THE ORGANIC GLOBALIZER

HIP HOP, POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, AND MOVEMENT CULTURE

EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER MALONE & GEORGE MARTINEZ, JR.

BLOOMSBURY

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ABOUT THE COVER ART

Symbolism of the cover art: "Organic Globalizer"

The hand gesture in the middle represents the concept of "infinite building" and "knowledge," which represents the fifth element of hip hop culture. This is surrounded by the four original elements of hip hop, which are represented by the presence of the (MC) holding the mic, the turntable (deejay), hand with can of spray paint (graffiti), and the b-boy in a hand stand (breaking). The piece is situated on a globe, with a diverse landscape moving from mountains to buildings. The entire piece is adorned with a leafy, growing vine, which represents the organic nature of the movement.

Muralist (cover art bio: Leidy Rayo (Era) is a visionary Colombian artist, who has been a part of the graffiti movement since 2001 and member of the Global Block Collective since 2011. In 2006, she began working on developing hip hop schools in her home town of Soacha in order to share the tools of empowerment and knowledge with a risk youth. She is currently studying Art Therapy in Juniguiana, Argentina in order to deepen the study of the self, the healing and the symbolism of art. In 2012, she began experimenting with capturing her creativity on the human canvas, the skin, through the art of tattooing. Her vision is the completion of a hip hop cultural center in the municipality of Soacha, Colombia that will be dedicated to providing the tools for personal and intellectual growth, across the social, political, and cultural spectrums.

CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Malone, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of American Politics and Chair of the Political Science Department at Pace University's New York City Campus. Since 2011, he has also served as Policy Director for New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera. Malone's academic research focuses primarily on race and American political development, democracy, and citizenship. He is the author of *Between Freedom and Bondage: Race, Party, and Voting Rights in the Antebellum North* (Routledge Press, 2008) and co-author and co-editor of *Occupying Political Science: The Occupy Wall Street Movement from New York to the World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Malone also reviews books for the *Law and Politics Book Review*. Malone is a nationally recognized teacher of civic engagement and public values. During the 2000 presidential campaign, he helped produce and appeared in the PBS show for teens *In the Mix*, teaching young voters about analyzing campaign ads. In January 2004, he was identified by the *Washington Post* as one of the nation's most innovative professors. From 2004 to 2010, Malone co-taught a course on American Politics and Public Policy with C-SPAN's Executive Producer Steve Scully that aired every Friday afternoon on the C-SPAN networks.

George Martinez, Jr., also known as "George Rithm Martinez," is an award winning artist, activist, and educator who blurs the lines between theory and practice through the combination of hip hop culture, grassroots organizing, and social entrepreneurship. George is an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at Pace University, a celebrated U.S. hip hop ambassador, and a political visionary. Martinez is the founder and President of the Global Block Foundation and the host of the nationally broadcast radio show *Critical Reboot*. Martinez has guest lectured and performed at universities throughout the United States and around the world and has appeared in more than 200 news outlets including MSNBC, Huff Post Live, the *New York Times, USA Today,* CNN Español, and the *New Yorker*. In 2013, Martinez was named as one of New York's 40 Under 40 Rising Latino Stars.

Craig Douglas Albert, Ph.D. received his Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut in 2009. His areas of expertise are in ethnic conflict, political

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Davina Anderson graduated from Pace University in spring 2014 with a B.A. in Political Science. She plans to attend law school in the future.

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Anne Flaherty, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, where she teaches American and Comparative Politics. She has degrees from the University of Richmond, the University of Sydney, and Duke University. Anne's academic interests and research focus on indigenous people's pursuit of sovereign rights and recognition. She also recently developed and taught a course on Music, Protest, and Politics to explore the question of the political dynamics of music around the world.

Barbara Franz, Ph.D. (Syracuse University) is Professor of Political Science at Rider University. Her research interests juxtapose the phenomenon of mass migrations and refugee movements and what they mean for the stability of nations. She has published extensively on the impact of population movements on culture clashes within societies, and the root causes of migration movements, violence, terror, and genocide. Her book *Uprooted and Unwanted: Bosnian Refugees in Austria and the United States* (Texas A&M University Press, 2005) focuses on the experience of Bosnian refugees, especially women, in two host countries with vastly different settlement and social welfare policies. Another book, on the experience of immigrant youth, Hip Hop and Online Gaming is forthcoming from Lexington Books.

Angela Ju is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at UCLA. Her research deals with comparative race, ethnicity, and immigration in North and South America. She is currently writing her dissertation about immigration and ethnicity in São Paulo, Brazil.

