting about, or acknowledging personal success. Lyrics in this category included reference to being highly visible as successful due to accomplishments, causing envy in others (e.g., having "haters[31*]"), living a luxurious lifestyle, having material and financial wealth (e.g., custom cars, mansions, designer clothing, owning expensive items,

Table 1

Percentage of Most Popular Rap Songs in Which Each Theme Was Present

Theme	%	Kappa coefficient
1. Celebration of Personal Success	77	.64
2. Urban Consciousness, Identity, and Pride	68.8	.69
3. Sexual Prowess/ Seductive Power	62.1	.69
4. Recreational Drug Use	54.9	.83
5. Ready and Willing to Become Violent	48.8	.87
6. Sexual Objectification	48.2	.64
7. Reappropriation of Stigma Labels	36.4	.71
8. Drive and Ambition	28.5	.69
9. Self-Objectification	28.5	.73
10. Struggle and Resilience	20	.70
11. Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex	15.1	.72
12. Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources	10.3	.74

Note. N = 110. Themes were not mutually exclusive (some song lyrics contained multiple themes).

having 6 zeros in their bank account), frivolous spending, and/or being treated with special privilege (e.g., VIP treatment, flying in a private jet). This category also included being admired/imitated, nicknames given due to success, and the "dissin" of competitors for not being as successful as the artist. Phrases commonly used in this message were "haters[31*]," "I'm at the top," "ballin," and "money ain't a thing." For example in Jay-Z's (2012) song "Niggas in Paris" he references his extent of "ballin" in his lyrics by describing his expensive diamond adorned jewelry, clothing, and champagne:

> Ball so hard[30*], got a broke clock, Rolleys that don't tick tock,
> Audemars that's losing time, hidden behind all these big rocks,

> Ball so hard[30*], let's get faded, Le Meurice for like 6 days,
> Gold bottles, scold models, spillin' Ace[1*] on my sick J's,

Similarly Drake (2009) in his song, "Best I Ever Had" boasts about his album sales, widespread appeal, receiving special treatment, and having financial security:

> Buzz so big, I could probably sell a blank disk,
> Play my album, drop, bitches will buy it for the picture,
> And niggas will buy it too, and claim they got it for they sister,
> Magazine paper girl, but money ain't the issue,
> They bring dinner to my room, and ask me to initial,

2. **Urban Consciousness, Identity, and Pride.** This message was mentioned in 68.8% of the songs. These references serve the purpose of establishing an identity that is representative and/or authentic of the urban population. Artists often used these urbanized representations as sources of pride and/or to establish an identity as neighborhood experts/ambassadors. Lyrics that were characteristic of this message contained references to urban location (e.g., cross streets, city, state, cardinal directions), neighborhood experiences, knowledge of street code (e.g., do or die), a sense of belonging (e.g., this is my hood[33*]), participation in criminal activity (e.g., selling drugs, robbing), distinctions of authenticity (e.g., real[37*] vs. fake, truth vs. lie, hard[30*] vs. soft), and the ability to understand historical and current socio political interactions between ones' community and authority (e.g., negative police relations, imprisonment rates, the war on drugs), poverty (e.g., collecting welfare, not being able to pay rent on time), violence (e.g., murders, shootings), opportunities (e.g., trapping[42*], hustling[34*], grinding[29*]), and crime (e.g., the murder rate in their city). For example, in Lil' Kim's (2005) "Lighters Up" lyrics she proudly represents her city by giving an honest portrayal of what she has observed regarding resident

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relations, the level of danger, police relations, drug addiction in the community, opportunities for financial gain through crime, and the limited opportunities available for survival in such bleak surroundings:

> I come from Bed-Stuy, where niggas either do or they gon' die,
> Gotta keep the ratchet close by,
> Someone murdered, nobody seen, nobody heard it,
> Just another funeral service,
> Niggas will get at you, come through shinin' they yap[44*] you,
> In broad day light kidnap you,
> Feds get clapped[24*] too, police stay on us like tattoos,
> Niggas only grind[29*] cause we have to,
> Money is power, sling crack, weed and powder,
> Fiends[21*] come through every hour,
> S'all about that dollar and we no deal with cowards,
> Weak lambs get devoured by the lion,
> In the concrete jungle[13*], the strong stand and rumble,
> The weak fold and crumble, It's the land of trouble,

In Jay-Z's (2004) "Dirt Off Your Shoulder" he recognizes that his fame has helped him escape the consequences of making money through drug sales. Further he pairs manhood with rebellion against the oppression and limited opportunities in his neighborhood:

> I probably owe it to you all, proud to be locked by the force,
> Trying to hustle[34*] some things, that go with the Porsche,
> Feeling no remorse, feeling like my hand was forced,
> Middle finger to the law, nigga griping my balls,

Juvenile's (2004) "Slow Motion" lyrics demonstrate some of the many ways artists identified themselves geographically and through neighborhood associations. In his lyrics he identifies himself through neighborhood landmarks, the name of his city, and his neighborhood friendships:

> It's Juvenile from cross the street by the derby,

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Same nigga used to be runnin' with Rusty and Kirby,
Can a playa from the nolia get a chance with it?

3. **Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power.** This message was found in 62.1% of the songs.

This category includes lyrics focused on the individual's ability to attract, entice, persuade, seduce, and be sought by partners. Lyrics included self-promoting messages of the artist's sexual ability (e.g., stamina), attractive qualities/features (e.g., skin tone, breast size, male endowment), and competitiveness for highly desirable attractive partners. Some artists referenced their abilities to have more than one partner at a time (e.g., "two hoes[32*] choosing[11*] me so you know that I'mma win") or their ability to have partners engage in the desired sexual behavior of their choice (e.g., preferred sexual positions, oral sex while driving) as means of expressing sexual prowess. Other artists described their abilities to draw attention to themselves through seductive techniques such as dancing (e.g., "I drop it low and all the boys stare") or through a reputation they have gained because of their attractiveness or sexual performance (e.g., "they call me Betty Croker because my cakes[9*] are stacked"). For example in 50 cent's verse on The Game's (2005) "How We Do" he depicts his sexual prowess by indicating his ability to have a heterosexual female partner engage in same sex relations in his hotel for his pleasure, further he assures her that he has the ability to please her:

I have a straight bitch in the telly[41*] going both ways,
Touch me, tease me, kiss me, please me,
I give it to ya just how you like it, girl,

The Ying Yang Twins' (2005) release of "Wait" exemplifies sexual bravado as one of the twins promotes his sexual superiority and physical endowment:

Switch the positions and ready to get down to business,

> So you can see what you've been missin',
> You might had some but you never had none like this,
> Just wait til you see my dick,
> Ay bitch! Wait til you see my dick,
> Imma beat dat pussy up,

Nicki Minaj expresses sexual superiority and ability by stating the following in her (2013) song "High School":

> I never fuck with beginners,
> I let him play with my pussy then lick it off of his fingers,

4. **Recreational Drug Use.** This theme was present in 54.9% of the songs. Lyrics falling into this category included the casual use of alcohol and drugs to relax, cope with stress, warm up sexual encounters, celebrate, and express freedom. Some artists also used the type or brand of drug to indicate status (e.g., Ace[1*], Chandon) by referencing expensive drugs, large drug amounts (e.g., "a zone[45*]"), or rare drugs. Other artists used *Recreational Drug Use* as a way to honor, grieve, or show respect for loved ones who had passed away or were incarcerated. Other drug use was depicted as ways of forming social bonds with others (e.g., "me and my homies get lifted[26*]") or gaining respect or distinction (e.g., "I roll the best weed so I have it going on"). Key phrases used in this message include "getting high," "drank[19*]," and "blunts[7*]." In YG's (2014) song "My Nigga" he references how he and his friends drink together:

> Tried to act right[2*], buy the case my nigga,
> Drink the act right[2*] and get straight[27*] with my niggas,

In Kid Ink's (2014) song "Show Me" he is attempting to warm up a sexual encounter through alcohol:

> Got a cup in your hand,
> Babysitting[4*] but you ain't got not kids,

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We ain't leaving 'til there ain't no more left,

Lil' Kim (2006) "Whoa" depicts a casual night out where smoking and drinking have come to an excess and she tells her friends she isn't going to party anymore but then playfully and quickly retracts her statement:

> Damn homie I'm so to',
> And I don't think I'm ever gon' smoke no mo',
> And I don't think I'm ever gon' drink no mo',
> But fuck it, bartender you can gimmie one mo',

5. **Ready and Willing to Become Violent**. This message was found in 48.8% of songs. Messages in this thematic category are aimed at creating an image of the artist as someone who should not be disrespected or victimized because they have the means, capability, and reputation of engaging in violence. This category includes reference to guns, violent capacity, violent reputation, a gangster network/ or violent friends, and forewarnings of violence. This includes lyrics aimed at creating a violent identity that is quick tempered, fast to act, fearless, and always ready for violence. Some artists evoked violent metaphorical imagery to express superior lyrical skill (e.g., "I killed them with my sick flow[22*]"), these creative descriptions of metaphorical skill were omitted; this theme is defined by clear examples of actual or potential physical violence. Some artists paired violent capacities with a survival mindset (e.g., a kill or be killed mentality). Other artists reference their violent network as a form of security while navigating unsafe territory:

> Just keep the peace because if cowards show me disrespect,
> My niggas put his soul to rest,
>   (LiL' Kim, 2006, "Whoa").

Some artists make clear their comfort with direct confrontation:

If ya got a problem, say it to my face,
We can knuckle up, anytime, anyplace,
      (Yung Joc, 2006, "It's Goin' Down").

Artists also list their past offenses in order to ward off potential threats:

Yea, I've got more records than the K.G.B,
So, uh, no funny business,
Some, some, some, some I murder,
Some, some, some, I let go,
      (M.I.A., 2009, "Paper Planes").

