BEYOND the MUSIC and LYRICS

APRIL SILVER
I’ve seen a lot of changes in the last 25 years. I’ve seen the culture of hip hop change to the commerce of hip hop. The sense of powerlessness that pervades Black society impacts our psyche. We feel as though we don’t exist.

CAPITALISM & MATERIALISM PREDICTS HIP HOP. This is what drives our culture.

The power of hip hop lyrics travels wide and deep in today’s world. The artists know this.

I believe art exists to uplift and heal.

HIP HOP WAS BIRTHED FROM THIS FEELING OF POWERLESSNESS.

The sense of powerlessness that pervades Black society impacts our psyche. We feel as though we don’t exist.

NEPHERTI
When you don’t control your images, your media, the voting mechanism, you’re controlled by capitalism.

As a community, we do not have a real coalition that is responsible for what our generation is producing. Much less what hip hop is producing.

The hip hop isn’t going anywhere. The images aren’t until we take control.

For me, I have to get the corporate money to get rid of the images that are positive.

The entire community of Black people need to take responsibility and accountability.

PANEL’S GROUP DISCUSSION

Radio is a part of the public trust. Our tax dollars finance the FCC, that controls radio. So is it turning off the radio effective?

○ It’s one of the tools to use when we’re under attack.
○ Take back the power within your own home. Make the vibrations within it beautiful.

When we go back out into the world, we must be courageous, not lazy, and confront what is negative.

We are under attack! The entire capitalist system is designed to disempower us.

Don’t believe the hype that Black people aren’t making it. We are doing it; we just don’t have the mic.

We must teach people about their past so they can control their future.

We must control what we think and manifest what we want, not what capitalism wants for us.

ENGAGING YOUTH: Often times we approach kids in a way that doesn’t really attract them.

We must be authentic, and honest and listen to young people from a space that is pure.

We need results-driven programs that actually work.

We must make our dollar count!

WHAT CAN WE DO?
1. Turn off offensive radio
2. Look at this degrading music as corporate band & take it from your kids & throw it in the garbage.
3. We must start communicating with each other with respect for our own beauty.
4. We must become activists for our own communities.

TYSON WASHINGTON

Who is being played and who is being paid?
Oliver Williams (IDVAAC) moderated our next panel discussion on capitalism and the images seen and messages heard in Hip-Hop. He was joined by panelists April Silver (Akila Worksongs), Nefertiti, and Tylon Washington (Black Waxx Recordings).

**APRIL SILVER**
- I've seen a lot of changes in the last 25 years. I've seen the culture of Hip-Hop change to the commerce of Hip-Hop.
- I believe art exists to uplift and heal.
- The power of Hip-Hop lyrics travel wide and deep in today's world. The artists know this.
- The sense of powerlessness that pervades Black society impacts our psyche; we feel as though we don't exist.
- Hip-Hop was birthed from this feeling of powerlessness.
- Capitalism and materialism precedes Hip-Hop. This is what drives our culture.
- The entire community of Black people need to take responsibility and accountability.
- We must make our dollar count!

**TYLON WASHINGTON**
- Who is being played and who is being paid?
- What can we do?
  - Turn off offensive radio.
  - Look at this degrading music as contraband and take it from your kids and throw it in the garbage.
  - We must start communicating with each other with respect for our own beauty.
  - We must become activists for our own communities.

**NEFERTITI**
- When you don't control your images, your media, or the voting mechanism, you're controlled by capitalism.
- As a community we do not have a real coalition that is responsible for what our generation is producing, much less what Hip-Hop is producing.
- The Hip-Hop isn't going anywhere, the negative images aren't, and the artists aren't until we take control.
- For me, I have to get the corporate money to project the images that are positive.
- We must teach people about their past so they can control their future.
- We must control what we think and manifest what we want, not what capitalism wants for us.
- We are under attack! The entire capitalist system is designed to disempower us.
- Don't believe the hype that Black people aren't making it. We are doing it; we just don't have the mic.