Paul J. Kuttner, Ed.D. is an educator and scholar working at the intersection of community organizing, youth civic engagement, and the arts. His research looks at community-based political and cultural organizations as sites of powerful educational and social change processes, particularly for young people in low income communities and communities of color. Paul is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Critical Communications Pedagogy at the University of Utah, and earned his

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Fahamu Pecou is an artist/scholar based in Atlanta, Georgia whose works comment on contemporary and hip hop culture while simultaneously subverting it to include his ideas on fine art. Pecou's

paintings, performance art, and scholarly work address concerns around representations of black masculinity in popular culture and how these images impact both the reading and the performance of black male masculinity and identity. Pecou's work is featured in *DEFINITION: The Art and Design of Hip Hop*, an anthology chronicling the impact of hip hop on visual culture, written by famed graffiti artist and designer Cey Adams. Currently he is a doctoral student in Emory University's Institute of Liberal Arts (ILA). Pecou maintains an active exhibition schedule as well as public lectures and speaking engagements at colleges and museums nationwide.

H. Lavar Pope, Ph.D. Upon graduating from his Master's Degree program in 2005, Lavar Pope began attending the University of California Santa Cruz as a Ph.D. student in the field of Politics. His dissertation "Internal Colonization and Revolt: Rap as an Underground Political Discourse in Oakland, CA from 1965–2010" began with an active-participant engagement within the underground Bay Area DJ/production scene, used a wealth of primary sources to explore the fundamental political content differences between underground and mainstream rap music, and questioned existing work predominately focused on use of mainstream sources. At the time Lavar was also a professional turntablist and had performed as disc-jockey at local venues in the tri-state area (N.Y., N.J., P.A.) and Bay Area, CA, co-hosted a radio show on WLVR (Lehigh Valley), and actively consulted and assisted local, unsigned artists. He is currently working as an instructor and teaches courses in American Political Science and special topics related to post-Reconstruction Civil Rights, Racial Justice, and musical subcultures.

Richard Schur, Ph.D./J.D. is Professor of English and the Director of the Law & Society Program at Drury University, Springfield, Missouri. He is the author of *Parodies of Ownership: Hip-Hop Aesthetics and Intellectual Property Law* and co-editor of *African American Culture and Legal Discourse*. His research focuses on African American literature and culture, popular music, and law. He is also currently the co-host of the *New Books in Popular Music* podcast on the New Books Network.

Mariama White-Hammond is the Executive Director of Project HIP-HOP (PHH), a youth-led organization that trains young people how to use hip hop as a cultural tool to educate and motivate their community. Born and raised in Boston, Mariama was involved in PHH throughout high school and college, and became the Executive Director in 2001, leading the

organization as it became an independent 501(c)3 organization. Mariama has received a certificate in youth work through the BEST Initiative Youth Worker Training, and a certificate in trauma response from the Children's Trauma Recovery Foundation. For her work at Project HIP-HOP, she received the 2004 Roxbury Founder's Day Award and along with youth at PHH received the 2005 Boston Celtics "Heroes Among Us" Award. Mariama is also involved with a number of other organizations in Boston including the SE/LR Youthworkers Alliance.

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CHAPTER ONE

The organic globalizer[1]

Christopher Malone and George Martinez, Jr.

Introduction

Music is a potent form of communication that crosses cultural and linguistic barriers through various information networks. At certain times, it also has the ability to inextricably link itself to protest movements, power, and politics. From the sorrow songs sung by slaves on the plantation, to the subversive character of American jazz, blues, and R&B in the heyday of the Civil Rights Movement, to the "revolution in four-part harmony" that helped to end apartheid in South Africa,[2] music has played a fundamental role in many social and political transformations. Today that power has undoubtedly been magnified with the rise of globalized communications. More than ever, faster than ever, music connects and influences people of all nations.

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[1] An earlier version of this chapter (2010) 32(4): was published in *New Political Science* 531–45.

[2] "Little of beauty has America given the world save the rude grandeur God himself stamped on her bosom; the human spirit in this new world has expressed itself in vigor and ingenuity rather than in beauty. And so by fateful chance the Negro folk-song—the rhythmic cry of the slave—stands to-day not simply as the sole American music, but as the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas. It has been neglected, it has been, and is, half despised, and above all it has been persistently mistaken and misunderstood; but notwithstanding, it still remains as the singular spiritual heritage of the nation and the greatest gift of the Negro people." W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Penguin Press), Ch. 14. Or few can deny the impact that Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" had in exposing the horrors of lynching to American society. See also *Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony* (2003).

Hip hop is no less a potent form of communication that has perhaps benefited more from globalized modes of communication than any other recent musical genre. From its emergence during the urban struggles of New York in the 1970s, its reach today spans all seven continents and is arguably the most important artistic global force since its emergence. Like all music, hip hop is first and foremost *movement*: rhythmic movement, bodily movement, movement of time and space and awareness (emotional, spiritual, cultural) within it. Unlike all other genres, however, we contend that hip hop in both its core and its elements contains a unique *movement culture*, which carries with it certain cultural, social, and political possibilities other musical genres rooted in specific traditions do not. These possibilities, ingrained in hip hop's movement culture, are why we call it the "organic globalizer": no matter its pervasiveness or its reach around the world, hip hop ultimately remains—and, we argue, should remain—a grassroots phenomenon that is born of the community from which it permeates. On the other hand, hip hop's global appeal (in both form and content) also presents interesting possibilities that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries.