6. **Sexual Objectification.** Sexually objectifying references were present in 28.5% of the songs. This message included focusing on select body parts of individuals (e.g., "her ass was tight"), referencing another individual in non-human or object like terms (e.g., "you remind me of my jeep, I wanna ride it"), focusing solely on an individual as a means of sexual pleasure (e.g., "I fuck her than I leave that hoe[32*], because you know we don't love them hoes[32*]"), and promoting a unidimensional use of others as sexual outlets (e.g., "you know I passed her to the homie because it ain't fun if we all can't enjoy her"). Many of these representations also lifted the artist's value above that of the person they were sexually objectifying and positioned the sexual object as disposable and easily replaceable. For example, in Outkast's (2004) song, "The Way You Move," lyrics focus on a select female body part and depict woman as sexual outlets:

Skinny, slim women got the camel toe[10*] within them,
You can hump them, lift them, bend them, give them something to remember,

Some artists also objectified partners based on racial categorizations:

See me in ya city sitting pretty, know I'm shining[38*] dawg,
Riding with a couple Latin brawds and a China doll,
      (T.I., 2006, "What You Know").

Other artists depict the unidimensional use of partners as sexual objects:

> Mi have a car, big house, and when mi done, mi haffi kick him ass out,
> Mi just want him fi him dang a lang,
>   (Trina, 2010, "Dang A Lang").

Artists also used non-human and object like terms to refer to partners:

> I don't need emotions to open your deep sea,
> I can see the ocean by going between legs,
>   (Wale, 2013, "Bad").

7. **Reappropriation of Stigma Labels.** This message was found in 36.4% of the

    sample. Due to the subjective nature and context dependent use of stigma labels the

    percentage may represent an underestimate for several reasons. Examples of

    reappropriation were only included if the artist expressing the label belonged to the

    stigmatized group being referenced (e.g., only women could reclaim the word Bitch,

    only African-American/Black artists could reclaim the word nigga, etc.). Also

    because many lyrics used the context of the sentence to denote pride or

    empowerment for the label (e.g., "she was my best friend that was my bitch; I could

    always count on my nigga") examples of reclamation were specific to those that

    included a clear positive or empowering adjective before the stigma term (e.g., "boss

    chick," "smart nigga," "real[37*] nigga," "hard[30*] nigga"). This in particular may have

    excluded many examples of the word nigga as it was used positively in many songs

    without such adjectives but was not consistently clear without the use of a positive

    adjective indicating an intention to reappropriate. Artists reclaimed the use of stigma

    inducing labels in order to express empowerment or pride, "I can't let you disrespect

    me Imma queen, And all my real[37*] Boss chicks know what I mean" (Trina, 2009,

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"Wish I Never Met You"). This theme mostly included self-referencing lyrics aimed at using derogatory names for women (e.g., Bitch, broad, chick) and minority individuals in a way that expresses pride, self-approval, and empowerment in oneself and one's group (e.g., "I'm the baddest bitch;" " I'm the number one nigga"). Fat Joe (2004) included lyrics that combined reappropriations for his intersecting identities referring to himself as a "Fat Nigga" (Terror Squad, 2004, "Lean Back"). Nicki Minaj's (2014) lyrics in "Anaconda" used reappropriation in order to challenge beauty standards:

> I wanna see all the big fat bitches in the motherfucking club,
> Fuck you if you skinny bitches, What? Yeah!

Another artist used her privileged racial membership in her reappropriation, "White chick, on that Pac shit" (Iggy Azalea, 2014, "Work").

8. **Drive and Ambition.** This theme was present in 28.5% of the lyrics. This message depicted a desire and/or determination to succeed and the objects of the artist's ambition (e.g., money, fame, resources, distinction, accomplishments). Some artists included information regarding their level of self-efficacy (e.g., "I always knew I would make it"). Some artists reference an unrelenting drive:

> I've been up all night, tryna get that rich,
> I've been work, work, work, work, working on my shit,
> Now get this work,
>   (Iggy Azalea, 2014, "Work")

Others simply state their dedication to their goals:

> I'm cuppin' a meal ticket,
> No matter the consequence,
> My emphasis is to get it,
>   (Trina, 2006, "Don't Trip")

Although, similar in inclusion of self-efficacy, this message differs from *Struggle and Resilience* in its focus on determination and end goals whereas the latter focuses on relaying the successful overcoming of obstacles sometimes referencing the goals they have reached. Indeed the two themes were often combined in lyrics:

> In this very moment I'm king,
> In this very moment, I slay Goliath with a sling,
> This very moment I bring, put it on everything,
> That I will retire with the ring,
> And I will retire with the crown, yes
>   (Nicki Minaj, 2011, "Moment 4 Life")

This category may underestimate references to *Drive and Ambition* alone as this theme was defined by the combination of the two. Lyrics that solely focused on drive (e.g., "I have to get it how I live[25*]") or solely on ambition (e.g., dreams of being the best) were not included in this category.

9. **Self-Objectification.** Lyrics that were self-objectifying in nature were found in 28.5% of the songs sampled. This message was almost identical to the message of *Sexual Objectification* only the objectification was in reference to oneself. This theme included focusing on one's own select body parts (e.g., "my ass is tight"), referencing oneself in object like terms (e.g., "I'll be your coke bottle, feel my curves"), focusing solely on oneself as a provider of sexual pleasure (e.g., "all I want is rough sex"), and/or promoting a unidimensional view of oneself as a sexual outlet or conduit for sexual release, "I'm a dick thrower" (Juvenile, 2004, "Slow Motion"). Some artists used self-objectifying lyrics in order to emphasize *Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power*:

> My na na na tastes like Jamaican Key,
> Ain't a bitch freaky[23*] like me,

(Foxy Brown, 2008, "When The Lights Go Out")

Others used self-objectification to highlight their ability to *Provide Sex in Exchange for Resources*:

> Girl I don't pay for weed,
> I get in clubs free, In V.I.P. and we drinking bubbly,
> It's so fat, to be in G-Strings,
> And it's so swoll, you can see the print in my jeans,
> That pussy pussy,
>   (Jacki-0, 2004, "Pussy – Real Good")

Others seemed to promote their sexual agency by referencing themselves in sexual ways "Misdemeanor move my nookie like a hoochay" (Missy Elliott, 2004, "I'm Really Hot"). Artists also emphasized pride in their sexual representations by combining self- objectification with *Reappropriations of Stigma Labels*:

> She a red, drop-top corvette, black lace corset,
> You know wat it is, trick[43*],
> Certified bad chick,
>   (Diamond, 2011, "Lotta Money").

10. **Struggle and Resilience.** Messages of struggle and resilience were present in 20% of the lyrics. This category includes references to struggles with poverty, disillusionment, discouragement received from others, and feelings of being alone and or unsupported. It also includes lyrics referencing the overcoming of adversity, surpassing limitations, and success gained through believing in oneself. Lyrics focusing solely on struggle (e.g., "I can't pay my rent") or resilience (e.g., "I made it to the top") were not included; this category involved both struggle and resilience. For this reason, this percentage may be an underestimate of separate instances of struggle and resilience in the sample. Some artists referenced struggle and resilience

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by stating they were not affected by negative critiques and they were indifferent to

people's attempts to dampen their success:

> Shout out to my haters[31*],
> Sorry that you couldn't faze[20*] me,
> Ain't being cocky, we just vindicated,
> Best believe that what we done this moment,
> Will be syndicated, I don't know,
> This night just remind me of,
> Everything they deprived me of,
>   (Nicki Minaj, 2011, "Moment 4 Life")

Although, similar in inclusion of self-efficacy, this message differs from *Drive and*

Ambition in its focus on the successful overcoming of obstacles whereas the latter

focuses on determination and a set goal sometimes referencing the struggles

encountered in their endeavor and the resilience experienced in accomplishing their

goal. Indeed the two themes were often combined in lyrics:

> I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive,
> I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise,
> To Fly,
>   (Nicki Minaj, 2010, "Fly")

Combinations of struggle/resilience and *Celebration of Personal Success* were also

common, as in this verse by Drake:

> Uh, I am the topic of conversation, this a celebration,
> Let's toast to the fact that I moved out my momma's basement,
> To a condo downtown, 'cause it's all about location,
>   (Timbaland, 2010, "Say Something").

11. **Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex.** This message was present in 15.1% of

the songs sampled. This theme embodied an implied or explicit exchange between

the artists and a potential partner for sex, sexual entertainment, or seduction. These

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messages referenced the artist's role in the exchange as one who provides resources

(e.g., money, fame, material goods, drugs/alcohol) for the implied or explicit gain of

sexual relations (e.g., oral sex), sexual seduction (e.g., lap dances), or sexual

entertainment (e.g., watching two women kiss) from a potential partner. This theme

included messages where the artist's role was clearly that of the provider of resources

for the above mentioned exchange. The artists' role in the exchange was the key

distinction between this theme and *Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources*,

whereas the role of the artist in the latter category is that of the person offering sex in

the exchange. Some artists boasted about their ability to attract partners who will

provide sex in any way the artist desires because of their accumulation of resources :

> White bitches wanna marry me,
> They see me they just might panic,
> My ice make 'em go down[28*] quick,
> Like the Titanic!
>   (Shop Boyz, 2007, "Party Like a Rockstar")

Many artists referenced providing money in exchange for seductive dancing:

> Yea she was worth the money,
> Lil mama took my cash,
> And I ain't want it back,
> The way she bent that back,
> Got her them paper stacks[39*],
>   (Flo Rida, 2008, "Low")

Nicki Minaj was one of the few females to invoke this message in the lyrics of her

2013 song "I Endorse These Strippers":

> I bust a band[5*] in the VIP,
> My money can't fit in clips,
> I tell the hoes[32*] when they strip,
> That they can play with my clit,
> Ooohh, Boobs, boobs, boobs, boobs, lotta boobs,

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Man I make the Baddest bitches send me nudes,

12. **Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources.** This message was found in 10.3% of the

lyrics. This theme embodied an implied or explicit sexual exchange between the

artists and a potential partner for resources (e.g., money, fame, material goods,

drugs/alcohol, special privileges, etc.). These messages referenced the artist's role in

the exchange as one who provides sexual relations (e.g., oral sex), sexual seduction

