

**THE HIP-HOP AND MENTAL HEALTH HANDBOOK FOR MENTAL HEALTH
PRACTITIONERS**

HUNTER VOLK

Honours Bachelor of Arts, University of Alberta, 2021

A project submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION
in
COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

Faculty of Education
University of Lethbridge
LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA, CANADA

© Hunter Volk, 2025

THE HIP-HOP AND MENTAL HEALTH HANDBOOK FOR MENTAL HEALTH
PRACTITIONERS

HUNTER VOLK

Dr. Thelma Gunn
Supervisor

Professor

Ph.D.

Dr. Doug Checkley
Committee Member

Assistant Dean

Ph.D.

DEDICATION

I am not a self-made man.

—Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Tools of Titans:*

The Tactics, Routines, and Habits of Billionaires, Icons, and World-Class Performers

I wish to thank everyone at the Edmonton YWCA who helped me in completing my education. Applying what I have studied for a long time was a significant transition, and you made it easier, showed me respect, challenged me, and ensured I was seen as a valuable member of the team. I have found solidarity alongside many people who share a mission for providing those who most need help with the care they deserve. It was a pleasure to learn more about you all. I hope my experiences at the YWCA set the tone for what it will be like to continue in this field.

I also need to thank all my relations who supported me: my friends, my family, and my partner. I worked tremendously hard throughout my education to reach the position I'm currently in; however, I could never have gone as far without all the ways you've supported me. For all your help along the way, I am forever grateful.

ABSTRACT

Hip-hop culture is a dynamic, multifaceted movement with profound relevance to mental health practices, albeit one that few professionals have experience with. Practitioners can develop more creative, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed approaches by understanding hip-hop culture and realizing how it can be used to improve mental health. This project articulates a literature review of several critical areas including a brief history of hip-hop culture, hip-hop through a Canadian lens, and the application of hip-hop in mental health practices. Additionally, this project includes a handbook that translates findings from the literature review into an accessible, interdisciplinary resource for professionals seeking to better understand hip-hop culture and potentially incorporate it into their practice. By increasing visibility and facilitating a better understanding of the relationship between hip-hop culture and mental health, this project aims to improve professionals' engagement with hip-hop as a therapeutic tool in working with diverse, relevant populations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank Drs. Thelma Gunn and Doug Checkley for their support throughout this project as my supervisor and committee member respectively.

I would also like to thank Lisa Grieve, who edited my project in accordance with the Guidelines for Ethical Editing of Graduate Student Texts set forth by Editors Canada. Lisa provided stylistic and copy editing for Chapters I, II, and III, and helped format the project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Overview	1
Rationale.....	1
Project Significance.....	2
Audience Considerations.....	2
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	4
Beginnings of Hip-Hop	4
Core Elements of Hip-Hop.....	6
Brief History of Hip-Hop	11
Early Hip-Hop.....	12
Golden Era of Hip-Hop.....	13
Globalization of Hip-Hop	16
Modern Hip-Hop.....	20
Canadian Hip-Hop: An Example of the Globalization of Hip-Hop.....	21
Brief History of Canadian Hip-Hop.....	22
Concurrent Rise of Indigenous Canadian Hip-Hop	28
Why Understanding the History of Hip-Hop is Important for Mental Health Professionals....	31
Basis for Using Hip-Hop to Improve Mental Health	32
Applications of Hip-Hop in Therapy	34
Connecting Hip-Hop’s History to Therapy.....	35
Basis for Using Hip-Hop in Therapeutic Applications.....	36
Hip-Hop Counselling Approaches	39
Using Hip-Hop to Address Specific Counselling Concerns	43
Rapport Building or Establishing the Therapeutic Alliance	43
Identity Construction	45
Self-Improvement	46
Other Ways Hip-Hop is Used to Address Specific Concerns.....	48

Professional Considerations for Using Hip-Hop in Counselling	50
CHAPTER III: METHOD AND HANDBOOK CREATION	53
Method	53
Handbook Creation	53
Handbook Format.....	54
CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS.....	55
Discussion	55
Summary of Findings from the Literature	55
Interpretation of Findings from the Literature	56
Strengths	57
Limitations	58
Future Directions	60
Conclusions.....	63
References	65
Appendix.....	84

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This project addresses the need for enhanced cultural responsiveness in mental health practice by providing mental health professionals with a practical resource for incorporating hip-hop culture into their work. This project aims to demonstrate how understanding hip-hop's history, principles, and applications can lead to more effective engagement with diverse client populations who have typically been marginalized from mainstream mental health care avenues.