Recognizing hip hop as an organic globalizer means that we must acknowledge hip hop itself as more than the transmission of symbolic expression of a particular culture or tradition. Though the historical development of hip hop in the United States has been distinct from the ways in which it is instantiated in local communities elsewhere, we nonetheless contend that the movement culture of hip hop positions it *institutionally* as a *potential* vehicle to usher in new forms of understanding about social cleavages (e.g. racial and class based) and new means of mobilizing that *may* lead to more democratic participation, civic engagement, and civic literacy of historically marginalized groups. We say "may" because hip hop does not necessarily lead to new forms of understanding or means of mobilizing. Neither does it *have* to. It has been, and can be, simply a particular musical genre—like others, done well or not so well depending on the artist. But this other side of hip hop, the side that trains the eye on the margin between actuality and possibility in the realm of social and political transformation, the "organic globalizer" side if you will: this is what interests us and broadly speaking animates the pages in this volume.

While we will have more to say about the essays collected in this volune at the end of this chapter and the beginning of each to follow, our particular claims about hip hop as an organic globalizer unfold in what immediately follows. In the first section, we position our concept of hip hop within other analyses. While many scholars and commentators recognize the political impact of hip hop, much of the debate has focused primarily on the American context, and whether or not hip hop should be construed as a continuation of the long hard social and political struggles of African

Americans. Much like several excellent recent works on hip hop,[3] our goal is to broaden the inquiry out beyond the analysis of hip hop as a symbolic embodiment of black culture to argue that the "elements" of hip hop give it an organic quality that has been adopted, co-opted, and utilized by indigenous communities around the world for their own ends.

The second section sketches out what we identify as the three stages in the political development of hip hop: (1) the *cultural awareness and emergence* stage (roughly the early 1970s to the late 1980s), marked by the identification and recognition of voices of marginalized communities through music and art; (2) the *social creation and institutionalization* stage (roughly late 1980s–2000), marked by the development of independent alternative institutions and non-profit organizations in civil society geared toward social and economic justice; and (3) the *political activism and participation* stage (2000–present), which hip hop has entered in the United States. It is marked by demands made on the state by group actors, and the recognition of hip hop's ability to affect electoral outcomes through political participation. For the most part, organizers in the hip hop community tended to reject electoral politics during the first and second stages. In the last decade, this has changed to the point where hip hop has become an important feature in electoral politics in the United States—through issue advocacy and/or the emergence of hip hop candidates.

In the United States, then, the movement culture of hip hop followed a fairly straightforward, linear developmental path to the point where, today, all three of these developmental phases can operate in co-terminus fashion. Though it does not necessarily have to be all of these, there is a side of hip hop in the United States that lays a unique claim to a cultural, social, and political nexus. Can this movement culture and institutional developmental model be "exported"? Have we seen other countries or regions of the world follow similar patterns whereby hip hop has moved from cultural expression to social and political force? Herein rests the real possibility for hip hop as organic globalizer.

In the final section, we provide a brief overview on the rest of the volume and what it seeks to achieve.

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[3] To be sure, there are many works that seek to address the global influence and impact of hip hop, which we align with. See, for instance, Tony Mitchell's *Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop Outside the USA* (2002); Basu and Lemelle's *The Vinyl Ain't Final: Hip Hop and the Globalization of Black Popular Culture* (2006); P. Khalil Saucier's *Native Tongues: An African Hip-Hop Reader* (2011); Eric Charry's *Hip-Hop Africa: New African Music in a Globalizing World* (2012); and Sujatha Fernandes's *Close to the Edge: In Search of the Global Hip-Hop Generation* (2011).

Hip hop as the organic globalizer

While hip hop as a cultural and aesthetic form of expression is over 40 years old, the scholarly literature on its social, economic, and political impact is roughly half that. It was only two decades ago that Tricia Rose released her groundbreaking work *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, which provided the first extensive historical analysis of the development of hip hop (Rose 1994). That same year, historian and cultural studies scholar Robin D. G. Kelley tied the emergence of hip hop to black working-class culture in his excellent book *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (Kelley 1994). Since then scholarship has indeed grown steadily as many authors have begun analyzing hip hop for its global reach.[4] But as with Rose and Kelley's pioneering work, a good deal of what followed continued to "African Americanize" hip hop through a focus on its ties to the African American community in the United States.[5] Todd Boyd's *The New H.N.I.C.: The Death of Civil Rights and the Reign of Hip Hop* (2003) was a representative case in point. It argued that a fundamental shift in power and leadership from the civil rights generation to the hip hop generation was all but completed—and with it new priorities, issues, and methods of political and cultural communication. Boyd's work prompted other African American historians and cultural critics such as Derrick Alridge (2003) to counter that the civil rights and hip hop movements had much more in common than Boyd acknowledged, and that hip hop should be seen more as a continuation in the long history of the black American struggle rather than some fundamental break within it.[6]

We do not dispute these and other authors' historical accounts, or the fact that hip hop is intrinsically connected to black culture and history in the United States. We take that as a given and, as hopefully will be seen below, we build upon their work to make our case. However, restricting an analysis of the history and development of hip hop to the American context without connecting it to a systematic analysis of hip hop's reach and potential for social transformation through localized cultural norms and traditions misses an important element in the emergence of hip hop across the world. Recent scholarship has made that eminently clear: Halifu Osamare's *The Hiplife in Ghana: West African Indigenization of Hip-Hop* (2012), for instance, analyzes how American hip hop has at once been

[4] The works here are too many to mention. Besides those mentioned above, see, for instance: Arlene Tickner (2008); Nina Cornyetz (1994); Peter Wade et al. (1999).

