ELLOIT CARDOZO
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS)

AKSHARA DAFRE
Texas A&M University

TANMAY SINGH
University of Delhi

'At the table I sit, making it legit': Legitimate knowledge, and the legitimacy of knowledge in a hip hop classroom in India

ABSTRACT

Hip hop's entrance into academic spaces is inextricably linked to the questions: what is legitimate knowledge, and how is legitimacy attributed? These questions stem from a concern about the exclusionary structures in academia that prioritize privileged positions of institutional power over the lived experiences of artists and practitioners: who warrants a seat at the metaphorical head table? We explore such questions of legitimate knowledge by considering the case of India's first university-accredited course on hip hop, the certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies'. Aimed at providing students with a sociocultural and historical understanding of hip hop, most of the 60-hour course is taught by homegrown

KEYWORDS

legitimacy/legitimate
the fifth element
woman-produced
  knowledge
academia
academic
knowledge of self
intro to hip hop studies
University of Mumbai

artists who have been pivotal for the culture's growth in India. In this article, we reflect on our experiences as researchers and knowledge producers as part of the inaugural batch of this course, in the summer of 2021. Through autoethnographic readings, we address the following questions: what constitutes legitimate knowledge, and how is this legitimacy determined? We pivot these questions on (sub)/cultural capital, woman-produced knowledge and emic and etic stances towards knowledge. Reflecting on our personal identities, we re-evaluate conceptions of legitimate knowledge created at the intersection of our roles as students of the course, and as researchers and academics. Problematizing our positions as knowledge producers, and latent extensions of hip hop's fifth element, we dissect notions of legitimate knowledge, as well as the varying axes across which they are produced and legitimized, such as street cred, gender and membership in the Global Hip Hop Nation.

INTRO/DUCTION

Hip hop's liaison with academia has a history of being met with scepticism. Michael Eric Dyson points out how early critics of hip hop studies looked at the culture as a fad that is 'simply unworthy of serious examination' because they did not think of it as belonging amongst 'subjects [that] could be legitimately pursued' (2004: xiv). The question being asked here was: does the academic study of hip hop stand to generate any legitimate knowledge? While the eventual growth of hip hop into a widespread global phenomenon and the subsequent increase in its academic analyses over the years have quashed these archaic criticisms to a large extent, there is another line of criticism that undeniably merits closer attention from hip hop scholars.

> There is frequently a defensive attitude expressed among the youth of the extended and variegated hip-hop community that is articulated as skepticism for scholarly engagements with hip-hop. For youth who are most explicitly identified with hip-hop's cultural forms, claims made for and about hip-hop by professors occupying academia's 'ivory towers' or 'hallowed halls' are frequently met with suspicion, if not outright derision. It is not rare, for instance, to hear critiques among young constituents of 'the hip-hop nation' who are convinced that professors with little or no connection to 'the 'hood' and, thus, lacking in 'street credibility' in their view, are exploiting the culture in order to identify with something cool, exciting, 'fresh', or 'phat'. This viewpoint, inscribed at its worst with a palpable anti-intellectual disdain, suggests that university and college teachers are often most interested in translating hip-hop's cultural forms and practices into abstract theoretical jargon, building their academic careers on the backs of MCs, DJs, B-boys and graffiti artists who forge the objects of scholarly research.
>
> (Forman 2004: 4)

To borrow a term from Big Daddy Kane (1988), then, academics are often accused of being 'half-steppin' charlatans by practitioners of hip hop, and their claims to 'expertise' are seen as being dubious. Such stances are indicative of doubts over not only the intentions of scholars who study hip hop academically, but also the legitimacy of the knowledge such studies produce. While Forman's observations are made especially in the context of hip hop studies

in the United States, they ring true even in case of hip hop's early forays into the Indian academia. A cursory glance at the comments on the Instagram posts announcing the University of Mumbai's certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course is testament enough:

> Is it [a] joke?
> Hip-hop can never be schooled. Please if you guys really support, know the history from where it started and how. Hip-hop is a natural thing, you can never teach them in syllabus wise. 🙏 Please respect hip-hop @indiasfinesthiphop [*sic*]
> Teacher *kaun kaun hai be* [Who are the teachers?].
> (@indiasfinesthiphop 2021)

The University of Mumbai officially approved the first ever academic course on hip hop in India, the certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' in 2019 after it had been under review for over a year. The vision behind the 60-hour-long course is to provide students with a cultural and historical understanding of hip hop, as opposed to helping them hone their craft at its artistic elements. When Usha Pravin Gandhi (UPG) College in Mumbai prepared to admit the first batch for the course in early 2021, it became clear that the course syllabus was loosely structured around the artistic elements of hip hop with individual modules dedicated to MCing, breaking, graffiti, rapping and beatboxing. Yatindra Ingle, assistant professor and coordinator of the course at UPG College who was also the brain behind the design of the course when it was first introduced, made it a point to get veterans from the country's hip hop scenes involved in the course: the course faculty for the inaugural batch included rappers Enkore and Manmeet Kaur, breakers Akku and Am-B, beatboxer D-Cypher, graffiti writer Zake and battle rapper Rapture, amongst others.

Ingle, himself a seasoned MC of the country's underground hip hop scenes, made it a point to have artists represented as well as preventing the course from becoming a hostile ivory-tower takeover of the country's hip hop culture, especially in light of the increased mainstream attention that came with Zoya Akhtar's (2019) Oscar-nominated Bollywood blockbuster movie about Mumbai's underground rap scene, *Gully Boy*. The fact that most of the course faculty comprised of artists who had been a part of the country's hip hop scenes for over a decade (as opposed to *professors occupying academia's 'ivory towers' or 'hallowed halls'*) gave the course a community-facing orientation. While the course still faced a fair share of criticism from the community, the artists involved in it as faculty were exempt on account of their embodied Knowledges from having been an indispensable part of the scenes. In fact, these artists, by their mere presence, gave the course whatever little air of legitimacy it had amidst the hip hop community, reminiscent of Big Daddy Kane's (1988) proclamation: 'At the table I sit, making it legit'.

The argument stands to be made that this community-facing orientation is heavily facilitated by the nascent state of hip hop scholarship in India: the first academic book on the subject, Ethiraj Gabriel Dattatreyan's *The Globally Familiar: Digital Hip Hop, Masculinity, and Urban Space in Delhi*, was only published in October 2020 with the second, Jaspal Naveel Singh's *Transcultural Voices: Narrating Hip Hop Culture in Complex Delhi*, only published in November 2021, when the course was already running its second batch. It is further worth pointing out that both Dattatreyan and Singh are based outside

India, so the state of scholarship on the subject within the country's academic circles was at an even more germinative stage when the course was launched. Whatever little scholarship on hip hop in India existed besides their work was limited at best and undiscoverable at worst. It is in a hip hop studies 'scene' in this state, still in the early days of its development, that we signed up for the course as three early-career researchers still finding our feet. We were part of a batch of fifteen students: accompanied by other dancers and rappers and, in essence, surrounded by and steeped deep inside all four of hip hop's artistic elements during the course.

