

Ivania Esteban

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The Societal Impact of Rappers

Throughout my life living in New York City I was surrounded by music and the type of music was rap . Ever since then rap was something I would listen to on a daily basis. I would listen to it on my way to school , on my way home , at parties , and just to relax . Many people in New York City listen to rap, it is a part of our culture. In fact rap originated from New York City in the 1970s. Some famous New York City rappers during the time were Notorious B.I.G, and 50 cent . Now in New York we listen to rappers like Pop Smoke , A Boogie wit da Hoodie and Dave East. Which are some artists I will be researching about.

Rap is a very popular genre in our society. According to the statistics shown in this article “Share of total music album consumption* in the United States in 2008, by Genre” by Amy Watson who is a researcher and analyst from statista showed a graph that Hip Hop/ Rap is the top genre listened to with 27.1%. Rap music is a connection to many people who listen to it and can relate to it so well. The majority of the rap audience are teenagers between the age of 14-19. Rarely over the age of 35 . The type of ethnic groups that listen to rap is Hispanics and African Americans according to this article called Hip-Hop, Consumers and Retail written by a reporter from Radio and Television report states, “The Black audience is double the overall Black

footprint, and Hispanic use of the format isn't all that far behind. While it isn't a big favorite among Caucasian listeners, it still manages to attract almost 36% of them." The majority of the population are people of color or a part of that ethnic group and the larger amount of audience it has shows how important this genre is to us because of how relatable it can be. Being that most rappers are people of color.

Rap is an important genre in our society because it is very popular and is listened to by many people. Rap is portrayed as a negative aspect and is misunderstood by society, some people portray rap as negative because it promotes teen pregnancy, drugs and gang violence. However, rappers rap about this to show the media the reality in life and why these things actually happen. These rappers are not trying to corrupt the mind of the youth, they are showing the truth and sharing their stories. According to this article called *Impact of Rap Music on Youths*, which is an essay explaining the positive effects of rap music, the author from *Weebly* states "Rap is channel for people to speak freely about their view on political or social issues and by doing so, it engages teenagers to become concerned and aware of these issues. This is important in making the youth aware of the world around them and the conditions they face in society, enabling individuals to discuss ways in which they can make a positive change within society. A few of the issues that hip hop has created awareness in are racial discrimination, individuality and the importance of education and believing in your dreams. Hip hop also is a reflection of the soul and mind, and is a solace for both the artists and listeners who may be struggling with the same issues." Rap helps share awareness for the youth through music and also help them have a connection with the rapper when dealing with the same issues. This encourages

the youth to do something about these issues in society, especially when a rapper is speaking up about it.

An artist that shows sharing awareness on these problems in society is a rapper named Nipsey Hussle, he was about giving back to the community. In an article from the New Yorker said “ He chose a Crenshaw shopping plaza where he was harassed growing up as the site for his clothing store, Marathon. He wanted the kids of his neighborhood to feel welcome where he didn’t. He instilled hope and found beauty where so many had only found despair and hopelessness, and that is itself revolutionary.” Nipsey hussle spread awareness on racial discrimination but showed a positive way to fix it and helping hte community as well so the kids in the community wont have to go through the same discrimination he did when he was younger.

A Lot of rappers have a different flow and rap about different things such as their past, their love life, and traumatic events they've been through. They use music as a way to express how they feel and to spread awareness to their audience.

One of my favorite rapper artists is a Canadian rapper named Nav. He is also popular in New York City with some of his songs such as “Myself” and recently one of his collabs with pop smoke “Wolves” . Nav is one of the first brown boy / indian rappers to get in the game. As Nav said on his twitter “I’m really a producer that became an artist by accident” . Nav is a producer and rapper signed by XO label which has other artists such as The Weeknd and Lil Uzi. One thing that made Nav my favorite rapper is how different he is and shares how society believes

rappers just sing about drugs, money and women. Nav shows a different view and shows that all of this is not important. According to this article *Nav Is Finally Self-Aware* from Vice, the author said “Such an admission, with its implicit self-awareness and blunt honesty, seems out of character for Nav, the oft braggadocious Punjabi-Canadian rapper who is signed to The Weeknd's major label-affiliated XO imprint. On the album in question, he depicted himself as another one of hip-hop's hedonists, draped in designer threads as he drifts emotionlessly through a near- ceaseless stream of narcotic and carnal disposable pleasures.” Nav realizes all this stuff he has the money, the drugs, anything a rapper has and brag about does not mean anything and does not make him happy.