[5] Besides Rose and Kelley, see for instance Nelson George (1999); Bakari Kitwana (2002); Jeff Chang (2005); S. Craig Watkins (2005); Charise Cheney (2005). For an earlier concise bibliographical essay on hip hop, see Juliana Chang (2006).

[6] See also Alridge (2005).

globalized and indigenized in West Africa, transforming culture, society, and politics. Similarly, we offer a critical reinterpretation and reassessment of its evolution and expansion. While acknowledging the (multi)cultural roots of hip hop, our emphasis here shall instead be on its peculiar development from (1) a cultural expression; to (2) a network of grassroots social institutions built around issues of social justice; and, finally, to (3) a potentially enduring political force.[7] We postulate that this trajectory has implications for marginalized communities using hip hop as a transformational force across the globe.

The fundamental premise: hip hop is situated at once as a cultural phenomenon and institutionalized social reality on the global scale the likes of which we have not seen before with similar musical genres. In this sense, we agree with Arlene Tickner (2008: 121), who argues:

> what makes hip hop unique among popular musical genres is the way it relates to everyday life. In reflecting on poverty, inequality, exclusion, and discrimination; claiming a positive identity based on these conditions; and offering musical, linguistic and corporal tools for commenting on them, it transcends the bounded sites where it is practiced and participates in a symbolic network that circulates globally.

While other cultural movements grounded in music have served as vehicles for social transformation, few if any have had the unique success in building a network of grassroots institutions geared toward social justice and political participation *both locally and globally* to the extent that hip hop has in its relatively short lifespan. Essentially this is what we mean by the term "organic globalizer." It consists of a unique process in which the elements of a subculture that began in New York City spread across the United States, then the world through simple exposure, and the forces it set in motion. Tickner explains that hip hop was initially experienced in urban communities in the United States viscerally or "authentically," and then was commoditized in the United States for a largely white audience through the rap music industry. Rap music was in turn exported across the globe in this "homogenized" or commoditized version (Tickner 2008: 121–3). A similar analysis led Rose (2008) to conclude that hip hop was in crisis. However, something peculiar has also happened—an organic reversal of sorts (see, for instance, Chapter 9, Barbara Franz's work on hip hop in Central Europe). Many of those same communities that may have initially consumed a cultural caricature of hip hop promoted by the rap industry have since sought to make hip hop "their own" by using it to lodge that same visceral connection to local communities' hip hop first experienced

[7] Hopefully it will become clear as we proceed that we think the jury is still out on the impact hip hop has on political participation and electoral politics.

in the United States. To be sure, such an organic process is not necessarily automatic or positive—as the work of many contributors to this volume makes eminently clear. But when an attempt to organize communities around a local hip hop culture has taken place, it has done so through a budding but burgeoning set of social and political networks.

What comes of the institutionalization of hip hop as the organic globalizer remains to be seen. As we stated at the outset, an eye should gravitate toward the space between potentiality and actuality, and between the descriptive as well as the normative. On one side, we simply seek to explain how hip hop emerged as a specific form of cultural expression but was transformed into a robust set of social institutions that eventually—and perhaps inevitably—led to political activism and a call for hip hop communities to become politically involved. On the other side, we suggest that this history provides a prescription—a road map of sorts—for how the vehicle of hip hop might serve to develop the necessary institutions both in the United States and elsewhere to transform political realities at the local level.

The questions that the development and evolution of hip hop thus raises are compelling and require responses if we are to understand hip hop's impact and the prospects it holds for social and political transformation in communities around the globe. How exactly did a cultural artifact—born in the ramshackle but vibrant urban settings of New York City in the early 1970s—come to facilitate an awareness of a plethora of social problems (global as well as local) through the creation of community organizations some 20 years later? How did the creation and development of those institutions in turn precipitate and advance the growth of hip hop into the electoral arena by engaging in activities like voter registration and voter turnout drives, and the encouragement of "hip hop" candidates to run for political office on platforms of social justice? Can this model of growth and institutional development be replicated in other parts of the world? And finally, what are the prospects for new and lasting forms of democratic participation for marginalized groups?