Discussing Afrika Bambaataa's idea of knowledge as the fifth element of hip hop, Travis Gosa points out how it is conceived as the 'knowledge of self': an Afro-diasporic mix of spiritual and political consciousness meant to empower members of disenfranchised communities. He further elucidates that according to the literature of the Universal Zulu Nation, this 'knowledge of self' 'can be derived from the critical and self-reflective study of anything in the universe, as long as knowledge is deployed towards peace, unity, love, and having fun' (2015: 57, 65). In his historiographical reading, Gosa thoroughly emphasizes that Bambaataa's notion is firmly grounded in the sociohistorical and cultural roots of hip hop in the ghettos in the streets of the United States. Jaspal Naveel Singh points out that the fifth element consists of understanding and Overstanding: historically informed epistemic stances taken towards the self and the other; and an affective, metadiscursive rationalization, respectively (2016: 179; for a detailed discussion on the concept of Overstanding, see Singh 2021a). Working at a nexus of these conceptions, we analyse our subject positions as knowledge producers (researchers) vis-à-vis the fifth element in a formal academic set-up for the study of hip hop, as part of the certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course's inaugural batch. In what follows, we present three separate autoethnographic narratives in succession, à la posse cut, in which we reflect individually on our experiences with the scepticism (often our own) towards academic knowledge in a hip hop classroom. In doing this, we attempt to unpack notions of legitimate knowledge and the discernment of this legitimacy while simultaneously putting into practice and underpinning the fifth element's ethos to constantly keep an eye on the dynamics of our subjective positionalities.

WHO GETS TO TEACH, WHO GETS TO PREACH

In my first three years disseminating and speaking about my work on hip hop in India, I (Elliot) almost always found myself speaking to a 'knowledge' deficit. In engagements with the Indian academia, my audience showed familiarity with the scholarly literature of humanities and social sciences while also displaying an understanding of the sociocultural milieu of the hip hop scenes I was analysing, perceivably through lived experiences. However, they knew little, if anything, about the sociocultural history of hip hop's growth and the existing scholarly literature on it and were largely unfamiliar with the local hip hop scenes I was discussing, barring probably the most famous artists. My encounters with academia in other parts of the world introduced me to an audience relatively familiar with the scholarly literature of the humanities and social sciences as well as existing work on hip hop. This audience, often fairly familiar with the history and culture of hip hop, knew barely anything about the hip hop scenes I was talking about and lacked familiarity with the socio-cultural context of the production of the hip hop I was discussing. On being

taken aboard the faculty for the certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course, I fully expected to speak to an audience that knew the hip hop culture I was analysing thoroughly while also knowing a fair bit about the history as well as the culture of hip hop. They, I anticipated, would lack the familiarity with scholarly literature of humanities and social sciences, as well as existing work on hip hop. This history of having to engage with and plug 'knowledge' deficits informed my perception of myself as an aspiring representative of hip hop's fifth element.

The fallacy of this stance only dawned upon me as I began speaking to hip hop artists in various cities for fieldwork as part of a project I was working on around the same time as the beginning of the course. While I had previously read and ruminated on Ethiraj Gabriel Dattatreyan's discussion of HipHopography as 'a way of conducting research that takes seriously [hip hop] practitioners' efforts to theorize and represent themselves' and 'displace the power differentials between experts and participants' (2020: 16), the numerous moments of self-reflection I had while listening and relistening to recordings of conversations during fieldwork represented the first instances of me consciously engaging with my own position and power. As these experiences made me more mindful of my position as an 'outsider' in the scenes – a potential culture vulture even – my feelings towards my positionality as a researcher of hip hop have grown increasingly ambivalent with time. My autoethnographic readings are littered with this ambivalence towards my own position. One of the fundamental issues with my initial stance is that it thought of 'knowledge' as a cultural practice of production, overlooking the fact that '[t]he fifth element of hip hop pushes practitioners of the four elements of the culture to attempt to overstand hip hop, to metadiscursively rationalise hip hop' (Singh 2016: 179). I have eventually begun to grapple with the fact that knowledge of self is more of an overarching superstructure to any analytical or theoretical frameworks for aspiring hip hop scholars than being the element they stand to represent.

Roped in by Ingle to teach the module on 'Hip-Hop & Research', it was a no-brainer for me to enrol for the course as a student as well after having had this realization. As opposed to most other members of the faculty who were veterans in the country's hip hop circles with over a decade of experience under their belts, I had only been researching the culture in India for a little over two years, when the course was launched. Here, I must take a step back and speculate that my inclusion in the course faculty could, in large part, be attributed to the cultural capital and privilege I had courtesy of having previously met and discussed my research with Ingle back when the course was initially approved, as well as having been in his peripheral vision as one of the very few people researching hip hop in India and a collaborator with him on other related projects. I contend that as someone actively trying to bridge the gap between the hip hop scenes and the academia, for Ingle, the knowledge I produced was legitimized by the fact that my work on hip hop was being funded by reputable fellowships awarded by institutes under the Government of India's Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Demonstrably introduced to the students and my fellow classmates as 'the first person to receive a fellowship from the government to research hip hop culture in India', it was clear from the outset that the position I occupied was quite different from all the other faculty members as well as all the other students. I was the odd one out amongst the faculty: someone who had not 'done' hip hop but still found himself entrusted with contributing

some value to this moment, which everyone involved unanimously acknowledged as being culturally significant. Amidst my fellow classmates, I occupied an ambivalently indifferent place: they knew too little about me or my work to either appreciate or criticize me in any capacity if at all. As I have stated elsewhere,

> to the best of my knowledge my interest in understanding the evolution of hip hop culture in India now, comes with no claim to nor a wish to eventually claim a stake, and with an acknowledgement and understanding that I am as much of an 'outsider' as others who have never been an active part of the scenes in any way.
>
> (Cardozo forthcoming)

When I told Mumbai-based rapper Enkore this amidst a conversation, he responded saying: 'The fifth element of hip hop is knowledge of self as much as it is knowledge. So even though you might not want to call it that, in being aware of this, you are hip hop' (Johar 2021: n.pag.). Without even realizing it, I felt validated by this affirmation.

