

Band 4: Rap: More Than Words

Richard Shusterman

Pragmatismus, Rap und Gewalt

Summary:

Though violence often signifies harm or injury resulting from extreme and rapid force, its root meaning is simply, swift and intense force or power. In this original sense, violence is a necessary and useful part of nature and of art. Since pragmatist aesthetics advocates a closer integration of life and art, it must address the worry that violent artistic expression will carry over into real-life violence. In contemporary culture, no genre illustrates this danger more clearly than rap. My essay examines rap's expression of violence together with its advocacy to, stop the violence. Rap's most astute solution to this tension is to recognize that since violence cannot be entirely erased, we should focus on minimizing its damaging effects by utilizing constructive forms of violence – a vigorous critique of self and society and a demanding ascetic of self-mastery – to root out the destructive violence in ourselves and our communities.

Albert Scharenberg

Globalität und Nationalismus im afro-amerikanischen Hip Hop

Summary:

This essay discusses the dialectic of globalism and nationalism in African American Hip Hop. Since the 1970s, 'really existing globalization' and the demise of Fordism have initiated a process of economic restructuring that has further strengthened the exclusionary practices of the US-American society. Spatial segregation and economic marginalization of social classes and ethnic groups, in particular of Black Americans, have increased. Hip Hop culture and Rap music are seen as cultural responses to these societal changes. Even though it is part of corporate culture industries, Hip Hop is deeply embedded in the traditions of African American cultural production. The rappers' 'ghettocentricity' thus symbolizes both a protest against as well as a reproduction of their exclusion and racial discrimination. Accordingly, identity formation in Hip Hop revolves around the 'postfordist ghetto of the excluded'. The local and the specific are the means of deconstructing the eurocentric universalism and ideological 'globalism' of the US-American society. Therefore, Hip Hop culture is strongly influenced by economic and cultural globalization, and it is simultaneously expressing 'pro-Black' and Black nationalist ideas.

Arno Scholz

Kulturelle Hybridität und Strategien der Appropriation an Beispielen des romanischen Rap

Summary:

Using a cultural studies approach proposed by James Lull the present article tries to illustrate how a subcultural global model, i.e. *rap*, is appropriated in several European countries. Basing on results obtained in preceding comparative studies on European Rap a gamut of general analytical aspects pertinent to *rap* (contents, speech acts, cultural reference, language, style, rhetorical text structuring) can be formulated. The comparative perspective allows us to show the different significance of the individual analytical aspects for each country. Cultural hybridity and mixture are the result of individual appropriation processes that are developed within a range of dichotomic parameters like *centripetal* vs. *centrifugal* attitude to the US-model, *active* vs. *passive* cultural activity (consumption vs. creativity), and the well-known tensions between the *local* and the *global*. The central point, as Adam Krims points out, seems to be the respective individual formation of a subcultural identity by the use of particular combinations of subcultural items.

Dietmar Hüser

„Sex & crime & rap-music“

Amerika im französischen Rap zwischen Traum und Alptraum

Summary:

Often considered by non-initiated as being a pure copy of the transatlantic original, rap music in France is on the contrary highly autonomous and an accepted part of the French tradition of political songs. Comparing topics and values, there are enormous differences between the American and the French scene. After having dealt with productive local

appropriation processes of such a global musical style in the 1980's and 1990's, the article analyzes the critical attitude of hexagonal rappers to fellow-artists and groups in the United States judged to be too materialistic, too violent, too sexist and too mono-ethnic. The impact that such heteroimages produce must be seen as a fundamental factor of their autoimage, not to be always socially integrated perhaps, but to be culturally French. Songs and interviews showing to what a great extent young people, frequently deriving from minority ethnic groups, believe in traditional republican models of integration adapted to their own profit, rap music in France finally shares the classical discourse of a French cultural exception.

Sébastien Barrio

Underground-Rap in Bobigny: Ideologie einer populären Kultur

Summary:

The dualistic basis of French rap is inalienably connected with its history and with its importation from the United-States; there is the institutional way, which is the commercial one and the dissident or underground way, which is the subject of our research. This separation which is characteristic of all arts causes different processes of creation, of diffusion and of course of different finalities. Undoubtedly created as a reaction against the commercial rap, the underground rap went back to the street, its creation place, to reveal its fears, its hopes, its disillusion, its dreams and its thinking about life, society or politics by the means of a positive creation mode, the music. Seine St Denis and its underground rap is just a testimony of rap's reality on French territory and especially on its most virulent rap scene which is Paris and its suburbs.