From cultural expression to political activism: Three stages in the development of hip hop

We shall take up the first of these questions in this section by tracing the development of hip hop over the last 40 years in the United States. We identify three distinct phases in its history. One caveat here before proceeding: while these three phases occurred more or less sequentially over time in the United States, they should be seen today as operating contemporaneously with each other. Today, hip hop as cultural expression exists right alongside various social institutions and the political participation of the hip hop community.

Stage I: Cultural awareness and emergence (early 1970s to the mid-1980s)

The power of hip hop rests in the ability to combine every day experiences, limited resources, and existing cultural expressions to improvise new and original forms. It began in the post-civil rights urban ghettos of New York of the 1970s as economic and social changes heightened racial and class tensions. At its origins, hip hop was nothing more than an aesthetic and cultural assertion of what the streets felt like—the good, the bad, and the ugly. Summer heat brought young and old alike outside in close proximity with one another. Poor public services and few economic opportunities forced them to rely on the support of the community as well as their own resourcefulness. Hip hop thus developed organically through individuals and groups shaped by similar conditions using little more than what was at their disposal. Through the original four elements of hip hop (breakin', graffiti, DJ'in', and MC'in'), young people found vehicles to create a reference point of knowledge (which we believe constitutes the fifth element in hip hop), to reclaim public spaces in blighted neighborhoods, to critique existing conditions, to define and salute, and to empower and build.

Most commentators cite the Sugarhill Gang's 1979 hit "Rapper's Delight" as the coming-of-age moment for hip hop. Yet, its origins and emergence as a cultural force can be traced back to at least a decade earlier—May 19, 1968 precisely, when the New York-based group Last Poets (Felipe Luciano, Gylan Kain, and David Nelson) got together to celebrate Malcolm X's birthday in Mt. Morris Park in Harlem (Potter 2014). Their flowing vocal styles were the precursors to rap music, and while they epitomized a pro-black message the drum beats became the precursors of those of a more multi cultural hip hop music in the years to come. Five years later, in the community center space at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, Clive Campbell, aka DJ Kool Herc, began deejaying back-to-school parties for his sister and friends (Roug 2008). DJ Herc is credited with creating the two-turntable technique, which now pervades hip hop. Herc emigrated from Jamaica in 1967; he brought with him the deejay style typical of reggae music and a West Indian work ethic (Universal Zulu Nation 2014). Certainly the point of the block party was to have fun. But DJ Herc was also an entrepreneur; he worked to raise his profile which soon led to local fame. Through the cultural form of hip hop, DJ Herc saw economic opportunity for advancement. Soon others in the Bronx began to emulate him, including Kevin Donovan, also known as Afrika Bambaataa Aasim, who adopted the name of the Zulu chief Bhambatha. Donovan had been a gang member in the South Bronx. After a trip to Africa he had won through an essay contest, he returned to New York and began to use this new musical form he named "hip hop" to draw angry kids out of gangs

(Chang 2007). Bambaataa formed Universal Zulu Nation in 1977, which sought to raise awareness of the scourge of gang violence in New York's urban ghettos, and to turn young males away from what the rap industry would later call the "thug life." Indeed, hip hop's origins, through organizations like Zulu Nation, were fashioned on the exact opposite premise of the thug life. Bambaataa made that clear in 1982 when he initiated the first international hip hop tour built on peace, unity, love, and just having fun. Zulu Nation was the first organization formed from the hip hop community to promote social awareness and a vital link in hip hop's development from its earliest stage of cultural expression to the second stage of social creation and institutionalization.

Released a year before Ronald Reagan's election in 1980, "Rapper's Delight" immediately represented the potential market power of rap music. While the song exemplified the cultural recognition of hip hop as a community-based "block party," it also opened this new form of self-expression up to a wider commercialization. Around the same time, the graffiti movement became omnipresent on subway trains in New York City and caught the attention of artist Charlie Ahearn. In 1982, Ahearn directed the first hip hop film, *Wild Style*, which examined how the aesthetic of hip hop had developed up to that point from self-expression to art form through its four elements (Jaehne 1984). Two years later the film *Breakin'* was released, and attempted to capture the energy of break dancing through the retelling of the tale of forbidden romance and gang violence found in the classic theatrical work *West Side Story*. Thus, within the span of just a decade, hip hop had gone from an organic, community-based activity of self-expression in the South Bronx to a commercialized art form that had begun to span the globe.

Stage II: Social creation and institutionalization stage (mid- to late 1980s–2000)

