

# SAMPLING

musical sampling and cultural appropriation in hip-hop



## Seminar Leaders

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"Cutting and pasting is the essence of what hip-hop culture is all about for me. It's about drawing from what's around you, and subverting it and de-contextualizing it." -DJ Shadow

"Sampling's not a lazy man's way. We learn a lot from sampling, it's like school for us. When we sample a portion of a song and repeat it over and over we can better understand the matrix of the song." - Daddy-O of Stetsasonic

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the introduction of digital sampling fomented the development of radical new music styles. Principal among these was hip-hop: Hip-Hop music, feeding on the creative potential of digital sampling, collected and re-organized an expansive musical history, forging a fresh collage of musical tropes and cultural markers. How does musical sampling complicate cultural issues of authority, dominants, and origins? To where should we look for the sources of this type of music, particularly in the context of hip-hop as a black critical art form? How does this kind of musical re-appropriation subvert or disrupt the sample's identity? An investigation of musical sampling invites us to categorize and classify music based on its position in a coded system. How does hip-hop, as the confluence of multiple musical sources, re-define the coded identity of both the original song and the song that uses that sample? In general, we can say that sampling performs a re-appropriation of one coded cultural object by another group. In the interest of addressing these issues, we will examine the hip-hop sample as a postmodern mode of entertainment, cultural phenomenon, and critical rhetoric.

We will open the seminar by developing a theoretical framework through which to understand sampling in hip-hop. This focus will involve directly interrogating what sampling obtains in terms of musical value, origin, and authority, but will also bring us to broader concerns of intertextuality, bricolage, and pastiche, in terms of postmodern culture. We will then move through recent hip-hop history, surveying the vast landscape of rap music and investigating the topography of a musical genre that refuses definition. To add more texture to this investigation of music, we will explore the regional distinctions of hip-hop, examining the particular differences of style and technique used by subgroups of a general hip-hop culture. We will, in addition, survey contemporary issues of copyright, intellectual property rights, and the consequences of sampling as an act of piracy and cultural re-appropriation.

The texts for this seminar will be selected from the following list:

### **Constructing a Theoretical Framework**

Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal, *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader* (selections)  
Russell A. Potter, *Spectacular Vernaculars: Hip-Hop and the Politics of Postmodernism*  
John Swezd, *Essays on Race, Music, and American Culture* (selections)  
David Metzger, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*  
Mark Anthony Neal, *What the Music Said*  
Bell Hooks, "Postmodern Blackness"  
Cornell West, *Black Culture and Postmodernism*  
William Maxwell, "Sampling Authenticity: Rap Music, Postmodernism, and the Ideology of Black Crime"  
Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism"  
Tricia Rose, *Black Noise*  
Paul Théberge, "Random access: music, technology, postmodernism"  
David Riesman, "Listening to Popular Music"  
John Fiske, "The Jeaning of America"  
Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

### **The History of the Sampler and the Legal Ramifications of Intellectual Property**

Joanna Demers, *Steal This Music: How Intellectual Property Affects Musical Creativity*  
Joseph G. Schloss, *Making Beats; The Art of Sample-Based Hip-Hop*  
Kembrew Mcleod, "How Copyright Law Changed Hip-Hop: An Interview with Public Enemy's Chuck D and Hank Shocklee"  
Kembrew McLeod, *Freedom of expression® : overzealous copyright bozos and other enemies of creativity*

Susan Broadhurst, *Liminal Acts: A Critical Overview of Contemporary Performance and Theory* (selections)  
Andrew Goodwin, "Sample and Hold: Pop Music in the Age of Digital Reproduction"  
Kyle Gann, "Plundering for Art" and "Noises of Fate"  
Hugh Davies, "A History of Sampling"  
Norm Igma, "Taking sampling 50 times beyond the expected: an interview with John Oswald"  
John Oswald, "Plunderphonics or, Audio piracy as a compositional prerogative"

### **Hip-Hop in Two Acts: 1968-1987 and 1988-present**

Bakari Kitwana, *The hip-hop generation : young Blacks and the crisis in African American culture*  
Jeff Chang, *Can't stop, won't stop : a history of the hip-hop generation*  
Tim Strode, *The hip-hop reader*  
Patricia Hill Collins, *From Black power to hip-hop : racism, nationalism, and feminism*  
Martha Cooper and Henry Chalfant, *Subway Art and Style Wars*  
Sahpreem A. King, *Gotta Get Signed: How to Become a Hip-Hop Producer*  
Virgil Moorefield, *The producer as composer: shaping the sounds of popular music*  
Thomas Swiss, John Sloop, and Andrew Herman, *Mapping the beat : popular music and contemporary theory*  
Ian Condry, *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization*  
The Rub's History of Hip-Hop mix series

### **Styles of Sampling and the Regionalization of Hip-Hop**

Andrew Devereux, "What Chew Know About Down the Hill?": *Baltimore Club Music, Subgenre Crossover, and the New Subcultural Capital of Race and Space*  
"Baltimore Club Interview with Scottie B and Shawn Ceasar," Aural States  
RZA and Chris Norris, *The Wu-Tang Manual*  
Josh Tyrangiel, "Why You Can't Ignore Kanye"  
Ethan Brown, *Queens Reigns Supreme: Fat Cat, 50 Cent, and the Rise of the Hip-Hop Hustler* (selections)  
Roni Sarig and Julia Beverly, *Third Coast: OutKast, Timbaland, and How Hip-Hop Became a Southern Thing*  
Eithne Quinn, *Nuthin' but a "G" Thang: The Culture and Commerce of Gangsta Rap*

We will also look examine a large list of interviews with rappers, producers, and other members of the hip-hop industry. Among the artists included on this list will be Guru and DJ Premier, Kanye West, Jay-Z, Three 6 Mafia, The Cool Kids, Snoop Dogg, N.W.A., DJ Mark the 45 King, DJ Shadow, Just Blaze and many others.

In addition, throughout the seminar, we will complement the readings with an extensive listening list. Through this list we will aim to develop an understanding of the different techniques of sampling in hip-hop music, tracing the genealogy of hip-hop tracks through their production to the original sources. In addition, we will look at specific regional styles of hip-hop to develop an understanding of how sampling varies across the nation and how sampling is employed in different cultural sites.

Duncan, as a member of Haverford's concert organization FUCS, wants to incorporate a concert with this seminar. He would bring an artist in the industry and bring the members of our seminar to the concert. Potentially this artist would give a talk to the seminar members or participate in an informal discussion.

# APPLICATIONS DUE WEDS. APRIL 30

Students interested in applying to join the Humanities Center's Fall 2008 Student Seminar should email a MS Word document to [jweissin@haverford.edu](mailto:jweissin@haverford.edu) by 5pm, Wednesday April 30th with the following information:

- Student name, email address, year, and (possible) major/minor
- Name of faculty advisor
- A paragraph or two that explains your interest in the seminar, what perspectives you hope to contribute, and what you hope to take from participating in it. Possible questions to address: are there any texts missing from the syllabus which you would suggest? How does(n't) this seminar intersect with your previous studies?

More info at <http://www.haverford.edu/hhc>