(e.g., provocative dancing), or sexual entertainment (e.g., putting on sexual acts for

show) for the implied or explicit gain of desired resources (e.g., money, fame,

material goods, drugs/alcohol) from a potential partner. This theme included

messages where the artist's role was clearly that of the provider of sex, seduction, or

sexual entertainment for the above mentioned exchange. The artists' role in the

exchange was the key distinction between this theme and *Providing Resources in*

Exchange for Sex, whereas the role of the artist in the latter category is that of the

person offering resources in the exchange. These messages were often combined

with claims of *Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power*:

> He toss my salad like his name Romaine,
> And when we done, I make him buy me Balmain,
> (Nicki Minaj, 2014, "Anaconda")

In Trina's (2006) song "Don't Trip" she instructs women on how to extract money

from men through sexual seduction and encourages them to do so without actually

providing sexual relations:

> Ladies let's say you want a man,
> But don't know how to do it,
> Dirty dance with em,
> Put a little back into it,
> Go catch a wall shorty,

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End up at the mall sporty,
Try to dog waddy[15*],
Make 'em spend it all on ya,
Yep and make that nigga ball for ya,
Then have him beggin for that kitty kat[35*],
Wining and dining for that ass,
Give him none of that,
Just let him know,
Say make a bitch rich,
Cause the baddest bitch taught you that

Table 2

Thematic Categories, Percentages, and Examples

Celebration of Personal Success (77%)		
Chris Brown (2011) "Look at Me Now": Yellow model chick, Yellow bottle sipping, Yellow Lamborghini, Yellow top missing, Yeah, Yeah, That shit look like a toupee, I get what you get in 10 years, in two days,	Nicki Minaj (2014) "Pills N Potions": But I sped off in the Benzy, I see the envy when I'm causing a frenzy, So I pop pills for 'em, Cop cribs in the hills on 'em,	Pitbull (2014) "Timber": Look up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, Nah, it's just me, ain't a damn thing changed, Live in hotels, swing on planes, Blessed to say, money ain't a thing,
Urban Consciousness, Identity, and Pride (68.8%)		
Shawnna (2005) "Shake That Shit": C-H-I to the C-A-G-O, If you ain't been, don't go, My city's so fast, you react so slow, Your heart might stop and your blood won't flow,	Yung Joc (2006) "It's Going Down": Time to flip the work, make the block bump, Boyz in the hood[33*], call me Black Donald Trump,	T.I. (2009) "Live Your Life": I'm Westside anyway, even if I left today and stayed away, Some move away to make a way, not move away cause they afraid, I brought back to the hood[33*] and all you ever did was take away,

Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power (62.1%)		
Kelis (2004) "Milkshake": My milkshake brings all the boys to the yard, And they're like It's better than yours, Damn right it's better than yours,	Shawnna (2006) "Gettin' Some": You know your nigga want a bitch like me, Apple bottoms with the wife beater rockin' Nikes, All the niggas in the hood[33*] wanna call her wifey,	A$ap Rocky (2013) "F**king Problems": I be fuckin' broads like I be fuckin'bored, Turn a dyke bitch out have her fuckin' boys, beast,

Recreational Drug Use (54.9%)		
Lil Jon (2006) "Snap Yo Fingers": Got da purp fired up, What's happening', what's up, Got Patron in my cup, I pop, I drank[19*], I'm on Patron and purp, I can't think, I'm blowed, to tha dome, Don't know how the hell I'm getting' home,	DJ Khaled (2011) "I'm On One" Drake verse: I'mma sip until I feel it, I'mma smoke it 'til it's done, Fuck it, I'm on one, Two white cups, and I got that drink, Could be purple, it could be pink, Depending on how you mix that shit,	Nicki Minaj (2012) "Starships": Have a drink, clink, found the Bud Light, Bad bitches, like me, is hard to come by, The Patron, own, let's go get it on, The zone[45*], own, yes I'm in the zone[45*],

Ready and Willing to Become Violent (48.8%)		
Brooke Valentine (2005) "Girlfight": Ya acting real hard[30*] but I know you fakin, Know you really don't wanna	Snoop Dogg (2005) "Drop it Like it's Hot" Pharrel verse: Killer wit the beat, I know killers in the street, Wit the steel that'll make you feel	T.I. (2009) "Dead and Gone": Paralyzed, waist down, now ya wheel chair bound,

step to dis, Really don't know why you talkin' shit, You 'bout to catch one right in the lip, It's about to be a what? Girlfight!, We on our way to ya neighborhood, The reason why we comin' is understood, Me and my girls we down to ride[18*], So when you hear us pull up bring ya butt outside, And if you try to call ya cousin and dem, Don't forget that I got some of dem, 'Bout to go real hard[30*] 'bout to swang dem thangs[40*], 'Bout to feel elbows all in ya brain,	like Chinchilla in the heat, So don't try to run up on my ear talking all that raspy shit, Trying to ask me shit, When my niggaz fill ya vest they ain't gon pass me shit, You should think about it, take a second, Matter fact, you should take four B, And think before you fuck wit lil skateboard P,	Never mind that now, you lucky to be alive, Just think it all started you fussing with 3 guys, Nigga pride in the way, but ya pride is the way, You could fuck around, get shot, die any day, Niggas die every day, All over bull shit, dope money, dice game, ordinary hood[33*] shit, Could this be 'cos of Hip-Hop music?, Or did the one's with good sense not use it?, Usually niggas don't know what to do when their back against the wall, so they just start shooting, For red or for blue, or for blow[6*] I guess, From Bankhead, up to your projects,

Sexual Objectification (48.2%)

Plies (2007) "Shawty": I got her trained now, now she suck me with ice, I call her my lil bust if baby cause she keep it tight, Whenever I tell her to bust, ain't got to tell her twice, Whenever I wanna get off , she know how to get me right, I love to show her off, cause all the Dope boys[17*] want her, Know why they wanna beat bae, Look at all that ass on her, Look how that pussy sit up in them shorts, You gotta want her,	Kanye West (2012) "Mercy": Ok, drop it to the floor, Make that ass shake, Woah, make the ground move, that's an ass quake, Built a house up on that ass, that's an ass state, Roll my weed on it, that an ass tray,	Nicki Minaj (2014) "Anaconda": This dude named Michael used to ride motorcycles, Dick bigger than a tower, I ain't talking about Eiffel's, Real[37*] country ass nigga, let me play with his rifle,

Reappropriation of Stigma Labels (36.4%)		
Rasheeda (2010) "Boss Chick": Boss chick, that's the motto, We set shit off, we don't follow, We no gargle, we no swallow, Brush lames out the way, like they did on Apollo, Goodbye, adios amigo, I ain't stuck up, I got a Kanye ego, Getting' to this money like my name was Nino[36*], How you think I got all this Luis and VO, I ain't just talkin pimp, this what I stand fo', An independent chick who be staking them bank rolls, I got my own house, I got my own car,	Diamond (2011) "Lotta Money" Now all my ladies, Who be gettin cash, Without givin no ass, You stay popping all dem tags, Throw the money in the bag, Cuz you a bad chick, now dats a bad chick,	Wale (2013) "Bad": Bad girls ain't no good, and good girls ain't no fun, And the hood[33*] girls want a smart nigga, college girls all want a thug,
Drive and Ambition (28.5%)		
Lil' Kim (2006) "Whoa": Me and my team, we tryin' to own casinos, So we can all cop dreams like Pacino's, Come through in the on-six-Benz-itos,	Mims (2007) "This Is Why I'm Hot": For those who say they know me, Know I'm focused on my cream[14*],	Iggy Azalea (2014) "Fancy": I just can't worry 'bout no haters[31*], gotta stay on my grind[29*], Now tell me, who that, who that? That do that, do that, Put that paper over all, I thought you knew that, knew that,

Self-Objectification (28.5%)		
Trina (2009) "Look Back At Me": I got an ass so big like the sun, Hope you got a mile for a dick I wanna run,	Waka Flocka Flame (2011) "No Hands" Wale verse: A young handsome mother fucker, I slang that wood I just nunchuck'em,	Brianna Perry (2012) "Marilyn Monroe": See Bri, I'm a dope model, Drop Dead, Coke bottle,

Struggle and Resilience (20%)		
Jay Z (2004) "Dirt Off Your Shoulder": From Bricks to Billboards, from grams to Grammies The O's to opposite, Orphan Annie You gotta pardon Jay, for selling out the Garden in a day,	Nicki Minaj (2010) "Fly": Me against enemies, me against friends, Somehow they both seem to become one, A sea full of sharks and they all smell blood, They start coming and I start rising, Must be surprising, I'm just surmising, I win, thrive, soar, higher, higher, higher, More, fire, Everybody wanna try to box me in, Suffocating every time it locks me in, Painting their own pictures then they crop me in, But I will remain where the top begins,	Big Sean (2011) "My Last": Man I just ended up on er'body guest list, I'm just doing better than what everyone projected, I knew that I'd be here so if you asked me how I feel, I'm a just tell you, it's everything that I expected, Bitch!

Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex (15.1%)

Plies (2007) "Shawty":	T.I. (2008) "Whatever You Like":	Nicki Minaj (2012) "Beez in the Trap":
Soon as I seen her, shit told her I'd pay for it, Lil mam the Baddest thing 'round here and she already know it, I pointed at the donk[16*] and told her this supposed to be yours, Showed her a couple stacks[39*] and told her I'd let her blow it,	You know it ain't nothing to drop a couple stacks[39*] on you, Want it you could get it my dear, Five million dollar home, drop Bentley's I swear, Yeah, I want 'cho body, need yo body, Long as you got me you won't need nobody, You want it?, I got it, go get it, I'll buy it, Tell 'em other broke niggas be quiet, Shawty you da hottest, love the way you drop it, Brain so good could've sworn you went to college, 100k deposit, vacations in the tropics, 'Cause errbody know it ain't tricking[43*] if ya got it[3*],	Man, I been popped off, And if she ain't tryna give it up, she get dropped off, Let me bust that U-ie, Bitch, bust that open[8*], Might spend a couple thou' just to bust that open[8*], Rip it off, no jokin', Like your name Hulk Hogan,

Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources (10.3%)

Jacki-O (2004) "Pussy (Real Good)":	Diamond (2011) "Lotta Money":	Nicki Minaj (2013) "I'm Legit":
I get diamonds, big old pearls Brand new cars, cause I got my girl, She my best friend, she keeps it real[37*], I love my pussy, pussy pay my bills,	She can't help it if your nigga wanna taker her out, Credit cards, she max it out, She all in his bank account, The mall is what she think about, So niggas better come correct[12*], Cuz she ain't tryna holla, Unless a nigga tryna cut da check,	Let me get the most expensive car, And let me steer that boy, Real big, pretty titty, Shut down any city, If you want the kit kitty, Gotta get the key for me, All new everything,

		Plus pay the rent fo' me,

Note. N = 110. Themes were not mutually exclusive (some song lyrics were coded contained multiple themes). Slang and spelling is presented true to its online form.

Sex Differences

One of the goals of this project was to compare the messages present in male versus female rap artist's lyrics (i.e., a 2 x 2 design). The results of the comparisons appear in Table 3. As can be seen using Chi-Square analyses, five significant gender differences were observed in the following themes: 1) *Sexual Objectification*, 2) *Reappropriation of Stigma Labels*, 3) *Self-Objectification*, 4) *Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex*, and 5) *Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources*. Female rap artist's lyrics more often included messages of *Reappropriation of Stigma Labels* (47% versus 25 %, Chi-Square = 5.78, $p < .05$), *Self-objectification* (38% versus 19%, Chi-Square = 4.87, $p < .05$), and *Providing Sex in Exchange for Resource*s (19% versus 1%, Chi-Square = 9.89, $p < .01$). Male rap artists' lyrics more often included messages of *Sexual Objectification* (61% versus 35%, Chi-Square = 7.45, $p < .01$) and *Providing Resources for Sex* (25% versus 5%, Chi-Square = 8.63, $p < .01$).

Table 3

Percentage of most popular Rap songs with each theme present and chi-square differences for female rap artists (FRA) and male rap artists (MRA)

Theme	Percentage in Each Group		X2	*p*
	FRA	MRA		
1. Celebration of Personal Success	75	79	.25	.62
2. Urban Consciousness, Identity, and Pride	62	75	2.15	.14
3. Sexual Prowess/ Seductive Power	59	65	.42	.52
4. Recreational Drug Use	46	64	3.60	.06
5. Ready and Willing to Become Violent	47	50	.10	.75
6. Sexual Objectification	35	61	7.45	.006
7. Reappropriation of Stigma Labels	47	25	5.78	.02
8. Drive and Ambition	24	33	1.09	.30
9. Self-Objectification	38	19	4.87	.03
10. Struggle and Resilience	14	26	2.48	.12
11. Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex	5	25	8.63	.003
12. Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources	19	1	9.89	.002

Note. N = 110; n = 55.

Discussion

The purpose of this exploratory study of 4th generation Hip-Hop messages was twofold: 1) to provide a comprehensive list of the most frequent messages and values expressed by male and female rap artists, and 2) to compare the messages endorsed by male and female rap artists. The overall aim of the study was to further inform counselors and mental health professionals regarding the worldview of Hip-Hop oriented clients by examining the messages they hear most frequently. Regarding the first purpose, a list of 12 common themes in the most popular rap songs from female and male rap artists of

2004-2014 were obtained. The top 6 themes most frequently referenced were: 1) celebration of personal success, 2) urban consciousness, identity and pride, 3) sexual prowess/seductive power, 4) recreational drug use, 5) ready and willing to become violent, and 6) sexual objectification. Providing resources in exchange for sex and providing sex in exchange for resources were the least mentioned themes. In response to the second aim of this study gender comparisons revealed significant differences in female rap artists' messages. Female rap artists used more reappropriation of stigma labels, self-objectified themselves more frequently, and depicted themselves as providing sex in exchange for resources more often than did their male counterparts. Male rap artists sexually objectified others more frequently and portrayed the role of providing resources in exchange for sex more often than did female rap artists in their songs.

Taken together the most frequent messages found in 4th generation Hip-Hop music of both male and female artists provide insight into the worldview and sociopolitical realities of the most current Hip-Hop community. Indeed Richardson and Scott (2002) describe this relationship, "The culture of Hip-Hop has become the nexus from which youth [particularly lower income Black youngsters] can create their values, define their selfhood, and express their heightened consciousness of violence and its implications against a social backdrop that has historically devalued their color and contributions. Rappers, even the most graphic, often become cultural ethnographers systematically silenced due to their social and cultural disenfranchisement and further censored for describing the effects of their marginalization (p 185)". Each of the themes in this study offered avenues for artists to create, express, explore, celebrate, challenge, and combine identities in their narratives. Some identities were depicted as

unidimensional (e.g., focusing only on sexual prowess) while others were rich, complex, empowering, and unapologetic (e.g., reappropriation of stigma labels, and urban consciousness). Artists provided representations in their narratives that discuss gender, class, race, and place. Intra and inter-ethnic comparisons abound amidst metaphors and double entendres that allowed artists to situate past, present, and future within their songs. These representations depict the struggles, aspirations, racial/gender climate, and survival mindset of those who live in the ghettos of urbanized American cities.

      The tone of the themes are mostly "materialistic" (Johnson et al., 1995), "sexist" (Armstrong, 2001; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009), "violent"(Armstrong, 2001; Herd, 2009; Johnson et al., 1995; Kubrin, 2005), "hedonistic" (Diamond, Bermudez, & Schensul, 2006; Herd, 2005; Herd, 2008), "prideful", and "conscious-raising" (Martinez, 1997; Rose, 1994; Stapleton, 1998. The value and necessity of power, privilege, wealth, respect, safety, and acknowledgment are clear and understandable given the environments of impoverished marginalized communities (Simmons & George, 2001). These messages cannot be separated from the American context in which they have been created; the ghetto. Thus they are reflections of larger American systems and values (i.e., hegemonic masculinity [Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005], hegemonic patriarchy [Oware, 2007], racialized class systems, consumerism, the myth of meritocracy, and the media's love affair with sex, drugs, and violence [Dyson, 1996]). However, they also constitute the resistant voice of marginalized oppressed people who find empowerment and forge resilience through individual and collective identity (Galinsky et al., 2003; Galinsky et al., 2013) and expression (Martinez, 1997; McDonnell, 1992; Rose, 1994). The messages demonstrate the importance of pride, authenticity (McLeod, 1999; Clay, 2003), agency,

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awareness, and determination in the pursuit of means normally denied to marginalized and oppressed groups (e.g., power, privilege, wealth, respect, safety, and acknowledgment). Findings support the ever-growing association between substance use, glamour, and wealth in Rap music (Herd, 2005). Herd (2009 b) emphasized that, "In this sphere of limited opportunity, expansion of the underground drug economy and heightened criminalization due to the war on drugs, drug selling has become legitimized as a way to escape poverty and powerlessness, and smoking marijuana has become a symbol of freedom and identity" (p. 178). Weitzer and Kubrin (2009) also noted how limited conventional avenues for asserting masculinity and self-esteem coupled with harsh neighborhood conditions governed by race and class fuel unconventional means of winning respect (e.g., violence and the economic/ sexual exploitation of women) for "poor marginalized Black males" (p.8). They represent a "counter culture" where the lack of conventional and socially acceptable institutional avenues (e.g., employment and education) to solidify identity, promote social mobility, and gain safety and/or respect are replaced by more available and socially criticized methods (e.g., sexism, sexual prowess, materialism, violence, substance use, and criminal involvement).

Previous content analyses of Hip-Hop music have mainly relied on the rap lyrics of male artists to inform their findings. This study extends these findings to the lyrics of female rap artists. Indeed, it appears that female Hip-Hop artists invoke messages similar to their male counterparts in regard to materialism, violence, and substance use (Keyes, 2004; Oware, 2007). However females also include messages of female empowerment, agency, and womanism (Phillips et al., 2005; Skeggs, 1993). Oware (2007) urged researchers to increase scholarship that, "specifically focuses on the ways that women,

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especially Black women, potentially disempower themselves" (p.798). It was clear that female rap artists used methods towards empowerment within a patriarchal hegemonic discourse that could be interpreted by some as empowering (e.g., reappropriating gendered and racial stigma labels, promoting their sexual agency, and objectifying men) and by others as disempowering (e.g., self-objectifying, depicting themselves as providing sex in exchange for resources, and objectifying other women) or reinforcing the same patriarchy which oppresses them. For example, Oware (2007) terms this portrayal as a "man's woman" who, "…imitates and reinscribes a White supremacist, misogynist structure" (p. 798), undermining the very empowerment that is often evoked in the same song. Alternatively, Skeggs (1993), celebrates female rappers' ability to create, "a popular space for women to speak a sexuality which is about their desires in a way which is ungovernable and impossible to contain, yet is automatically located with control, fun, autonomy and independence" (p. 17) whereby they cease to become sexual objects and instead take the form of sexual subjects.