By the mid-1980s, the popularity of hip hop had quickly expanded beyond the primarily black and Latino audiences who had experienced it in the previous decade. Artists such as Run DMC, LL Cool J, and Salt-N-Pepa brought the genre to mainstream, suburban, white American audiences; white rap bands such as the New York-based Beastie Boys signaled that the art form itself was to be appropriated by those outside of the communities of color in which it was created. Others would follow, and even if the label "inauthentic" could be applied to them, the appeal of hip hop to these wider audiences nonetheless indicated that it was a veritable multi cultural force. Yet, while a commercialized and corporatized form of hip hop began to produce enormous profits for many in the music industry, the late 1980s and early 1990s also saw two simultaneous movements within hip hop that

led to what we call Stage II in its development. First, a growing number of hip hop artists became overtly political. Part of the politicization of hip hop traced back to its very origins through groups like the Last Poets and the creation of Afrika Bambaataa's Zulu Nation. But current events like apartheid in South Africa abroad and tensions of race and class in the United States drove further activism. Reagan's support for the apartheid regime in South Africa drew outrage in communities of color across the United States. The hip hop community responded by working closely on the South Africa boycott with Artists Against Apartheid (Cook 2010). In the United States, growing issues of gang violence, police brutality, economic inequality, and persistent racism led rap artists such as Public Enemy, KRS-One, X-Clan, and Paris to address them through their music. At the very moment "gangsta rap" groups like N.W.A. were hitting the air waves, a progressive, politically conscious rap was also flourishing—economically as well as ideologically. Charise Cheney (2005) calls this era "the golden age of rap nationalism" because of the way hip hop artists appropriated the critiques and language of 1960s, Black Panther-style, black nationalism. Others have argued that by the late 1980s it was these and other hip hop artists, rather than black churches and traditional civil rights organizations, that connected most viscerally and immediately with disenfranchised urban youth (Bynoe 2014).

Second, drawing upon the model offered by Zulu Nation, hip hop heads began creating non-profit, community-based organizations aimed at expanding the arts in poor communities, strengthening education, ending gang violence and youth incarceration, and fighting for social and economic justice. For example, in 1988, KRS-One created the Stop the Violence Movement—a collection of artists and activists that sought to promote positive and peaceful dispute resolution models. Several years later in 1991, he and Zizwe Mtafuta-Ukweli launched Human Education Against Lies (H.E.A.L), a not-for-profit corporation and organization that "promotes Human respect amongst Humanity by providing knowledge about Humanity" (Mtafuta-Ukweli 2014). KRS-One and Mtafuta-Ukweli described H.E.A.L. as a self-construction movement designed to rescue humanity from the most lethal disease facing it: Common Sense Deficiency Syndrome (CSDS):

> CSDS is the root of most of the world's social problems. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), crack addiction, racism, sexism, environmental terrorism, "pimp-ism", and imperialism are all encouraged and supported by CSDS. In fact, these anti-Human systems are symptoms of CSDS. Organized lying is the virulent base of CSDS and leads to the deceiving of the people causing the people to act insane to their Humanity. Since the principal carriers of CSDS are the education, religious, and political systems, they are shaking in their boots at the

> possibility of being rocked by the H.E.A.L. movement. They are correct to be afraid because the H.E.A.L. movement plans to modify these institutions of lying.
>
> (Mtafuta-Ukweli 2014)[8]

Two years after H.E.A.L. was founded, the political and social activist organization Hip Hop Congress emerged in San Jose, California, and soon expanded to 30 chapters across the country. On the East Coast, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM)—a black nationalist hip hop-based organization with seven chapters in urban centers of the United States—formed in Brooklyn, New York. MXGM chapters set up community education workshop series, feeding and clothing programs, political prisoner amnesty campaigns, and initiated "Black August"—a celebration of hip hop and the "freedom fighters" for the black nationalist cause.[9]

In 1996, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights was founded in Oakland, California. The Center's mission is to promote justice, peace, and opportunity in and around the Bay Area through four separate but integrated projects: (1) Books not Bars, which addresses the problem of incarceration; (2) Green-Collar Jobs Campaign, which seeks to bring environmentally focused jobs to the inner city; (3) Soul of the City, which focuses on sustainable development in communities; and (4) Heal the Streets, a program that prevents youth (15–18) from engaging in violence, drugs, and gang-related activity. One year later in New York City, the grassroots organization Blackout Arts Collective (BAC) was founded by spoken word artists and hip hop MCs on the mission of empowering communities of color through the tools of hip hop culture and education. Like the Ella Baker Center, BAC has seven chapters in urban centers across the United States and promotes its identity as a "national organization that operates through local action." Two issues at the core of BAC chapters across the United States are education and arts in the local public school system and the persistent problem of youth incarceration.[10]

The above is just a sampling of the community-based hip hop organizations that emerged during the initial years of the hip hop's social creation and institutionalization stage. The number of organizations has grown steadily since and includes nationally focused ones such as the Hip Hop

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[8] The H.E.A.L. manifesto can be found at http://www.hiphop-network.com/articles/graffitiarticles/heal-1.asp (accessed February 22, 2014).

[9] MXMG has local chapters in Atlanta, Detroit, New Orleans, Jackson, Dallas-Fort Worth, Oakland, New York. Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, http://mxgm.org (accessed February 10, 2014).

[10] Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, http://www.ellabakercenter.org/page.php?pageid=19&contentid=151; Blackout Arts Collective, http://www.blackoutartscollective.com/about.html (both accessed February 22, 2014).