Singh (2022) discusses his occupation of the ambiguous insider-outsider role duality during fieldwork. He describes oscillating between his role as a hip hop head or someone with 'knowledge and experience of hip hop cultural practices' and his role as a researcher, 'an apprentice, looking to learn things from [his] participants' (Singh 2022: 84). In stark contrast to Singh, I find myself in no position to lay any such claims to first-hand experience with hip hop cultural practices. Even my knowledge of hip hop cultural practices is functional at best and, more importantly, mostly acquired through reading scholarly literature on hip hop. The position I occupy, in fact, is a lot closer to that of a fan/academic (Hills 2002: xviii; Brooker 2005: 879) than that of a hip hop head: a fine, oft-blurry but crucial distinction. As a self-acknowledged 'outsider', then, I realize and try to acknowledge, to the best of my capacities, that the knowledge I produce and disseminate is perhaps only as legitimate as it is earnest in its representations of the on-ground artists it talks about while simultaneously being mindful of the relative (often-privileged) positions I occupy in the field.

H. Samy Alim discusses how global hip hop scholars and practitioners challenge the 'origins' or what Murray Forman calls 'the essential Bronx moment' through retellings that present alternative origins of hip hop culture (2008: 7). However, given the repeated, justified emphasis during certain sessions in the course on how hip hop in India is a culture that has been 'borrowed' from elsewhere, and the obligation for anyone engaging in it to acknowledge and respect the history of racial struggles that it comes from, I could not help but ponder on its role in how the knowledge I produced was perceived. Would the knowledge be 'more legitimate' if it were being provided by a person of African American origin? What difference would it have made if it were a person of an altogether different ethnicity producing and disseminating the same knowledge that I was? I got indicative answers during guest sessions conducted by hip hop artists from Japan and Russia. While the first generation of hip hop artists in India learned their craft exonormatively, looking at more developed scenes in countries such as Germany, Korea and the United States, a large part of the consequent generation(s) have grown up with Indian hip hop as their reference point with some of the older practitioners effectively being seen as veterans within their respective scenes now

(Singh and Cardozo forthcoming 2024). When Ingle invited hip hop artists from Japan and Russia to conduct guest sessions with us, at least some of our classmates seemed almost enamoured by the mere fact that artists from *other countries* would be interacting with them so closely. While not all of them knew much about the hip hop scenes in these countries beforehand, they seemed drawn in, in equal measures, by the fact that these artists practised and represented hip hop culture as well as an accompanying orientalizing/occidentalizing gaze. I posit that these experiences are indicative of a legitimization of knowledge within the hip hop classroom I found myself in (and probably elsewhere) by racialization. Given that my classmates and I shared the same ethnicity, their perception of the legitimacy of the knowledge I produced was informed by the conspicuous absence of said racialization towards me.

It is useful here to take a look at Dattatreyan's and Singh's reflections on their respective positions during ethnographic fieldwork in Delhi, to demonstrate this difference. Dattatreyan points out how 'as an older male Indian American from New York' he was 'perceived as closer to an authentic Black masculinity' by the participants of his research in the then nascent Delhi hip hop scene (2020: 16). Singh argues that the participants' perception of him as a 'travelling ethnographer who himself speaks a "non-native" version of English' positioned him as 'a worldly exponent of the global networks to which [his] participants perhaps strived to belong', effectually charging his interactions with them 'with the power and knowledge of the postcolonial world' and making them 'indexically imbued with the socio-economic ideologies of modernity and middle-class aspirational lifestyles in Delhi' (2022: 86). In addition, I must revisit a point I made earlier. The fact that Dattareyan and Singh conducted their fieldwork around 2012–13 while the hip hop scenes in Delhi (and India) were still in the germinative stages can be seen as another important factor in the way their positions as researchers were perceived by their participants. In contrast, by the time I was teaching the course module in 2021, cities like Delhi and Mumbai had strongly consolidated identities as the epicentres of hip hop in the country. Understandably, my lack of membership in these was accompanied by a lack of perceived legitimacy, as Sunaina Maira rightly points out '"being in the know" carries with it a certain status, or subcultural capital' (2000: 337). Mike Moore discusses how hip hop 'provides institutional cultural capital through organizations and locales which legitimize claims to "cultural competence"' (2007: 16). The legitimacy attributed to the knowledge produced by Dattatreyan and Singh by their research participants comes in part from the fact that the participants associated them with the United States and Germany: locales with considerably more claim to cultural capital within what Osumare calls the hip hop nation (2001: 173) than India. This difference is only amplified by the fact that with the development of local scenes, hip hop culture in India had become a lot more endonormative when I started conducting sessions for the course, as opposed to when they conducted their ethnographic fieldwork.

It is implicit in both Gosa's and Singh's discussions of the fifth element that the legitimacy of knowledge in hip hop is intrinsically linked to lived realities. When tied up with Motley and Henderson's argument that authenticity is essentially established and reaffirmed by performances that position 'the artist as experienced knower' (2008: 250–51), this indicates that the 'experience' that comes with 'doing' hip hop as an active member of the scenes plays an important part in knowledge as well as the eventual perception of its legitimacy. In sum, my experiences in the hip hop classroom were in keeping

with these observations, denoting a break from Gosa's concern over whether 'radical, counter-hegemonic thought, Afrocentrism or street knowledge' would have any place in academic spaces 'that operate primarily for the reproduction of race-gender-social class advantage' (2015: 67). Here, however, I would like to re-emphasize that my fellow classmates consisted of individuals who self-identified either as hip hop heads or aspiring and/or practising artists, often both. And for them, as Imani Perry tells us, a recognized hip hop artist becomes 'a kind of preacher […] and assumes the kind of intellectualism, exposition, and arrogance accorded that role' (2004: 153). In not being one, I was understandably met with indifference by my classmates initially (though this did seem to change a bit after a session where I gave them an overview of hip hop scholarship). What remains worth looking out for is how these perceptions towards legitimate knowledge in hip hop change as the composition of consequent batches diversifies, drawing in students who do not necessarily identify as such.

WOMAN-PRODUCED KNOWLEDGE IN HIP HOP

I (Akshara) have been fortunate enough to grow up surrounded by spaces and people that have never made me reflect on my womanhood. My identity as a cis-woman has never felt like a part of me that I do things *despite of*, and my privilege shines through in my language and education, the clothes I wear, the places I go to and every other fibre of my existence. My cushioned lifestyle has thus never put me in a situation where I have thought to myself, 'This would not have happened if I was a man', until very recently.