Perhaps the most interesting finding in this study is the prevalence of prideful identity, empowerment, and conscious raising messages in the lyrics of 4th generation Hip-Hop. Termed in this paper as "urban consciousness, identity, and pride", these messages focused on authenticating one's self, defining one's culture, displaying pride through socially creative identification, and voicing urbanized oppressed grievances, circumstances, and systemic understanding. These messages appeared to facilitate individual and collective identity, protection, self-esteem, and pride. Conscious-raising lyrical themes aimed at empowering and informing youth regarding socio-political forces, oppression, systems of inequality, and injustice are history markers of the post-civil rights

era that birthed Hip-Hop in the disenfranchised urban neighborhoods of the Bronx, NY in the 1970's. These results expand this lineage and provide contemporary examples of an urbanized socialization process whereby Hip-Hop lyrics reinforce the self-governing power of the community regarding the "code of the street", authenticity, and what is valued by the culture. Indeed, groups that attempt to renegotiate negative attributes associated with their group (e.g., the stereotype of urban poor youth as criminals and drug dealers; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) may employ strategies like restricted in group comparisons (e.g., only comparing themselves to other Hip-Hop community members) and changing the dimensions by which the group bases their identity (e.g., valuing a violent resume, drug sales, arrest records, real vs. fake, substance use, etc.) in order to allow normally disadvantaged group members to feel relatively advantaged (e.g., feeling pride about being the best drug dealer in your neighborhood, the most violent, or the baddest bitch; Galinsky et al., 2003; Galinsky et al., 2013). Also, the reclamation of racialized and gendered stigma labels throughout the lyrics of fourth generation Hip-Hop demonstrate another strategy of group revaluation by which stigmatized communities reclaim the power of a word that has been used historically to exclude and dishonor them, by using it as a term of empowerment in order to bolster individual and group self-esteem (e.g., the use of nigga and bitch; Galinsky et al., 2003; Galinsky et al., 2013). I argue that these messages are cultural strengths, signs of social creativity, and potential group/individual protective factors that are often overlooked in research that seeks to scape goat Hip-Hop for society's social ills, focus solely on the negative messages found in the genre devoid of appropriate broader cultural context, and/or dismiss the inclusion of the terms "nigga" and "bitch" as mere shock value.

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Limitations

There are important limitations related to this study that need to be addressed. The coding team consisted of two male coders (one African-American male and one Puerto Rican male). There was one female coder (Cuban-Mexican American). There were no female African-American coders. Having an equal representation of male to female coders and African-American to Latino/a ethnic composition of the coding team would have been preferred. However, efforts were made to ensure the coders identified with, were knowledgeable about, and represented the Hip-Hop urban culture. A second limitation of the study involves the definitions of thematic categories resulting in potential underestimates of the following themes: 1) reappropriation of stigma labels, 2) drive and ambition, and 3) struggle and resilience. Thematic definitions requiring a clear positive adjective or intent to reappropriate stigma labels may have excluded more nuanced representations of homosociality (e.g., "I got love for my niggas"), group empowering language (e.g., "I am that bitch, and don't forget that you are too"), and reappropriations that lacked a clear adjectives (e.g., "I'm that nigga"). Themes that required both elements of a category to be present (e.g., struggle and resilience, drive and ambition) may have underestimated instances of each individual element (e.g., instances where artists simply mention their struggles).

An additional limitation was related to the sample, which consisted of the most popular male and female rap artist songs for the years 2004-2014. The sample is representative of the 4th generation's most "popular" rap songs; however, it was not derived from the entire population of rap songs available for that time period. It is possible that this specific sample excludes non-radio friendly songs, underground,

independent, or local Hip-Hop artists that may express influential and differing messages in their lyrics. However, the majority of female rap songs were selected based on *iTunes* popularity rankings and *YouTube* views that may not have corresponded with radio play. This introduced more diversity in the song sample beyond "commercialized" and censored radio-friendly Hip-Hop music. Thus the sample is representative of the most popular and most frequently heard male and female rap themes of the 4th generation (2004-2014). Also, without contact with the rap artists themselves there is no way to ascertain if their lyrics are real-life accounts, artistic dramatizations, fantasy, or industry driven themes (e.g., increasing violence and sex in lyrics to drive profits). Finally, the themes and experiences presented in each artist's lyrics may not be the experience of all inner city impoverished youth. And although Hip-Hop music was created originally by Black and Latino inner-city youth, and the artists are often of the same cultural makeup, it does not mean that the worldview present in their lyrics is universal or accurate to all Black and Latino people or all Black/Latino inner city residents.

Implications for Practice

Anti-rap attitudes have been suggested to serve as a proxy for anti-Black attitudes (Dyson, 1996; Fried, 1999; Noe, 1995; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2007) particularly through use of the responsibility stereotype (Reyna, 2000; Reyna, 2008; Reyna, Brandt, & Vicki, 2009). According to Reyna et al., (2009) White Americans who held anti-rap attitudes (e.g., perceived rap as angry, violent, deviant, disrespectful, and crime based) were more likely to perceive Blacks as deserving and responsible for their economic plight due to the perception that individuals in the Hip-Hop community reinforce and glorify violation of Western value ideals (e.g., hard work through legal means, peace, and respect). It

appears this perception may lead some White American individuals to justify anti-Black personal and political discrimination. Counselors, the institutions within which they work, and the interdisciplinary partnerships within this community may not be exempt from such findings. Counselors can expect internal and external resistance regarding provision of services to Hip-Hop clients that validate and infuse their own cultural values, in particular those perceived by some White Americans as "counter-culture" into meaningful interventions. However, Sue et al., (1992) remind us that culturally appropriate intervention strategies include understanding how, "institutional barriers prevent minorities from using mental health services" (p. 482), requires, "attending to and working to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory contexts in conducting evaluations and providing interventions" (p. 483) and necessitates the development of, "sensitivity to issues of oppression, sexism, heterosexism, elitism, and racism" (p. 483).

The data in this study suggests that supposed Western value system violations (e.g., exploitation of women, crime, violence, etc.) are actually reflective of larger societal norms, serve as alternative forms of identity building, and may potentially serve as cultural capital for individuals in the Hip-Hop community due to the social political realities of their marginalized status. Counselors can use this understanding to: 1) validate client's aversive experiences and resilience, 2) explore how the messages in this study form the basis of our client's identity, 3) identify how the cultural capital gained through such identities is adaptive in the client's environments, and 4) help clients use their critical consciousness to evaluate and redefine the messages that influence their behaviors. Counselors can also help their clients prepare for, understand, and cope with the negative reactions and discrimination they may experience from individuals and institutions who

hold anti-rap attitudes. Further, the knowledge gained regarding the oppression, mistreatment, and discrimination of marginalized populations, such as those of the urban Hip-Hop community present in rap lyrics, should be used to create and evaluate macro and micro level interventions for poor disenfranchised urban youth (Vera & Speight, 2003).

At the micro level, knowledge of the themes in the fourth generation of Hip-Hop music may support counselors' confidence and increase their willingness to use Hip-Hop lyrics in therapy. Allen (2005) noted the importance that the therapist is genuine and knowledgeable in their appreciation and understanding of rap music in order to be most effective. Hip-Hop therapy is informed by established therapeutic practices like narrative, biblio-, music, and behavior therapy, modalities that have demonstrated efficacy to empower marginalized clients, to work from a strengths based approach, and to promote positive change. Hip-Hop lyrics can also serve as a projective means that allow clients to discuss and to disclose information that would otherwise be more difficult to obtain (e.g., criminal involvement, sexual practices, sexism, domestic violence, etc.) in a traditional therapeutic format (Allen, 2005; Ciadriello, 2003; Elligan, 2004; Tyson, 2003). In addition to the themes discussed and lyric examples provided in this study, scholars have created Hip-Hop therapy (HHT) models (Elligan, 2004, Tyson, 2003), provided sample interpretations of lyrics (Kobin & Tyson, 2006), and developed rap attitude assessment tools (Tyson, 2005; Tyson, 2006) to assist in this goal. Kobin and Tyson (2006) recommend the use of Hip-Hop lyrics to explore racial identity development, feminism, violence prevention, empowerment, "deviant values", and substance use with clients; the findings of this study support those recommendations. Lastly, counselors can use the

most current fourth generation lyrics in HHT to promote client engagement (Elligan, 2004; Tyson, 2003), impact clients' evaluation of counselors' empathic concern and relatedness (Allen, 2005; Tyson, 2002), place the client and their worldview at the center of the therapeutic engine (Rogers, 1951), and potentially strengthen the working alliance.

At the macro level, counselors and mental health professionals can challenge the deficit based view of Hip-Hop culture and integrate this knowledge with their other roles (e.g., teachers, advisors, advocates, consultants, administrators, policy makers, and role models inside and outside of the profession). Listed below are just a few ways this can be accomplished:

1. Develop sensitivity trainings for service professionals who interact with the Hip-Hop community (e.g., teachers, the police department, community leaders, probation officers, etc.).

2. Serve as an organizing support for individuals within the Hip-Hop community who would like to promote community lead agendas (e.g., facilitating a town hall meeting with youth and elders in the urban community to discuss the impact of Hip-Hop stereotypes on their experiences of daily living).

3. Become knowledgeable about Hip-Hop based service organizations (e.g., Hip-Hop for Change, The Cipher, Hip Hop 4 Life, Hip Hop Sisters Network, Hip Hop Heals) that you and your client's can connect with for further support.

Implications for Future Research

Future studies should focus on in depth examinations of individual themes in order to provide a more nuanced perspective and understanding of the core messages in Hip-Hop music. Further, because these messages are reflective of the period within which the

music is produced, generational comparisons of themes as well as continued examinations of each succeeding generation in the genre is encouraged. The themes identified in this study should be validated and expanded by members of the Hip-Hop community. It is important to understand which messages Hip-Hop community members consider authentic and inauthentic. It is equally important to understand for whom certain messages are most relevant (e.g., young or old, minority or majority, females or males, etc.). It may be fruitful to survey individuals who identify with Hip-Hop culture regarding the metaphors, double entendres, and lyrics that most resonate with the struggles they face and the strengths they hold. Those results, for example, could be used to create a collection of lyrics accompanied with interpretations that counselors can use in therapy.

Continued empirical study of the effectiveness of Hip-Hop based interventions and Hip-Hop therapy is needed, in particular comparison studies of common treatment modalities that are currently being used with this population would be helpful. This also requires an increased understanding of the barriers (e.g., counselor bias, institutional racism, administrative policies, lack of counselor training, lack of Hip-Hop informed assessment tools, counselor-client racial/ethnic differences, etc.) that prevent counselors from being able to create, implement, and offer Hip-Hop based services. Further examination of how the themes in Hip-Hop music affect community members' self-esteem, identity development, ethnic/racialization, prejudice, and critical consciousness could inform such interventions. For example, research examining and contrasting the messages of female rap artists may increase the understanding of the intersection between a Hip-Hop and a female identity. Or research investigating the potential protective and

buffering qualities of urban consciousness, identity, and pride messages could provide scripts that can be used in counseling to harness internal cultural assets that combat marginalization.