Monika Sokol

Verbal Duelling: Ein universeller Sprachspieltypus und seine Metamorphosen im US-amerikanischen, französischen und deutschen Rap

Summary:

The following article is meant to widen the perspective on Rap by connecting one of its core-practices, the competitive verbo-musical Battleing, to present and historically documented traditions of more or less routinized Verbal Duelling worldwide. In analysing the token in terms of the type, the functional ties confrontative routines in Rap may have with the make-up of collective identities can reveal more clearly, and it can help to shed new light on the processes of recontextualisation and diversification of Hip Hop and Rap in Europe and elsewhere. After providing the reader with basic knowledge on some competitive and especially verbal competitive traditions of the world, the induced patterns will serve as framework for an in-depth comparative study of the Verbal-Duelling-phenomenology in commercial North-American, French and German Rap.

Martin Greve & Ayhan Kaya

Islamic Force, Takim 34 und andere Identitätsmixturen türkischer Rapper in Berlin und Istanbul

Summary:

Today Turkish rappers can be found in almost every German city, recently also in Turkey. By means of breakdance, graffiti and rap Turkish or Turkish-German youngsters create a space of Diaspora existence which delimitates them from both the German majority society and from the Turkish minority enclave. The formation of cultural identity is determined by global youth cultures, Turkish traditions and a local identity. Four historical phases can be separated: 1. The dominance of Turkish youngsters at the beginning of hiphop movement in Germany. 2. Transnational commercialization of Turkish rap in Turkey. 3. The reception of Turkish rap in Germany as 'Oriental hiphop'. 4. The development of a hiphop movement in Turkey.

Frank Wittmann

Sexismus, Islamismus und Ghettoromantik

Die Dakarer HipHop-Bewegung *Bul faale* im Kontext der globalen Postmoderne

Summary:

Scholars of different disciplines recently became interested in the Senegalese hip hop-movement *Bul faale*. They focus primarily on progressivity, constructive attitudes and ghetto-identity. This article

wants to make clear that this topic has to be debated from the side of the local (Rainer Winter 2003) and to be contextualized in the discourse of the global postmodernity. For this reason the textual content of the rap songs does not have to be underestimated as it is done by Lawrence Grossberg (1992). Only the analysis of the lyrics enables one to find out what exactly the young hip hopper do criticize their society for and what social conceptions they do propose. The analysis shows that a considerable part of the songs is characterized by a socio-religious conservatism. In this sense the article suggests that the terms of empowerment, resistance and subversion – often idealized in the cultural studies – can be regressive.

Michelle Auzanneau & Vincent Fayol

Äußerungsereignis und Sprachvariabilität im senegalesischen Rap

Summary:

This essay introduces a discourse analysis concentrating upon aspects of enunciation within the genre Rap at Dakar. These are to be seen in connection with sociocultural conditions. Urbanity and occidental influences demand a higher social and mental flexibility of the individual especially in societies with primarily oral communication. Rap is best suited to comply with these challenges. The authors observe the variability of linguistic choice interplaying at presentations of enunciation and construction of sociotypes. The linguistic choice symbolically mobilizes the ambivalence of languages, registers and lexis and the functions connected therewith as well as their institutional and social status and history. Thus Rap is considered as a (re)construction of a variety of sociotypes shaped by the linguistic variability of the enunciation and the organization of its micro-genres. So a multiplicity of observations and differentiation released.

Eva Kimminich

(Hi)Story, Rapstory und ‚possible worlds‘

Erzählstrategien und Körperkommunikation im französischen und senegalesischen Rap

Summary:

The essay centers on the narrative aspect of Rap, viewed in its anthropological implications and in connection with an increasing tendency of reoralisation. Background of the analysis are constructivist reflections of storytelling in connection with actual narratological concepts and semiotic research of gestures. The narratological models include the philosophical possible-worlds theory and move the accent onto the narrative universe, its internal dynamic and its references. This enables us to observe how the storytelling rapper creates authority and credibility for himself and his narrated possible worlds, temporarily materialized by performance. Thereby various movements, gestures and gesticulations are employed. With the help of video records his body language and gestures are studied in connection with the verbal flow. The analysis shows how in the process of multimedia storytelling the narrated person becomes not only a self-determined storyteller himself but via mimetic narration also the self representing protagonist of his own textual actual world. It is kinesic communication which is incorporating what is possible.