In the summer of 2021, I completed the certificate in an 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course, offered by Usha Pravin Gandhi College, affiliated to the University of Mumbai. I enrolled as an aspiring hip hop studies researcher, fresh out of an MA and having written my dissertation on the postcoloniality of Mumbai rap music. It felt like the perfect next step for me to segue into the field and to perhaps form connections with artists and aspiring hip hop studies scholars that would eventually prove useful for my research and doctoral study. I approached this space as someone who already had some knowledge but was also eager to learn more about hip hop, particularly in the Indian context.

In my batch of fifteen students, there were only three of us that identified as women. From these, Mahima, a young dancer from Mumbai, sent me a personal message before our induction asking me about how I was going to introduce myself to everyone (we were asked to prepare short and creative introductions of ourselves to present to the other students and faculty, as a 'getting to know each other' exercise). Ever since then, Mahima and I formed a friendship where we would often discuss and share our thoughts, ideas and, more importantly, our anxieties. I found that every time we needed to raise a question, make a request or even share a concern in the online classroom, we would first message each other, discuss it and *decide* who would be the one that would have to speak up in sessions. For me, it was almost as if something about being surrounded by my male classmates, discussing hip hop (which in itself is often critiqued alongside theories of gender and masculinity), made me question my belonging in this space and the legitimacy of the knowledge I had acquired from my previous studies.

Even during WhatsApp group discussions about artists and albums, I often found that my opinions were perhaps valued less or were even argued

against, which also added to my hesitancy of speaking up in the first place. Some of the questions raised by male students in sessions along the lines of 'What do you think of the female rappers that claim "women empowerment" as an excuse for their nudity, and vulgarity?' made me feel defeated. I tried my best to fight back against this, by making sure my opinions were at least *heard*, if not valued, and by sharing my past work in the field of hip hop studies, as a way to demonstrate legitimate knowledge and genuine interest.

I found that the only time I was valued as an individual, with my own agency, opinions and as my own person, was when I shared my past trauma and family history in the form of a spoken word poem. For an online jam that was planned for the session, where each student had to perform an act whether it was dancing, rapping, beatboxing or even stand up, I chose to perform a slam poem where I shared details of my past and a few events that transpired in my life. For some reason, prior to my performance, I was introduced to the audience by my fellow classmate as 'beautiful', which I felt was odd and, honestly, unnecessary. Ironically, the poem I had written and chose to perform was called 'Why I am a bad feminist', the answer for which was 'because I hate all men'. Suddenly I was transformed from being the 'angry girl always shouting her opinions' to 'sad, broken, *damaged* girl'. This time my classmates were listening to me and what I was saying, and valuing my ideas, but only out of sympathy.

The very idea of women's knowledge being less legitimate is one that was engrained in us all. From my insecurities of speaking up to my classmates not knowing how to react when I did, it was something that we all experienced, and perhaps discovered about ourselves with the time spent on this course. The sanctity of knowledge is an age-old concept, and while our world moves forward in the twenty-first century with feminism, women empowerment and intersectionality, the notion of woman-produced knowledge being permissible and valuable is still perhaps implicitly a novice idea. Contemporary women hip hop artists being considered members of the fraternity is something that is still met with resistance, and so women hip hop artists being actual, real and significant producers and propagators of knowledge is just an apparition.

While woman-produced knowledge in hip hop academia accounts for some of the most important work in the field – see Tricia Rose's *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (1994) and Joan Morgan's *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: A Hip Hop Feminist Breaks It Down* (1999) – and artists such as Lauryn Hill and Missy Elliott are considered foremothers of hip hop not just in terms of female representation but also as pioneers for the culture as a whole, I cannot help but wonder whether our high regard for a few selected women in hip hop exists simply as an *exception to the rule*. Are women actively participating in hip hop spaces and communities a departure from the otherwise masculine and, to some extent, heteronormative nature of these spaces? Have we, as an audience and as academic critics, fully embraced women's positions in hip hop in a true sense, beyond performative and token acceptance?

After performing my slam poem at the online jam, I received several messages from my classmates where they thanked me for sharing, offered their sympathies and asked me if what I said was true – 'Did that really happen?' I sensed a shift in their behaviour towards me after that, making me question whether my worth was tied into my ability to deal with trauma, and if my personhood was directly dependant on the abuse I suffered. Was I someone only because of what I went through?

Even though my ideas and opinions were met with lesser resistance now, it somehow made me feel worse. Sympathy from my male classmates did not suddenly give me subjectivity, and my opinions did not suddenly matter. If anything, they were trivialized. It was as if my past clouded their vision of me and everything I now said was tainted. I had strayed further away from establishing the legitimacy of my knowledge.

With the certificate course, I had a first-hand experience with the dismissal of my knowledge and ideas as a woman in an inherently male space. My personhood, while coated in privilege, has also been a site of discrimination, abuse and trauma, all of which contribute to the formation of my identity. The continued invisibility and ignorance of knowledge produced by such identities also contributes to the maintenance of oppressive power structures and social inequalities. As pointed out in *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, 'suppressing the knowledge produced by any oppressed group makes it easier for dominant groups to rule because the seeming absence of dissent suggests that subordinate groups willingly collaborate in their own victimization' (Scott cited in Collins 2002: 3). Thus, the legitimacy of woman-produced knowledge especially as a person of colour is actively resisted by either conscious or unconscious perpetrators.

So how would one go about attempting to validate or legitimize their knowledge? It is important to note that 'the methods used to validate knowledge claims must also be acceptable to the group controlling the knowledge validation process' (Collins 2002: 255), and thus, individuals in positions of power in any given context tend to *decide* how one could prove themselves, and their knowledge, valid. This brings to my mind a more recent experience I had while presenting a previous version of this article at a conference amongst other hip hop scholars from around the world. My strong claims of women's punishing position in hip hop (Cardozo et al. 2022) were met with disbelief, dismissal and denial. I had academics tell me how what I experienced was perhaps specific to the Indian hip hop context only, as if women's oppression is not global, or that it is simply not true. This time I experienced the delegitimization of my knowledge not in terms of research or facts but more in terms of my personal knowledge attained from my experiences on the certificate course.