Finally, future research could take a community based participatory research approach by involving stakeholders in the Hip-Hop community (e.g., listeners, artists, recording executives, urban marginalized families, etc.) in the creation of research that investigates how Hip-Hop lyrics can be used as a vehicle toward positive social change. Opportunities to facilitate the communication between listeners, producers of Rap music, and interdisciplinary service providers (e.g., artists, production companies, music streaming organizations, health care providers, teachers, police agencies, counselors, etc.) may help the community to address health, social, and economic issues based on what is being represented and /or ignored in the music.

Conclusion

The findings from the present study document the pursuit of success, the importance of identity, and the level of consciousness that is prevalent in the messages of fourth generation Hip-Hop music. Counselors can use the data from this study to better understand their client's worldview, values, and belief systems. Future research may explore how these messages and values can inform treatment modalities' efficacy. Despite the criticisms and controversial nature of some of the messages in Hip-Hop, counselors and researchers should continue to examine the positive and empowering influence of the genre on the community. The data can be used to validate clients' resilience by understanding their aversive experiences and mobilizing client's cultural resources. As the famous rapper, Tupac (2Pac) Shakur, wrote:

…you wouldn't ask why
the rose that grew from the concrete had damaged petals.
On the contrary, we would all celebrate its tenacity.
We would all love it's will to reach the sun
Well, we are the roses—this is the concrete
and these are my damaged petals.
Don't ask me why, ask me how!
                    (2009, "The Rose that Grew from Concrete")

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Discography

This list contains the rap songs cited in this thesis. Written song lyrics were obtained from online archive lyric websites (e.g., azlyrics.com; metrolyrics.com)

A$ap Rocky. 2013. "Fuckin Problems". *Long.Live.ASAP*

Big Sean. 2011. "My Last". *Finally Famous*

Brianna Perry. 2012. "Marilyn Monroe". *Face Off*

Brooke Valentine. 2005. "Girlfight". *Chain Letter*

B.o.B. 2010. "Nothin' On You". *B.o.B. Presents: The Adventures of Bobby Ray*

Bobby Shmurda. 2014. "Hot Nigga". *Shmurda She Wrote*

Chris Brown.2011. "Look At Me Now". *F.A.M.E.*

Da Brat. (2004). "In Love Wit Chu". *Limelite, Luv & Niteclubz*

Dem Franchize Boyz. 2006. "Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It". *On Top of Our Game*

Drake. 2009. "Best I Ever Had". *Thank Me Later*

———. 2010. "Over". *Thank Me Later*

———. 2012. "The Motto". *Take Care*

———. 2012. "Take Care". *Take Care*

Diamond. 2011. "Lotta Money". *Cocaine Waitress*

DJ Khaled. 2011. "I'm On One". *We the Best Forever*

Eminem. 2014. "The Monster". *The Marshall Mathers LP 2*

Eve. 2007. "Tamborounie". *Here I am*

———. 2013. "Eve". (2013). *Lip Lock*

Fabolous. 2007. "Make Me Better". *From Nothin' to Somethin'*

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Flo Rida. 2008. "Low". *Mail on Sundays*

Foxy Brown. 2008. "When The Lights Go Out". *Brooklyn's Don Diva*

Kanye West. 2004. "Jesus Walks". *The College Dropout*

——————. 2005. "Gold Digger". *Late Registration*

——————. 2009. "Heartless". *808s & Heartbreak*

——————. 2011. "All of the Lights". *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*

——————. 2012. "Mercy". *Cruel Summer*

Iggy Azalea. 2014. "Fancy". *The New Classic*

——————. 2014. "Black Widow". *The New Classic*

——————. 2014. "Work". *The New Classic*

Jacki-O. 2004. "Pussy (Real Good)". *Poe Little Rich Girl*

Jay Z. 2004. "Dirt Off Your Shoulder". *The Black Album*

———. 2012. "Niggas in Paris". *Watch the Throne*

———. 2013. "Holy Grail". *Magna Carta*

J. Cole. 2013. "Power Trip". *Born Sinner*

Jean Grae. 2008. "Away With Me". *The Evil Jeanius*

Juvenile. 2004. "Slow Motion". *Juve the Great*

Kelis. 2004. "Milkshake". *Tasty*

Kendrick Lamar. 2013. "Poetic Justice". *Good Kid, m.A.A.d city*

Kid Ink. 2014. "Show Me". *My Own Lane*

Kirko Bangz. 2012. "Drank In My Cup". *Progression 2: A Young Texas Playa*

Lola Monroe. 2011. "Overtime". *Batteries Not Included*

Lil Jon. 2005. "Lovers & Friends". *Crunk Juice*

————. 2006. "Snap Yo Fingers". *Crunk Rock*

Lil' Kim. 2005. "Lighters Up". *The Naked Truth*

————. 2006. "Whoa". *The Naked Truth*

Lil Mama. 2007. "Lip Gloss". *VYP: Voice of the Young People*

————. 2007. "G Slide". *VYP: Voice of the Young People*

————. 2008. "Shawty Get Loose". *VYP: Voice of the Young People*

————. 2009. "What it is? Strike A Pose". *VYP: Voice of the Young People*

————. 2009. "L.I.F.E.". *VYP: Voice of the Young People*

Lil Wayne. 2008. "Lollipop". *The Carter III*

————. 2008. "A Milli". *The Carter III*

Ludacris. 2010. "How Low". *Battle of the Sexes*

MC Lyte. 2004. "Ride Wit Me". *Da Underground Heat*

M.I.A. 2009. "Paper Planes". *Kala*

Mims. 2007. "This Is Why I'm Hot". *Music is My Savior*

Missy Elliott. 2004. "I'm Really Hot". *This Is Not A Test*

————. 2005. "Lose Control". *The Cookbook*

————. 2005. "We Run This". *The Cookbook*

————. 2008. "Ching A Ling". *Step Up 2 the Streets soundtrack*

Nelly. 2006. "Grillz". *Sweatsuit*

Nicki Minaj. 2007. "Jump Off". *Playtime is Over*

————. 2010. "Right Thru Me". *Pink Friday*

————. 2010. "Your Love". *Pink Friday*

————. 2010. "Fly". *Pink Friday*

——————. 2011. "Moment 4 Life". *Pink Friday*

——————. 2011. "Super Bass". *Pink Friday*

——————. 2011. "Did it on 'Em". *Pink Friday*

——————. 2012. "Beez In The Trap". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded*

——————. 2012. "Stupid Hoe". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded*

——————. 2012. "Starships". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded*

——————. 2012. "Roman Reloaded". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded*

——————. 2013. "I'm Legit". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded, The Re-Up*

——————. 2013. "High School". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded, The Re-Up*

——————. 2013. "I Endorse These Strippers". *Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded, The Re-Up*

——————. 2014. "Anaconda". *The Pinkprint*

——————. 2014. "Pills N Potions". *The Pinkprint*

Outkast. 2004. "The Way You Move". *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below*

Pitbull. 2014. "Timber". *Meltdown*

Plies. 2007. "Shawty". *The Real Testament*

——. 2008. "Bust It Baby". *Definition of Real*

Rasheeda. 2010. "Boss Chick". *Certified Hot Chick*

——————. 2013. "Mary Me". *Boss Chick Music*

Remy Ma. 2006. "Conceited". *There's Something About Remy: Based on a True Story*

——————. 2007. "Thug Love". *There's Something About Remy: Based on a True Story*

Shawnna. 2005. "Shake That Shit". *Worth tha Weight*

——————. 2006. "Getting' Some". *Block Music*

Shop Boyz. 2007. "Party Like a Rockstar". *Rockstar Mentality*

Snoop Dogg. 2005. "Drop It Like It's Hot". *R & G (Rhythm & Gangsta): The Masterpiece*

Terror Squad. 2004. "Lean Back". *True Story*

The Game. 2005. "How We Do". *The Documentary*

T.I. 2006. "What You Know". *King*

——. 2008. "Whatever You Like". *Paper Trail*

——. 2009. "Dead and Gone". *Paper Trail*

——. 2009. "Live Your Life". *Paper Trail*

Timbaland. 2010. "Say Something". *Shock Value II*

Trina. 2006. "Don't Trip". *Glamorest Life*

——. 2006. "Here We Go". *Glamorest Life*

——. 2008. "Single Again". *Still da Baddest*

——. 2009. "Look Back At Me". *Still da Baddest*

——. 2009. "Wish I Never Met You". *Still da Baddest*

——. 2010. "Dang A Lang". *Amazin'*

Unk. 2007. "Walk It Out". *Stomp the Yard*

Waka Flocka Flame. 2011. "No Hands". *Flockaveli*

Wale. 2013. "Bad". *The Gifted*

YG. 2014. "My Nigga". *My Krazy Life*

Ying Yang Twins   . 2005. "Wait (The Whisper Song)". *U.S.A. (United State of Atlanta)*

Young Money. 2009. "Every Girl". *We Are Young Money*

————————. 2010. "Bedrock". *We Are Young Money*

Yung Joc. 2006. "It's Goin' Down". *New Joc City*

APPENDIX A

FOURTH GENERATION TOP HIP-HOP SONGS (2004-2014)