Another famous New York Carnarsie rapper is Pop smoke. Recently , the rapper Pop Smoke had died on February 19, 2020. His death had a big impact on New york city, everyone was devastated for how soon he was gone. Pop smoke was a new artist and had just got into the game. Some of his famous well known songs are “Welcome to the Party” and “Dior” which was a summer hit of 2019. After his death, walking around New york city you will hear people blasting his songs. According to this article from Vice “Is Pop Smoke the New King Of New York?” After Pop Smoke summer hits , Vice did an interview with him about how he became so popular within a year. After having the interview they said “ If Pop can continue his ascent, we might just have a new King of New York on our hands.” Pop Smoke had potential to be the King of New York , some people still refer to him that.

Pop smoke shared awareness on gang violence in his community in brooklyn with his song. In this article “Remembering Pop Smoke, a Rapper Who Brought Brooklyn to the World” from The New York Times , they stated “His motivation, he said, came from the opportunity to provide some semblance of hope to children who “got to carry their guns to school because it ain’t safe, but they still got to make sure they get they diploma ’cause they mom could be happy. I do it for them. That’s me.”” Pop Smoke shared a lot of awareness of his past life and the traumatic events he had been through and put them all in a song. By sharing the traumatic events he had been through with gang affiliated violence , he was trying to show that this is not the life the youth should want, This was a way to show awareness of the violence and not have kids affiliated with it because it can cause ptsd as pop smoke stated in many of his songs.

However, we have another self proclaimed King of New York, Highbridge rapper named A boogie wit da hoodie. His fame started around 2016 and is still popular now. His music is well known in New york, literally every teen in New york has heard or know some of his songs. His song “My Shit” was a hit in the summer of 2016 that got him famous, and ever since he's been having hit songs every year. A boogie is known to modernize the hip hop/rap game since he sings also in his songs. A boogie is also known for having two sides of his music. One side is what we know as A boogie and he sings about his life and the obstacles he had to go through. His other side is Artist where he sings love songs about him being heartbroken. One thing I enjoy about listening to A boogie is the reason he makes these songs. In this article from Rolling stones “A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie: Lovestruck Bronx Rapper Wants to Be Your Mirror” , A boogie said “I would make a song on some vicarious shit and make you feel like that’s *you* that made that

song. I want you to feel like, ‘Damn, this is everything that I just went through.’” . He makes his music so everyone can relate to it and feel how he feels. This is so important because it helps people not feel alone and know that other people have the same feeling too.

A boogie also gives back to his community. With all the money he makes he gives back to the kids in the community to help them pursue their education. Like in his song “ 4 Min Convo” he said “And Puma Just gave me a budget, I should say, “Fuck it” And give it to the schools’ cause they need it more than I need it now” A boogie did a collaboration with the brand Puma and the money he recieved from it he donated to schools instead of keeping it. Many kids in New York City are in poverty and the reason for that is the lack of education, by helping out kids to help pursue their education will help them in the future to get out of poverty and motivate them to continue going to school.

Rap has shown awareness on the real issues in society, and is a great way to show the awareness when there is a large audience in this genre. This helps the youth who are going through similar circumstances as the rapper to not feel alone and motivates them to speak up about these issues and hopefully make a change. Rappers and their songs have more meaning than just talking about money, drugs and women. There spreading a bigger idea here, they are showing awareness to society issues to the working class and people of color.

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