The fifth element of hip hop culture is coined 'knowledge of self' (Gosa 2015: 57), and I always considered the idea of knowledge not only from a spiritual and introspective perspective but also from the perspective of knowledge being an acquired capital and something to 'get'. Hip hop feminism adopts a discourse that 'embraces the lived experiences of Black women and girls', thus making lived experiences and knowledge of their own lives central to the understanding of hip hop feminism and culture. This dual understanding of knowledge, as one that is self-contained and one that is to be sought, is not entirely appositional but rather intrinsically intertwined. Here, knowledge exists through both these understandings simultaneously, where the ideas build on one another to create a holistic conception of knowledge. Knowledge production taking place at the sites of Black girlhood and womanhood is significant for identity development and exploration of systemic oppression; it is also important to look at the idea of knowledge as an outward entity for one to be in pursuit of. I previously believed that as an Indian woman and as a researcher, my role as a latent extension of the fifth element of hip hop had less to do with my own lived reality and more to do

with my interactions and praxis with hip hop, primarily because of my racial and ethnic origins. As an Indian woman (read: *not Black*), my experiences did not contribute to hip hop knowledge, and that led me to focus more on the knowledge that is to be sought than the one that is within. However, I soon came to realize that the former very much dictates the latter, which means that my quest for knowledge within hip hop also shapes my experiences as a woman researching hip hop to be unique and distinct from those of my male counterparts.

With this, I cannot help but wonder whether my quest for knowledge had been wrong all along, where I should recall my own experiences to understand a woman's positionality in hip hop spheres better. Has the dismissal of my knowledge by my classmates been a sore experience, but also in some ways a lesson for me that has manifested into learned knowledge of some sort?

KNOWLEDGE FROM AN ETIC VIEWPOINT

When I (Tanmay) first heard of the 'Certificate in Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course offered by the University of Mumbai, it seemed set to be a pioneering move in hip hop studies in India. The course was majorly about hip hop's artistic elements, and no direct mention of the 'fifth' element, that is, knowledge, was explicitly made. However, epistemological questions (What is the nature of knowledge and how can it be attained?) still stood tall in most of the sessions. This was even more blatant for me because as an armchair social science student, I have always deemed knowledge 'across' disciplines to be close and bounded. It is always 'knowledge' of 'something' fixed, which defines the epistemological parameters of a subject. Hence hip hop existed for me but as an 'object' of enquiry, something 'on'/'about' which knowledge can be produced through various investigative 'modalities' (Historiography, Anthropology, Philosophy, etc.). I was completely unaware of the notion of 'boundless' knowledge in the culture of hip hop. Although the interpretive methodologies in Anthropology have forced me to reckon that the culture is an intersubjective system of meanings that is contextual, hip hop is a culture that, in today's world, is based in numerous different places and contexts, and hence even after deploying interpretive faculties, a unitary notion of its 'knowledge' system seems elusive. I have therefore chosen to label this section, and the knowledge production therein, an 'etic' viewpoint because it is a commentary on this trope of 'knowledge' through externally imposed 'discursive' categories of social science and my 'life-word'. I keep in mind that the perspectives of insiders need to be foregrounded, but due to my limited experiences of being on the inside, I am not sure whether I will be able to shed the 'objectifying' predispositions while making sense of the culture.

The trajectory of this section is concomitant with my personal history of coming to understand the 'knowledge' in hip hop better through my experiences in the course and of getting to read some of the existing literature on hip hop. For conceptual clarity I have developed a hypothetical dualism – knowledge 'in' hip hop/knowledge 'on' hip hop – and discuss this through a combination of autoethnographic reflections on my time as a student of the course, simultaneously reflecting as an 'outsider', using the 'objective' social science categories, to make discernible what I selectively take as important experiences of the inside.

Knowledge 'in' hip hop

Knowledge 'in' hip hop is a kind of knowledge that operates within the culture and is scantly understandable to the outsider, that which the insiders consciously try to conceal and is seldom made explicit through their performances, testimonies and representation. During the course sessions, I realized that everyone had some conception of what the 'knowledge' produced, disseminated and discussed in such a setting meant to them: there was seemingly an objective quest but through an 'individualistic' perception of hip hop. It might not have stemmed from a very creative refashioning of it but had different meanings for different people that was imbricated in their own immediate life-worlds. Generally for the practitioners of hip hop, it was 'doing'; the researchers (who are also my co-authors here) were already preoccupied with 'loose' boundaries that characterize 'knowledge' in hip hop studies; and the course faculty walked the tightrope of characterizing it as 'subjective', based on contexts rooted in life experiences (they at times equated knowledge 'in' it with knowledge of 'self'), and 'objective', which is the generalized knowledge of hip hop such as annalistic history, terminology and techniques of the four elements. The 'symbolic' meaning system that existed on the 'inside' was ungraspable for me because I strove for rational coherence in a culture based on artful practices. Moreover, being an 'outsider' to the culture trying to understand its dynamic make-up, this experience struck me as incomplete because 'knowledge' carried different meanings in my life-world; I always thought it really cannot be that simple and easy-going!

A quest for the 'epistemological' parameter of the subject and the habit of returning to the books when 'experiences' left me unfulfilled pushed me towards some of the hip hop literature suggested in the course syllabus and by Elloit. I came across the conception of knowledge of 'self' as used by Afrika Bambaataa, which in hip hop is used for the legitimization of knowledge produced. It is an Afro-diasporic mix of 'spiritual' and 'political' consciousness meant to empower members of disenfranchised communities. Along with these aims of self-realization, it includes information on the history of the genre and its practitioners (Gosa 2015; Alim et al. 2018). Another usage in 'The Infinity Lessons', the basic teachings of Zulu Nation, emphasizes that there are no substantive and methodological limits to knowledge (Gosa 2015: 65), and the idea of 'knowledge of self' is attached with conditions of 'knowledge' being deployed for peace, unity, love and having fun. These are more or less community-based conceptions rooted in an 'essentialist' understanding of hip hop as a counter-hegemonic discourse pioneered by African Americans in the 'hoods of the United States. Later on, with the globalization of hip hop culture, the transcultural question came to the fore, and hence an understanding of the process of 'decentring' this rooted culture became imperative. Hip hop became a site of identity creation and refashioning of the self for young people all across the globe, not just by the process of appropriation but by 'creative' appropriation.

Alim (2008) and Benett and Morgan (2011) use the concept of 'Global Hip Hop Nation' that pushes us towards a transcultural reading of hip hop's cultural movement. Alim describes the Global Hip Hop Nation as a 'multilingual, multi-ethnic "nation" with an international reach, a fluid capacity to cross borders, and a reluctance to adhere to the geopolitical givens of the present' (2008: 3). Benett and Morgan think that in recent times hip hop has become a culture that 'encourages and integrates innovative practices of artistic expression, knowledge production, identity formation and political mobilization'

(2011: 177). Another important work is the conception of the Global Cipha. The term 'Cipha' itself is a metaphor to understand the many complex back-and-forth movements that have occurred in hip hop over the past 50 years. 'The very term "cipha" signifies and exemplifies the international and global diffusion of Hip Hop Culture, as well as its social location as a universal, cultural free space to express yo'self' (Spady et al. 2006: 10; for a more recent discussion on the concept and how it can inform research methodologies, see Rollefson 2018).