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 4	Terror Squad	Lean Back	5	Kelis	Milkshake	40
	Kanye West	Jesus Walks	7	Missy Elliott	I'm Really Hot	*
	Juvenile	Slow Motion	11	MC Lyte	Ride Wit Me	*
	Outkast	The Way You Move	13	Da Brat	In Love Wit Chu	*
	Jay Z	Dirt Off Your Shoulder	14	Jacki-O	Pussy (Real Good)"	*
	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 5	Lil Jon	Lovers & Friends	3	Missy Elliott	Lose Control	49
	Snoop Dogg	Drop It Like It's Hot	5	Lil' Kim	Lighters Up	69
	The Game	How We Do	8	Brooke Valentine	Girlfight	70
	Ying Yang Twins	Wait (The Whisper Song)	9	Shawnaa	Shake That Shit	*
	Kanye West	Gold Digger	14	Missy Elliott	We Run This	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 6	Yung Joc	It's Going Down	1	Shawwna	Getting' Some	20
	Lil Jon	Snap Yo Fingers	2	Trina	Don't Trip	*
	Dem Franchize Boyz	Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It	3	Lil' Kim	Whoa	*
	Nelly	Grillz	4	Trina	Here We Go	*
	T.I.	What You Know	5	Remy Ma	Conceited	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 7	Fabolous	Make Me Better	1	Nicki Minaj	Jump Off	*
	Plies	Shawty	2	Lil Mama	Lip Gloss	*
	Mims	This Is Why I'm Hot	3	Eve	Tamborounie	*
	Unk	Walk It Out	4	Lil Mama	G Slide	*
	Shop Boyz	Party Like a Rockstar	5	Remy Ma	Thug Love	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 8	Lil Wayne	Lollipop	1	Jean Grae	Away With Me	*
	Flo Rida	Low	2	Lil Mama	Shawty Get Loose	*
	Plies	Bust It Baby	3	Missy Elliott	Ching A Ling	*
	T.I.	Whatever You Like	4	Trina	Single Again	*
	Lil Wayne	A Milli	5	Foxy Brown	When The Lights Go Out	*
	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 0 9	Drake	Best I Ever Had	1	Lil Mama	What it is? Strike A Pose	*
	T.I.	Dead and Gone	2	Trina	Look Back At Me	*
	T.I.	Live Your Life	3	Lil Mama	L.I.F.E.	*
	Kanye West	Heartless	4	Trina	Wish I Never Met You	*
	Young Money	Every Girl	5	M.I.A.	Paper Planes	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2	B.o.B.	Nothin' On You	1	Rasheeda	Boss Chick	*
0	Young Money	Bedrock	2	Nicki Minaj	Right Thru Me	*
1	Drake	Over	3	Trina	Dang A Lang	*
0	Ludacris	How Low	4	Nicki Minaj	Your Love	*
	Timbaland	Say Something	5	Nicki Minaj	Fly	*
	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2	Chris Brown	Look At Me Now	1	Nicki Minaj	Moment 4 Life	4
0	DJ Khaled	I'm On One	2	Nicki Minaj	Super Bass	9
1	Waka Flocka Flame	No Hands	3	Nicki Minaj	Did it on 'Em	23
1	Big Sean	My Last	5	Diamond	Lotta Money	*
	Kanye West	All of the Lights	6	Lola Monroe	Overtime	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 1 2	Drake	The Motto	1	Nicki Minaj	Beez In The Trap	*
	Kanye West	Mercy	2	Brianna Perry	Marilyn Monroe	*
	Jay-Z	Niggas in Paris	3	Nicki Minaj	Stupid Hoe	*
	Kirko Bangz	Drank In My Cup	4	Nicki Minaj	Starships	*
	Drake	Take Care	5	Nicki Minaj	Roman Reloaded	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 1 3	J. Cole	Power Trip	1	Nicki Minaj	I'm Legit	*
	Wale	Bad	2	Eve	Eve	*
	A$ap Rocky	Fuckin Problems	3	Nicki Minaj	High School	*
	Jay-Z	Holy Grail	4	Nicki Minaj	I Endorse These Strippers	*
	Kendrick Lamar	Poetic Justice	5	Rasheeda	Mary Me	*

	MALE			FEMALE		
	Artist	**Title**	**Rank**	**Artist**	**Title**	**Rank**
2 0 1 4	Pitbull	Timber	2	Iggy Azalea	Fancy	1
	Eminem	The Monster	3	Iggy Azalea	Black Widow	4
	Kid Ink	Show Me	6	Nicki Minaj	Anaconda	5
	Bobby Shmurda	Hot Nigga	7	Nicki Minaj	Pills N Potions	17
	YG	My Nigga	9	Iggy Azalea	Work	*

Note. N = 110. Ranking is provided for songs selected from *Billboard's* annual "Hot Rap Songs" listing. Non- rap artists were excluded from the sample. Asterisks indicate female artists that were selected by referencing *BET's* "Best Female Hip-Hop Artist" awardee and nominee list. Final song selections for *BET* selected artists were based off of *iTunes* song popularity for the nominee/award year and *YouTube* views.

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY

1.	Ace	a brand of Armad de Brignac brut champagne that comes in a signature gold bottle
2.	Act right	a liquor, spirit, or beer
3.	Aint trickin if you got it	having the financial means to spend on a partner is not considered financial exploitation
4.	Babysitting	to drink alcohol at a slow pace
5.	Band	a unit term for a thousand dollars
6.	Blow	1) cocaine, 2) reference to oral sex, and/or 3) the act of becoming famous and successful
7.	Blunts	a cigar that has been hollowed out replacing the tobacco with marijuana
8.	Bust that open	a term used to encourage women to open their legs and/or vaginal area
9.	Cakes	1) a large rear end, 2) money, or 3) a unit term for a kilo of cocaine
10.	Camel toe	the appearance of a camel's toe in a woman's genital region resulting from tight fitting clothes
11.	Choosing	showing attraction to, or being selected by a potential mate
12.	Come correct	to do something the right way
13.	Concrete Jungle	a hardcore, grimy, crime ridden city or ghetto
14.	Cream	1) an acronym for Cash Rules Everything Around Me as referenced in the 1993 Wu-Tang song C.R.E.A.M.,and/or 2) a synonym for money
15.	Dog waddy	a provocative dance
16.	Donk	a classic large domestic car lifted and fitted with 20" wheels or greater, with bold candy paint and designer inspired "patterned" interiors
17.	Dope boys	a young male or any person who distributes illicit substances

18. Down to ride	willing to do anything in particular for people whom they are close to
19. Drank	a codeine and promethazine mix that people sip and sell also known as purple stuff, oil, and sizzurp
20. Faze	to bother
21. Fiend	a person who craves or is addicted to a certain substance, usually a drug
22. Flow	a rappers ability to vocalize a rhythmic and complex string of rhymes that fit together in a logical and seamless manner
23. Freaky	an adjective used to describe a person who enjoys being kinky, wild in bed, or being sexually promiscuous
24. Get clapped	to get shot or shot at
25. Get it how I live	to use the means which are readily available to obtain whatever one desires
26. Get lifted	getting high
27. Get straight	to get something right or to correct something
28. Go down	oral sex, or the lowering of one's body when dancing
29. Grinding	(1) to sell illegal contraband for money, 2) to make money, either legally or illegally, and/or 3) to work hard
30. Hard	a tough persona achieved through surviving poverty and difficult circumstances by being resourceful, pragmatic, and/or cold
31. Haters	a person who feels anger and/or jealousy for someone who has succeeded in something they have worked hard for
32. Hoes	a shorter term for the word whore
33. Hood	1) the ghetto, 2) someone who is from the ghetto, and/or 3) someone who acts like they are from the ghetto
34. Hustling	making money from any endeavor
35. Kitty kat	a vagina

36. Nino	a character in the film New Jack City who is the head of a crack dealing network based in Harlem
37. Real	the action of being true, authentic, or genuine to the code of ethics of one's self, culture, and/or environment
38. Shining	to show off or stand out through the visibility of one's material wealth and abundance (e.g., jewelry, diamonds, cars, etc.).
39. Stacks	a unit measure for one thousand dollars
40. Swang dem thangs	throwing punches
41. Telly	a hotel
42. Trapping	1) the act of selling dope on the corner and/or 2) a place/neighborhood where drug transactions take place
43. Trick	1) a man who patronizes a prostitute or 2) a woman that teases or provides sexual favors in order to get her bills paid or accumulate material goods
44. Yap	to steal from or rob someone
45. Zone	used to express a state of extreme relaxation, exceptional performance, or an ounce/28 grams of marijuana

APPENDIX C

CODEBOOK

THEME 1:   CELEBRATION OF PERSONAL SUCCESS

THEME 2:   STRUGGLE AND RESILLIENCE

THEME 3:   DRIVE AND AMBITION

THEME 4:   URBAN CONCIOUSNESS/ IDENTITY/ PRIDE

THEME 5:   REAPPROPRIATION OF STIGMA LABELS

THEME 6:   READY AND WILLING TO BECOME VIOLENT

THEME 7:   PROVIDING SEX IN EXCHANGE FOR RESOURCES

THEME 8:   PROVIDING RESOURCES IN EXCHANGE FOR SEX

THEME 9:   SEXUAL PROWESS/SEDUCTIVE POWER

THEME 10: SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION

THEME 11: SELF-OBJECTIFICATION

THEME 12: RECREATIONAL DRUG USE

CODING RULES

- DO NOT CODE FOR MORE THAN 2 HOURS WITHOUT TAKING A BREAK
- CODE WITH MINIMAL DISTRACTION (E.G., NO MUSIC, NO TV, ETC.)
- CODE ONE THEME AT A TIME (E.G., REVIEW THE CODE IN THE CODEBOOK AND THEN LOOK FOR IT IN THE SONG)
- **CODES CAN BE IN MULTIPLE CATEGORIES** (E.G., IT IS OK TO MARK SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION AND SELF OBJECTIFICATION IF YOU FEEL THEY BOTH ARE PRESENT)
- ONCE YOU FIND PRESENCE OF A CODE UNDERLINE THE TEXT AS WELL AS MARK IT ON YOUR CODING SHEET (I.E., YOU DO NOT NEED TO KEEP CODING FOR A THEME ONCE YOU HAVE FOUND 1 EXAMPLE)
- IF YOU FEEL A CATEGORY KEEPS COMING UP THAT YOU HAVE NO THEME FOR OR THERE ARE IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE USE THE NOTES/COMMENTS BOX

Theme 1: Celebration of Personal Success

Definition: this category includes lyrics aimed at celebrating, boasting about, or acknowledging <u>personal</u> success. Lyrics in this category include reference to being highly visible as successful due to artistic accomplishments, envy caused in others, living a luxurious lifestyle, having material wealth, and being treated with special privilege. This category also includes being admired/imitated, nicknames given due to success, and the dissin' of competitors for not being as great/rich/talented as the artist.