Caucus (formed in 2004), and internationally focused ones like the Hip-Hop Association (formed in 2002) and Global Block Foundation (formed 2008).[11] In 2001, the United Nations recognized the international importance of hip hop when on May 16 of that year it commended hip hop as an "international culture of peace and prosperity" through the UN-sponsored Hip Hop Declaration of Peace. The Declaration lists 18 principles of "hip-hop culture," which seek to maintain the dignity and respect of individuals, cultures, tribes, and peoples of the globe. As the Eleventh Principle states, "Hip hop Kulture [sic] is united as one multi-skilled, multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-racial people committed to the establishment and the development of peace."[12] The Declaration signaled hip hop's "global" bona fides as a veritable source of conflict resolution.

Stage III: Political activism and participation (2000–present)

Amid the presidential election of 1996, the renowned hip hop journalist Dave "Davey D" Cook asked a question in one of his articles: will rap artists run for political office in 1996? He explained:

> A rap artist running for office? How outlandish..is probably how many within the mainstream would view this concept.. But it is far from outlandish. White folks within the entertainment field have been doing this for years. Senator Bill Bradley out of New Jersey made a name for himself playing basketball. Sonny Bono and Clint Eastwood went from television and on screen icons to Mayors of Palm Springs and Carmel. Clint still does an occasional movie here and there and Bono took it to the next level by getting himself elected to Congress. If you really wanna [sic] think about one of this land's most popular Presidents Ronald Regan [sic] went from movie actor to Governor to two term President of these United States. While all this is happening, politicians are often seen feverishly seeking the endorsements of today's top icons. The political endorsements from folks like Jay Leno or Arnold Schwartznegger [sic] are considered worthy, yet you never hear about the political endorsements of those within the hip hop generation. Who was Spike Lee voting for in the last election? What about John Singleton? What does KRS-One think about this intense race between Pat Buchannon [sic] and Bob Dole.

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[11] Hip Hop Caucus, http://hiphopcaucus.org; Hip-Hop Association, http://www.hiphopassociation.org/#/home; Global Block Foundation, http://www.globalblock.org/index.html (accessed February 22, 2014).

[12] The Declaration of Peace was published, among other places, on December 8, 2011 at http://www.thetika.com/hip-hop-declaration-of-peace (accessed February 24, 2014).

> And will Bill Clinton approach KRS-One or someone like Speech or even Spearhead's Michael Franti during the big election this fall and ask him to rally up the troops?
>
> (Cook 1996)

That year, only one member of the hip hop community took up Davey D's challenge—James White in Milwaukee, whom we briefly discuss below. This was largely intentional: in the wake of events such as the Rodney King beating and the Los Angeles riots, large portions of the hip hop community looked at electoral politics with askance. But Davey D and others were urging a different strategy, and by the mid- to late 1990s, hip hop was poised to enter what we have identified as the third stage in its development: political activism and political participation.

Over the last decade and a half, hip hop has become overtly "political" mostly by seeking to influence electoral outcomes in the United States through voter registration drives, political style summits and conventions, and get-out-the-vote operations. To a much smaller degree, hip hop heads have begun recruiting and running candidates for elected office. As grassroots-based hip hop organizations were turning their attention to causes and issues in local communities across the United States in the 1990s, the commercial power that hip hop had amassed over the previous two decades inevitably allowed for a political platform that extended both across a mainstream national audience and down into local communities. Its origins are found in the Rock the Vote in 1992, when the organization registered over 300,000 young people to vote in time for the presidential election that year. Youth voter turnout that year increased by 20 percent over 1988 and served to reverse a 20-year decrease in youth participation in presidential elections (Trindell and Medhurst 1998). That year, "rap the vote" was merely a slogan used to appeal to hip hop communities across the United States, and in 1996 there was no meaningful hip hop presence in electoral politics either. However, in 2000, Russell Simmons's 360HipHop organization joined with Rock the Vote to create Rap the Vote as a means of expanding and enhancing voter registration drives in communities of color where political participation was low if not altogether non-existent.

In June 2001, Simmons also founded the Hip-Hop Summit Action Network (HSAN) dedicated

> to harnessing the cultural relevance of Hip-Hop music to serve as a catalyst for education advocacy and other societal concerns fundamental to the empowerment of youth…[hip-hop] must be responsibly and proactively utilized to fight the war on poverty and injustice.
>
> (hsan.org 2008)

That summer National Hip-Hop Summit held its inaugural meeting in New

York City, out of which emerged an electoral arm called Hip-Hop Team Vote, which, like Rap the Vote, focused on voter registration drives of the hip hop generation in communities of color.