From this theoretical dive in, it became clear to me that the underlying conception of knowledge 'in' hip hop, indeed, pushes it towards flexibility, and no ubiquitous 'tenets' of it can apply to all the contexts in which the culture is practised. However, despite these theoretical underpinnings, I felt that the epistemological expansiveness of knowledge in hip hop gets narrowed down when realized in practice. I distinctly remember a fashion workshop that was organized as part of the course, in which everyone had to exhibit their sense of pop fashion. All the students were dressed in the standard hip hop way, while I felt 'alienated' because I had no sense of pop fashion whatsoever. Since the sessions were happening online, presenting oneself from head to toe on a camera was a hefty task; the teacher for the session, however, was insistent we displayed our 'kicks'. The kicks are an important stylistic accessory of an 'authentic' global hip hop lifestyle. I also noticed that the majority of my peers did not care about 'self-knowledge' or being spiritually conscious; they were more into the technical aspects that would help them rap or dance better: hip hop to them has become an art form rather than a way of looking at the world and existing in it. At other times the teachers hinted to some symbolic subservience indicating that our hip hop was some kind of secondary offshoot to the original US hip hop. I concur to the fact that my experiences are limited, but they still carry some currency of reality in them. In operation, knowledge in hip hop seems to have an underlying standard form of legitimacy, authenticity and lifestyle attached to it, to which actors especially from South Asian regions (where the culture was not born) have to adhere, lest questions over their 'representing the culture correctly' and boundary-crossing arise. These actors have to constantly reflect upon their practices (of all the elements including knowledge) as hip-hoppers, or rather align to these standards, in order to remain true to the ethos of the culture as they do not have the ontological security that is associated with 'Blackness' in hip hop. Alluding to 'reflexivity' in Giddens (1991) as one of the commonplace characteristics of modernity, whence self becomes a reflexive project (1991: 32), it occurs that the creation of self and hence the knowledge of it is 'doubly' burdensome for them as compared to their African American counterparts.

I, being an outsider, felt these 'codes' more prominently because I could not fit in, but even more generally my observations of my fellow classmates are also directly contrary to the aims of 'self-expression', that is the core tenet of knowledge in hip hop. To avoid being interrogated, they frequently sacrifice complex experiences for routine correctness and hence cannot be blamed for being interested only in the 'objective' aspects (described also as 'doing' at the start) of hip hop knowledge.

Knowledge 'on' hip hop

At the outset, a small module in the course 'Hip-Hop & Research' had provided me some assurance that even academicians could participate in the culture.

As I eventually started to immerse myself in the scholarly literature on hip hop, I discovered that a lot of what is 'inside' the culture has been made available to the world by researchers on the outside, or insiders turned researchers. I have called this kind of knowledge production 'on'/'about' hip hop as knowledge 'on' hip hop. The field of hip hop studies has developed in a way that uses all kinds of social science methods and disciplinary approaches to write and research on the subject of hip hop. However, this prospect of speaking 'for' or 'about' other(s), that is, doing academic research 'on' culture(s), conceals an intrinsic colonizing potential. Assurance is therefore one part; to claim genuine legitimacy as a 'researcher' comes next. Being an 'insider' absolves the practitioners from probing questions regarding reflexivity and positionality, while the outsider should always make use of reflexive faculties at all steps so as not to be 'objective' when performing an 'intimate' study of the counter-hegemonic culture of hip hop. KRS-One (2013) defines a hip hop scholar as someone who does not have a colonizing mindset and an objective stance towards the culture. The whole of my section is an attempt to fit into the above definition while simultaneously trying to avoid any overt claims to legitimacy

The tinges of unethical and colonial 'habitus' in me showed during an instance in the course where we had to submit an assignment – a biography of our favourite rap artist. It had to be framed around specific pointers such as style, personality, skill set, influences, resources, best way to listen and so on. I, for my part, went all the way out and wrote up an article on 'JID', not completely abiding by the stated pointers, loaded with excess theoretical jargon and in a style characteristic of elusive social science essays. While exchanging our submissions on the informal WhatsApp group, my fellow batchmates responded to it as 'god level shit', and it was even compared to an academic thesis. One of them called it a heavy article that needs to be read with a dictionary and said that it required rereadings to be understood. It was necessarily the cryptic academic style of writing that I had always known, and I sought to impose that colonial style on a simple assignment. This not only made it difficult to grasp but also pointed towards the monadic way in which conventional academicians approach the subject of hip hop, or produce knowledge 'on' it. Singh (2021b), regarding his book *Transcultural Voices*, discusses how his participants had difficulty reading the book due to its academic prose and style and calls for challenging the normative academic writing conventions in favour of fundamental literacies hip hop practitioners engage with in their cultures. Grewal (2020) has shown how the 'academic epistemologies' of the university space that seek to impose a colonial frame on hip hop can become more ethical and decolonized by learning and adopting the radical and embodied epistemologies of 'street knowledge'. An understanding of the 'theoretical' concepts used by the researcher, from the viewpoint of people inside the culture, is very crucial. These concepts are many a times non-comprehendible to the actors and create a rift between artists and academicians that leads to the sustenance of the insider/outsider binary. An approach which deems primary, the practitioners' understandings of the culture can help us revisit the 'objectivising' tendencies of academia as well as pave the way for upsetting this hierarchical duality of knowledge (in/on).

The portrayal of this explicit dualism, as has been made evident, is not to establish levels between the two conceptual categories of my creation, but to point towards their ethical reconciliation. Two recent pieces of scholarship on hip hop in India – one a linguistic ethnography (Singh 2022) and the other a collaborative digital ethnography (Dattatreyan 2020) of hip hop youth in Delhi

– are exemplary of innovative ideas that erase the gap between the partici-
pants and the researchers. Spady et al.'s approach termed HipHopography
was deployed in the former to show similarities with 'epistemic solidarity'
(Van Der Aa cited in Singh 2022), '[t]hrough long-term fieldwork, cumulative
rounds of feedback sessions, cooperative triangulation, mutual respect and
other collaborative activities, participants and ethnographers can develop […]
an equal voice, when it comes to defining the goals of the research' (2022:
15). The latter arises out of digital content creation with the participants and
hence is sprinkled with reflections on HipHopography, which 'is an approach
to research that attempts to displace the power differentials between experts
and participants in typical social science endeavours by harnessing hip hop's
aesthetic and epistemic sensibilities' (Dattatreyan 2020: 16).