Examples include the following:

- Highly visible: I'm Ballin, stunting, shining[38*], flossing, I'm at the top

- Artist accomplishments: topping the charts; being listened to around the world; sales (e.g., 60 million copies sold); statistics/resume

- Admired/imitated: nicknames (e.g., they call me number 1, y'all trying to be me but you can't)

- Causing envy: having "haters[31*]", being controversial

- Lifestyle: reference to being rich and famous, ease of lifestyle, lack of problems, replacement of drug work with rapping

- Material wealth: homes, custom/foreign cars, expensive clothing (designer), jewelry, high quality and luxury assets, money, finances, financial status; exaggerated spending

- Privilege: trips, VIP treatment (pass metal detectors), treatment not afforded to their peers, being catered to

- Dissin' competitors: evoking images of superiority (e.g., I am the best rapper alive you are just a jive); elevation of their own talent/skill/ability/identity (e.g., I am a Martian I am so out of this world); competitive nature (e.g., tell whoever is number 1 they haven't heard me yet)

Theme 2: Struggle <u>AND</u> Resilience

Definition: this category includes references to struggles with poverty, disillusionment, discouragement received from others, and feelings of being alone/unsupported. It also includes lyrics referencing the overcoming of adversity, surpassing limitations, and success gained through believing in oneself. This is also referenced by stating one is not affected by negative critiques and indifferent to people's attempts to dampen their success. The example needs to 1) clearly describe a struggle and 2) explain/discuss/ or depict themselves as having overcome the struggle.

Examples include the following:

- My teacher said I would never amount to anything, now she's asking for a ticket to my show
- It was lonely when I was hungry, now that I'm paid everyone has their hand out
- I was on my grind[29*] day and night through the cold winters until I could finally rest
- It didn't matter what they said, I kept doing me and now I'm laughing to the bank

Theme 3: Drive <u>AND</u> Ambition

Definition: this category describes a desire/determination to succeed and the objects of the artists' ambition (e.g., money, fame, resources, distinction, accomplishments). The example needs to clearly have both components: 1) dedication/drive and 2) the object of the artist's ambition.

Examples include the following:

- I'm going to get rich or die trying.

- I won't stop until I take all your money and labels beg me to stop.

- I'm going to keep spitting until my name is on a blimp.

- I'm not going to stop until all my babies are fed and wearing Jordans.

Theme 4: Urban Consciousness/Identity/Pride

Definition: Representative and/or authentic of the urban population based on location, neighborhood experiences, knowledge of street code, a sense of belonging and the ability to understand historical and current socio political interactions between ones community and authority, poverty, violence, opportunities, and crime. This category also includes these urbanized representations as forms of identity and sources of pride.

Components of examples include:

- Location: hood[33*], specific neighborhood, streets, gang, general location (east vs. west, Midwest, down south)

- Drug sales: knowledge of pricing, how to make and sell drugs, drug industry knowledge, nicknames for success with selling drugs (e.g., good Coke Joe), drug selling resume (e.g., I get that bird for the low), team/coworkers

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- Street Knowledge/Etiquette; Street Group Norms: adherence to the street code, disapproval of those who violate street code, instructions on how to survive or mange common street problems (e.g., how to deal with betrayal, how to decide who to trust, how to preserve your assets)

- Ability to make accurate distinctions: real[37*] and fake, hard[30*] and soft, lie and truth, unique and basic, values and trends, danger and a protective illusion (e.g., his bark is bigger than his bite, he is not going to do anything about it)

- Knowledge/Advice/Criticism of the rap game: advice, instruction, forewarning, criticism

- Relationships with Authority/Institutions (e.g., law enforcement, judicial system, prison, teachers): harassment, discrimination, exploitation, persecution, disobedience/avoidance of authority/institutions

- Sense of Belonging: street nickname, specific friends (e.g., ask Migo about me; I be that boy running with Juvi and Lil tunchi), permission to travel to/through dangerous neighborhoods by other gangsters (e.g., I have a g-pass in Miami from D Loc)

- Hip-Hop/urban knowledge and history: references to identifiable rap history or urban figures relevant to urban identity (e.g., Like Pac I was a rose that grew from concrete)

- Pride: expressed through nicknames, representing their city (e.g., I rep LA all day, I rep LA to the fullest, I have my city on my back), or reference to themselves (e.g., I'm a queen)

Theme 5: Reappropriation of Stigma Labels

Definition: using derogatory names for women (e.g., Bitch, broad, chick), racial minorities, and black men in self-reference in a way that expresses pride, self-approval, affection, and empowerment. Only consider examples for a group which the artist belongs to (e.g., only women can reappropriate female stigmatizing labels; only minorities can reappropriate stigma labels for race, etc.).

- Pride/ self-approval: (e.g., I'm the baddest bitch, I'm the number one nigga)

- Affection towards others: (e.g., that's my bff that's my bitch; I love my nigga)

- Empowerment: using the term to join a stigmatized group (e.g., because bad bitches have to stick together)

Theme 6: Ready and Willing to Become Violent

Definition: this category includes reference to guns, violent capacity, violent reputation, a gangster network/ or violent friends, and forewarnings of violence. This includes lyrics aimed at creating a reputable violent identity that is quick tempered, fast to act, fearless, and always ready for violence. Only include examples referencing ACTUAL violence not a metaphor for verbal skill (e.g., I killed him with my flow[22*]).

Examples include:

- Guns: access to guns, abundance of guns, types of guns,

- Violent capacity/ reputation: willingness to kill/commit crimes, mentally unstable (e.g., I'm crazy, I lost my mind, I've caught bodies in the lobby), fearlessness

quick tempered

- Gangster network: having a criminal/violent support system to accomplish any violent task necessary (e.g., my niggas here with me and we ready if you want that beef); gang affiliation (e.g., bloods for life and we don't play); force or team (e.g., my soldiers, my niggas, my goons)

- Forewarnings: prescriptions for dealing with disrespect and potential threat/victimization; elaborate on the violent consequences people will suffer for disrespecting or threatening you (e.g., you'll get found in the dirt, your family will cry at your funeral, a nigga better not try me for me cheese)

Theme 7: Providing Sex in Exchange for Resources

Definition: Assuming the role of and expressing the ability to exchange sex for resources, privileges, wealth, fame, and financial gain or anything the person desires. Implied and explicit willingness to participate in seductive entertainment (e.g., I'll drop it low long as you spend that cash), sexual acts, or sexual relations for resources desired. Make decisions between Theme 7 and 8 by: 1) clarifying the role the artists plays in the exchange (e.g., what is the artist is providing?) and 2) clarifying what the artist is receiving for the exchange (e.g., resources or sex).

Theme 8: Providing Resources in Exchange for Sex

Definition: Ability to attract partners who will provide sex in any way the person desires because of the accumulation of resources (e.g., she waxed me off because she knows I'm

at the top of the game; she did the splits because she knows I'm paid) the person has. An implied or explicit exchange of such resources for sex, sexual entertainment, or sexual seduction (e.g., I'll make it rain if you drop it down on me). Make decisions between Theme 7 and 8 by: 1) clarifying the role the artists plays in the exchange (e.g., what is the artist is providing?) and 2) clarifying what the artist is receiving for the exchange (e.g., resources or sex).

Theme 9: Sexual Prowess/Seductive Power

Definition: this category includes lyrics focused on the individual's ability to attract, dominate, persuade and be sought after by partners. References may include: superior seductive ability, interpersonal skill, and dominance over sexual activity and sexually attractive partners.

- Superior: Claims of sexual ability; stamina; endowment; self-promotion; nickname (e.g., the dickslayer); competitiveness for potential partners, access to and abundance of desirable partners, ability to have more than 1 partner at a time, ability to convince partner to engage in bisexuality (e.g., I'll turn a straight girl bi), access to partners friends as additional sexual partners, no partner is off limits
- Skill: the ability to attract, entice, persuade a partner, to be chased or sought after
- Bravado: Boasting about physical attributes that are desired, ability to draw attention through dance, self-promotion, reputation/nickname, willingness to have rough sex

Theme 10: Sexual Objectification

Definition: references to an individual in terms of their selective traits for sexual pleasure focus on body parts and ability to provide sexual pleasure (e.g., I need a girl with a slim waist and thick thighs; I need a tall brother who can't fit in no boxer briefs). Include examples where any of the following occur: 1) focuses on body parts (e.g., I was staring at her ass), 2) uses object metaphors to describe the person (e.g., mami had the back of a dump truck), 3) indicates the persons use as that of sexual use and enjoyment (e.g., You know what that hoe[32*] is good for, so I let her go down[28*]), and 4) a unidimensional view of a person in sexual terms.

Theme 11: Self-Objectification

Definition: focusing on one's own body parts, or sexually attractive qualities, depicting oneself as tailored for sexual activity (e.g., My lady lumps). Include examples where any of the following occurs in the artist's self-portrayal: 1) focuses on their own body parts (e.g., My ass is the fattest), 2) uses object metaphors to describe themselves (e.g., my dick is long as an anaconda), 3) depicts themselves as suitable for sexual use and enjoyment (e.g., A freak[23*] like me, I'm good to go around), and 4) a unidimensional view of a person in sexual terms (e.g., sex is all I live for).

Theme 12: Recreational Drug Use

Definition: the use of alcohol and drugs to have a good time, relax, cope with distress, warm up sexual encounters, celebrate, etc. This category is not about addiction it is more about the fun, care free, casual, and common use of drugs.

Examples include:

- Let's pop bottles and kiss models.

- My job had me stressing so I lit an L.

- I gave her that Molly so she could get ready for me.