As the re-election of George W. Bush approached, members of the hip hop community sought a more involved method of affecting electoral outcomes. In 2003, the National Hip Hop Political Convention (NHHPC) was founded, a political advocacy organization that claimed chapters in 20 states. In June 2004, the NHHPC held its first convention in Newark, New Jersey. Over 3,000 people and 600 delegates from the 20 states attended the four-day convention and worked on a five-point agenda which included the following platform issues:

- Equal funding for all public schools, mandated by federal legislation or, if need be, a constitutional amendment. The platform rejects school vouchers, demands free post-secondary education and calls for legislation to eradicate illiteracy.
- The repeal of tax cuts for the wealthy, reparations for black Americans and full employment.
- Reinstatement of voting and other civil and human rights for convicted criminals, the eradication of mandatory minimum sentences and the formation of civilian review boards with subpoena power at all levels of government.
- Federal legislation for universal health care and women's reproductive health, and increased funding for AIDS and other diseases.
- Withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, Iraq, Puerto Rico and other occupied nations, an end to further U.S. imperialism and the formation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that will investigate U.S. human rights abuses.

(Jones 2004)

The election and re-election of Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012 also signaled the greatest level of electoral involvement for the hip hop community to date in terms of voter registration drives, get-out-the-vote operations, and political conventioneering and organizing. Yet, at the local level (and to a much smaller extent) hip hop has produced political candidates in the political activism and participation stage of development. In 1996, hip hop musical recording artist James White (also known as Ghetto Priest) won election to his first four-year term on the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. White served a total of three terms. Ras Baraka, a high school principal in Newark, New Jersey and son of the famous poet Amiri Baraka, has run for local political office several times

in the last two decades. In 1994, Baraka received 9 percent of the vote in Newark's mayoral race as a 24-year-old. In 1998 and 2002, Baraka ran for Councilman-At-Large in New York and narrowly missed the run-offs each time. Baraka served as Newark Deputy Mayor under Sharp James from 2002 to 2005, and in 2010 he ran and won for South Ward Councilman in Newark (www.rasjbaraka.com 2014). In 2014, he was a candidate for Mayor of Newark. Across the river in New York City in 2001, hip hop MC and political activist George Martinez (also known as "Rithm," one of the co-authors here) ran an insurgent campaign for City Council in Brooklyn, New York against incumbent Angel Rodriguez and received 13 percent of the vote. The following year Martinez was elected as Democratic District Leader of the 51st Assembly district in New York State. Since then, Martinez has served as a Cultural Envoy for the U.S. Department of State and made a run for Congress in 2012 on the heels of the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) Movement—something we will come back to in Chapter 13. Martinez has traveled on behalf of the U.S. government to countries throughout Latin America and Southeast Asia addressing issues of poverty and discrimination. Like Africa Bambaataa 30 years ago, Martinez uses the tools and methods of hip hop to turn youth involved in gangs in countries like Honduras, Nicaragua, and Bolivia away from violence and gang activity.

As the "hip-hop generation" (Kitwana 2002) has matured in the United States, hip hop itself has been transformed from a cultural expression to a potential political force for civic engagement, activism, and democratic participation. Community-based organizations with roots in hip hop have cropped up across the country to provide services to communities, to educate, to steer youth from drug use and gang violence, to deal with the causes and effects of poverty and discrimination, and most importantly to advocate for a more democratic and humane society.

While hip hop political organizations and candidates have put forth progressive platforms and ideas between and during elections, we acknowledge that the "political" success of hip hop is something open to debate. This is not to say that the events, organizations, or movements described above have had no impact on the communities at which they were targeted or the wider society. The hip hop community's involvement in successful movements like the reform of the Rockefeller Drug Laws in New York State is a recent case in point. Social awareness has been raised, activism around specific issues both locally and nationally has been enhanced, and in many communities individuals and organizations linked to hip hop have worked with or even replaced older, more established community-based organizations in the cause of social and economic justice. As we write this in 2014, a mere 40 years after its appearance, hip hop operates simultaneously in the United States as: (1) cultural expression and commercial industry; (2) a network of social organizations working toward

issues of social and economic justice; and (3) an avenue for political activism and participation. In all of these phases, hip hop as the culturally shared experience of marginalization through various forms of discrimination, violence, poverty, and hardship continues to pervade many communities. All of this points to the fact that hip hop's potential for transformation is probably more important than ever, given the national and international forces of militating against those communities.

To follow

Some aspect of the concept of hip hop as "organic globalizer" inspired the authors and essays in this collection. Rather than offer an overview of each chapter that follows here, we have decided on another approach. Each chapter begins with an Editors' note where we summarize the argument and attempt to contextualize its contents within the organic globalizer framework laid out above. Individually, the chapters that follow do not necessarily fit neatly within one or more of the three stages of development of hip hop we have outlined. Collectively, however, they broadly confirm a basic premise: hip hop, rooted in a movement culture, has been an artistic medium used to foster awareness, build and transform social institutions, and/or encourage political activism in local communities that have largely found themselves marginalized. We repeat our assertion that hip hop does not necessarily have to lead to any of these outcomes; further, when it has, the outcome is not always necessarily a "progressive" expression of political will. Put another way, none of what follows refutes other analyses of hip hop or the rap industry that shed a critical light on things like its commercialization, its cultural origins, the ongoing issues with misogyny, consumerism, homophobia, and so on. The literature on hip hop is burgeoning and at times boisterous. We are confident that within it a space exists for the Organic Globalizer.

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