   The ending of the course occurred to me as an exercise in the erosion
of this contradictory duality between knowledge 'in' and 'on' hip hop. A rap
cypher for an end-course assignment was astonishingly novel by my expecta-
tions. Using rap as a means of talking about the history of hip hop, its differ-
ent elements, technicalities and so on – with dancers expressing themselves
through those same 'verses' – created a condition where we were disseminat-
ing knowledge 'on' hip hop not through conventional academic means but
by using the faculties of knowledge 'in' hip hop. Performers intricately mixing
their own 'selves' and what they had 'learned' (objective), in dope 'bars', still
seems an amazing exercise for a conventional student like me. All the indi-
vidual positionalities melted away as everyone had to become an 'insider': I
for that matter had not even thought about rapping before that occasion. The
radicalism that hip hop can bring into academia had not struck me forcefully
then, but it becomes clearer with every passing day now.

OUTRO

Our autoethnographic reflections in the preceding sections have been an
attempt to further complexify the nature of the fifth element in hip hop by
eking out the nuances of how knowledge is legitimized. To sum these nuances
up in a traditional conclusion hence would be counterproductive. In vein of
an outro then, we use this closing section to reflect the spirit of our intro-
spections. The finality of this section, however, is only in terms of the present
article: we will continue to revisit and pick apart these questions in the future.

   Throughout our varied yet shared inward-facing inquiries into the legiti-
macy of knowledge in a hip hop classroom in India, we repeatedly ran into
some common stumbling blocks. These include questions of self-doubt (Elloit:
should I be teaching on this course, especially as a non-practitioner? Akshara:
will anything I say be taken seriously? Tanmay: do I belong here?), frustra-
tion (Elloit: is my work on hip hop as an 'outsider' *actually* useless? Akshara:
is my struggle to *at least* be heard all in vain? Tanmay: how can the concept
of knowledge be *that* fluid?) and, of course, legitimacy (Elloit: am I legitimate
enough to be a teacher on the course? Akshara: will I ever be legitimate as
a female in the male-dominated domain of hip hop? Tanmay: is knowledge
'on' hip hop legitimate at all?). These questions, we contend, stem from our
oft-subconscious complacency towards our sociocultural privilege. The fact
that the hip hop classroom we found ourselves in either reversed the power
differentials we had taken for granted from our positions within academia
(insider vs. outsider, academic vs. practitioner for Elloit and Tanmay) or rein-
forced preexisting power differentials from the outside world that we had

otherwise seldom encountered first hand (woman vs. man for Akshara) stands testament.

The hip hop classroom we found ourselves in, just like hip hop culture at large, acted as a shuffling ground where some hierarchies were rearranged while others were reinforced. It is these hierarchies that seem to play the most important role in discerning who is 'half-steppin'' and whose mere presence at the table (the University of Mumbai's certificate in 'Introduction to Hip-Hop Studies' course in our case) makes it legit. These reflections, however, are informed by our subjectivities that are in turn informed by the specific times and spaces, both physical and virtual, we find ourselves in. Given these subjectivities are highly dynamic, these questions merit earnest revisits down the line.

We believe we have already taken the initial steps towards such revisits in fact, during the process of writing, and especially co-authoring this article. Akshara's reflections, for instance, served to make Elloit and Tanmay see the shortcomings of their ways in that they did not discuss the privileges they carry on account of their gendered identities as cishet men within the male-dominated spaces (both real and imagined) of hip hop. Similarly, the drastic difference between the writing styles of our sections – Elloit's mix of autoethnography and stream of consciousness and Akshara's blending of autoethnography with introspective journaling as opposed to Tanmay's borderline autotheoretical ramblings – made Tanmay even more acutely aware than he already was of the alienating effect his highly jargonized writing style could have on readers. Furthermore, the process of getting feedback (not only but also) through editorial and peer reviews made Elloit and Akshara realize the importance of paying attention to nuance when discussing the racialization of identities: the usage of the term racialization as opposed to race in Elloit's case, and the importance of contextual specificity when identifying solidarities between being a woman of colour and Black American femininity in Akshara's case. These realizations, some of which are noticeably retroactively addressed now, could very well serve as starting points to further autoethnographic readings for us as well as others. More importantly perhaps, they are indicative of the importance of the multiplicity of perspectives in the discernment of hip hop Knowledges' legitimacy in academia.

Finally, we realize that a complexifying methodology such as the one we adopt might provide useful accounts for academia but not necessarily for the hip hop scene. This is quite a natural by-effect of our shared positions as academicians who are self-acknowledged outsiders to the scenes. While academia's pursuit of knowledge has its own importance, in hip hop, academia is not always welcome at the table. We hope for these reflections to contribute towards the growing dialogue that attempts to decolonize hip hop knowledge in the academia, with the lived experiences and practices of artists eventually not 'just' earning them a seat at the metaphorical table but *warranting* it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

exchanges. We also thank them and the anonymous reviewer for helping us improve this article with their thoughtful inputs. Our gratitude also goes out to Jaspal Naveel Singh for having patiently read multiple earlier drafts of this article and offered generous and incisive feedback. Big ups to Sanjay Ranade and Yatindra Ingle for getting it off the ground, to Usha Pravin Gandhi College in Mumbai for offering this historic course, and to all the amazing artists who conducted sessions with us throughout it. Massive shout-outs to our class-mates during the course, one love Panch-tatva!

REFERENCES

Alim, H. Samy (2008), 'Intro: Straight outta Compton, straight aus München – Global linguistic flows, identities, and the politics of language in a global hip hop nation', in H. S. Alim, A. Ibrahim and A. Pennycook (eds), *Global Linguistic Flows: Hip Hop Cultures, Youth Identities, and the Politics of Language*, Milton Park: Taylor & Francis, pp. 1–22, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203892787-4.

Big Daddy Kane (1988), 'Ain't No Half-Steppin", *Long Live the Kane*, USA: Cold Chillin' and Warner Bros. Records, https://open.spotify.com/track/0d NiLb9FEHrRK7VFDJctiR?autoplay=true. Accessed 29 July 2022.

Brooker, Will (2005), '"It is love": The Lewis Carroll Society as a fan commu-nity', *American Behavioural Scientist*, 48:7, pp. 859–80, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764204273173.

Cardozo, Elloit (forthcoming), '"The scribe for a history that's not even yours": An autoethnographic historiography of hip hop in India'.