**PANEL'S GROUP DISCUSSION**
- Radio is a part of the public trust. Our tax dollars finance the FCC that controls radio. So is turning off the radio effective?
  - It's one of the tactics to use when we're under attack.
  - Take back the power within your own home. Make the vibrations within it beautiful.
- When we go out into the world, we must be courageous, not lazy, and confront what is negative.
How can we reverse this economic model & get funds to the local artists?

- Start where you are.
- Use what you can.
- So do things like have a fundraiser; be excellent; know the history.
- It doesn't take a lot to produce your first 1,000 CDs. Set up a structure where you're getting paid.
- Learn about your intellectual property rights. When you own the property, you have a better chance at longevity in the industry.
- Support yourself, which means pay yourself first!
- Gain the support of your peers.
- Self interest & profit are the basis for capitalism. Our businesses are based on service and principle. So examine why you are in business in the first place.

How do I help my community to understand that some of the hip-hop lyrics promote domestic violence?

- Black women feel that they must be quiet because we don't want to add to the pain & trauma of Black men. But we must speak out and this will take a lot of work on our part. It's a very difficult process.
- Men need to take the responsibility and stand up when they see violence.

Q&A

With April Silver, Neferetti and Tyilon Washington

Domestic Violence and the Hip-Hop Generation: Understanding Challenges, Resources and Interventions to end Violence in this generation.
Q&A WITH APRIL SILVER, NEFERTITI, & TYLON WASHINGTON

HOW CAN WE REVERSE THIS ECONOMIC MODEL AND GET FUNDS TO LOCAL ARTISTS?
• Start where you are. Use what you can. Have a fundraiser, be excellent, know the history.
• It doesn’t take a lot to produce your first 1,000 CDs. Set up a structure where you’re getting paid.
• Learn about your intellectual property rights. When you own the property you have a better chance at longevity in the industry.
• Support yourself, which means pay yourself first!
• Gain the support of your peers.
• Self interest and profit are the basis for capitalism. Our businesses are based on service and principle. So examine why you are in business in the first place.

HOW DO I HELP MY COMMUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THAT SOME OF THE HIP-HOP LYRICS PROMOTE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?
• Black women feel that they must be quiet because we don’t want to add to the pain and trauma of Black men. But we must speak out and this will take a lot of work on our part. It’s a very difficult process.
• Men need to take the responsibility and stand up when they see violence.
PRACTITIONERS' VIEWPOINTS

LEAH ALDRIDGE

MEDIA'S INFLUENCE
- We know media is powerful and influential.
- For example, my 11-year-old clients all know about "Girls Gone Wild." They strip at birthday parties. It's what they are exposed to and consider normal.

HIP HOP MAGAZINE COVERS
- Males are portrayed as hard, tough, cool.
- Women are portrayed as sexy.

HIP HOP MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS
- Males are portrayed as larger than life, as having dominance over others.
- Ads still make images of wealth & power with women perceived as adornments, attachments, accessories.

SEX (IN VIDEO) SELLS
- There is a rising objectification of females in our videos.
- How is this moving our male and female into the world of creating & producing porn?

CHALLENGES TO HEALTHY GENDER
- Overrepresentation of females as sex objects & adornments.
- Overrepresentation of males as powerbrokers.
- Growing association between the sex industry and hip hop.

YOUTH IS NOT DIFFERENT
- There is a subset that youth today is different. This is not true. What is true is that what we subject them to every day in this urban world—a different set of rules and cultural contexts—is different.

One of the fundamental barriers we have in working with our young people is we're afraid of them.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP
- We must go to our young people who are doing good work, train them, then get out of the way.
- We must stop into the shoes that parents love empty and do the work they aren't doing.

Power of images
- The images we see wouldn't be so powerful if they weren't the only game in town.

GET OUT OF OUR WAY!!!

HOWARD PINDE HUGHES

UNDERSTANDING HIP HOP CULTURE
- It may be negative at times, but it offers its best critique of our culture today. At its best, it engages our youth in describing the truth about the urban condition.

Speaking truth to power.

OUR URBAN ECONOMIES
- The economies in our urban areas have changed to being based on substance abuse, sex & violence.

Power of images
- The images we see wouldn't be so powerful if they weren't the only game in town.