Cardozo, Elloit, Dafre, Akshara and Singh, Tanmay (2022), '"At the table I sit, making it legit": Legitimate knowledge, and the legitimacy of knowledge in a hip hop classroom in India', *PANTHEON: Hip-Hop's Global Pathways to Cultural 'Legitimacy' (4th Meeting of the European Hiphop Studies Network)*, virtual, 25–27 January, https://europeanhiphopstudiesnetwork.wordpress.com/2022/05/03/paris-2022-videos-e-cardozo-a-dafre-t-singh-on-the-legitimization-of-knowledge-in-a-hip-hop-classroom-in-india/. Accessed 7 August 2022.

Collins, Patricia Hill (2002), *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, New York: Routledge, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203900055.

Dattatreyan, Ethiraj Gabriel (2020), *The Globally Familiar: Digital Hip Hop, Masculinity, and Urban Space in Delhi*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, https://doi.org/10.1515/9781478012726.

Dyson, Michael Eric (2004), 'Foreword', in M. Forman and M. A. Neal (eds), *That's the Joint! The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, New York and London: Routledge, pp. xi–xiv.

Forman, Murray (2004), 'Introduction', in M. Forman and M. A. Neal (eds), *That's the Joint! The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, New York and London: Routledge, pp. 1–8, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203642191-8.

Giddens, Anthony (1991), *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.

Gosa, Travis L. (2015), 'The fifth element: Knowledge', in J. A. Williams (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop*, Cambridge Companions to Music, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 56–70, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139775298.007.

Grewal, Sara H. (2020), 'Hip hop and the university: The epistemologies of "street knowledge" and "book knowledge"', *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 32:3, pp. 73–97, https://doi.org/10.1525/jpms.2020.32.3.73.

Haupt, Adam, Williams, Quentin E. and Alim, H. Samy (2018), 'It's bigger than hip hop', *Journal of World Popular Music*, 5:1, pp. 9–14, https://doi.org/10.1558/jwpm.36670.

Hills, Matt (2002), *Fan Cultures*, London and New York: Routledge.

India's Finest Hip Hop (@indiasfinesthiphop) (2021), 'Previously, we broke…', Instagram, 12 February, https://www.instagram.com/p/CLMZE_4j7bf/, Accessed 22 January 2022.

Johar, Ankur (2021), telephone conversation with E. Cardozo, 29 April.

KRS-One (2013), 'Hiphopcore special: Hiphop lecture by KRS-ONE in Amsterdam part two', YouTube, 26 June, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEzSEbv7FH8&ab_channel=Hiphopcore. Accessed 21 July 2022.

Maira, Sunaina (2000), 'Henna and hip hop: The politics of cultural production and the work of cultural studies', *Journal of Asian American Studies*, 3:3, pp. 329–69, https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2000.0038.

Moore, Mike (2007), 'The economics of cultural legitimacy in hip hop's counterpublic space', *Gnovis Journal*, 8:1, pp. 7–23.

Morgan, Joan (1999), *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: A Hip-Hop Feminist Breaks It Down*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Morgan, Marcyliena and Bennett, Dionne (2011), 'Hip-hop and the global imprint of Black cultural form', *Dædalus: The Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, 140:2, pp. 176–96, http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00086.

Motley, Carol M. and Henderson, Geraldine Rosa (2008), 'The global hip-hop diaspora: Understanding the culture', *Journal of Business Research*, 61:3, pp. 243–53, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2007.06.020.

Osumare, Halifu (2001), 'Beat streets in the global hood: Connective marginalities of the hip hop globe', *Journal of American & Comparative Cultures*, 24:1&2, pp. 171–81, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1537-4726.2001.2401_171.x.

Perry, Imani (2004), 'B-boys, players, and preachers: Reading masculinity', in *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop*, Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, pp. 117–54, https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822386155-006.

Rollefson, J. Griffith (2018), 'ERC Consolidator Grant 2018: Research proposal (part 2B)', CIPHER, https://europeanhiphoporg.files.wordpress.com/2018/06/ercconsolidatorgrant-2018-rollefson-fullapp.pdf. Accessed 7 August 2022.

Rose, Tricia (1994), *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.

Singh, Jaspal Naveel (2016), 'Transcultural voices: Narrating hip hop culture in complex Delhi', Ph.D. thesis, Cardiff: Cardiff University, https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/98597. Accessed 12 April 2024.

Singh, Jaspal Naveel (2021a), 'Overstandin: Upscaling reading positions and rescaling texts/signs', *Applied Linguistics Review*, 12:3, pp. 445–62, https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2019-0138.

Singh, Jaspal Naveel (2021b), 'Academic writing and hip hop writin', Channel View Publications and Multilingual Matters, 4 November, https://channel-viewpublications.wordpress.com/2021/11/04/academic-writing-and-hip-hop-writin/. Accessed 24 January 2023.

Singh, Jaspal Naveel (2022), *Transcultural Voices: Narrating Hip Hop Culture in Complex Delhi*, Encounters, Vol. 22, Bristol: Multilingual Matters, https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788928144.

Singh, Jaspal Naveel and Cardozo, Elloit (forthcoming 2024), 'Narrating the Indian hip hop OG: Ethnography, epistemic-deontic stance and

chronotope', in M. Haugh and R. M. Reiter (eds), *Morality in Discourse*, Oxford Studies in Sociolinguistics, New York: Oxford University Press.

Spady, James G., Alim, H. Samy and Meghelli, Samir (2006), *The Global Cipha: Hip Hop Culture and Consciousness*, Philadelphia, PA: Black History Museum Press.

SUGGESTED CITATION

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Elloit Cardozo is a fellow at Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies in Kolkata, India. He teaches the module on hip hop and research for the University of Mumbai's certificate course on hip hop.

Contact: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), IB 166, Sector III, Salt Lake, Bidhannagar, Kolkata 700106, West Bengal, India.
E-mail: cardozoelloit@gmail.com

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0526-668X

Akshara Dafre (she/her/hers) is a Ph.D. student in English at Texas A&M University. She specializes in transnational popular culture and hip hop studies.

Contact: 349 Spence St., Liberal Arts and Humanities Building, College Station, TX 77840, USA.
E-mail: akshara31@tamu.edu

https://orcid.org/0009-0009-9815-0413

Tanmay Singh is a Ph.D. student at the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, and broadly interested in 'anthropology of the youth', working on youth cultures and aspirations among Muslims of Meerut (his hometown). As a profound lover of hip hop culture, he only recently discovered the sickest! (pun intended) way of furthering his relationship with it, the academic way, and he is thinking of walking the path.

Contact: Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, Delhi 110007, India.
E-mail: tanmaya.singh96@gmail.com

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0893-3724