The deliverable created from this project is a handbook designed for mental health practitioners (e.g., counselors, therapists, psychologists, and social workers). This handbook provides information on the global and Canadian history of hip-hop, reviews research supporting the use of hip-hop in professional mental health contexts, and offers concrete strategies for integrating hip-hop into therapeutic practices.

Rationale

Hip-hop is a global, evolving, and multifaceted phenomenon that majorly influences individuals' lives across cultural, ethnic, social, economic, and political domains (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005). It serves as a powerful vehicle for self-expression, resilience, and community connection among other specialized purposes (Chang, 2009; Diawara, 1998; Rose, 1994). Incorporating hip-hop into mental health practices aligns with existing evidence-based practices and the critical duties of working as a mental health care practitioner (Corey, 2020; Dozois, 2014). However, mental health professionals often lack the knowledge, resources, and training to effectively incorporate hip-hop's rich culture into their practice. Filling this professional gap can assist the development of authentic therapeutic relationships, foster

understanding of clients' lived experiences, and facilitate the delivery of culturally relevant and trauma-informed care.

Project Significance

This project fills a critical need by providing mental health practitioners with accessible, evidence-based guidance on using hip-hop into their work via a handbook. It offers a unique approach to fostering client engagement, building rapport, and promoting empowerment, especially within marginalized communities. By synthesizing research and exploring strategies around how hip-hop can help clients with their concerns, the handbook reduces the burden of independent study for professionals and presents hip-hop as a valuable therapeutic tool.

Audience Considerations

Several considerations inform the development and distribution of this project for audience. Firstly, this project intends to be accessible via websites or academic journals in the future, instead of just to the University of Lethbridge's research repository. These decisions reduce barriers to access and broaden accessibility of the information presented here.

Secondly, the project's formatting is designed with mental health professionals in mind. It uses clear and precise language to explain concepts and refers outward for topics that fall beyond its scope. The project resembles the typical structure of an academic article to enhance readability through familiarity.

Thirdly, this project welcomes collaborators to update or expand on the information presented. It is valuable to gather feedback from practitioners who have not considered, are considering, or are already using hip-hop in their work alongside feedback from practitioners with diverse backgrounds and identities. Combined, these audience considerations aim to enrich

the content and strengthen the relevance of the content found in this project. This project is grounded in the combined principles of open access, clarity, and continuous improvement. These audience considerations are all vital given the currently niche community of professionals who use hip-hop in their mental health practice compared to the potential for expansion.

Ultimately, this project aims to empower mental health practitioners to expand their professional repertoire. Despite its current limited use, introducing hip-hop into mental health has potential to benefit a number of individuals and be applicable to many therapeutic concerns. Creating a bridge between hip-hop culture and how it can be practically used in the mental health field can contribute to better outcomes for individuals as well as communities.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review begins with providing the basis for understanding hip-hop culture, then investigating Canadian hip-hop culture, and finally, exploring the rationale for using hip-hop culture to improve mental health. Providing a comprehensive overview of these topics ensures accessibility for mental health professionals with varying levels of familiarity with hip-hop and its connection to mental health.

Beginnings of Hip-Hop

Hip-hop is a culturally ubiquitous yet elusive idea to define. It emerged as a sociocultural phenomenon that originated in the Bronx during the 1970s, providing a vehicle for African American and Hispanic youth to creatively express their political, economic, cultural, historical, and social realities (Aldridge & Steward, 2005; Crossley, 2005; Henderson, 1996; Leach, 2008; McCollum, 2019). Hip-hop transcends just a sonic existence to become influential in personal styles, political perspectives, customs, attitudes, and geography (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005). One quote by Rose (1994) summarizes this idea:

Rap music brings together a tangle of some of the most complex social, cultural and political issues in contemporary American society. Rap's contradictory articulations are not signs of absent intellectual clarity; they are a common feature of community and popular cultural dialogues that always offer more than one cultural, social or political viewpoint. (p. 2)

Hip-hop's roots extend to the coalescence of diverse cultural influences. African griots, alongside European bards or minstrels, served as live repositories for expansive knowledge, thus contributing storytelling with musical elements to hip-hop (Bebey, 1999). Griots recounted stories with musical instrumentation, which resembles the most profound element of hip-hop:

story-focused lyricism alongside a beat. One could also draw parallels of the linguistic characteristics of hip-hop, namely lyrical competition, to as far back as poetic jousting. This can be seen with *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie* from the 1500s (Dunbar, 1979; Parks, 1986), which resembles a longstanding theme in hip-hop of insulting opponents. One notorious example of this is Kendrick Lamar's disses toward other prolific artists on Big Sean's song "Control" (Big Sean, 2013).

African American blues, gospel, and jazz genres also have a longstanding history of contributing to hip-hop's musical foundation. Blues, born of the struggles of emancipated slaves, reflects themes retained by hip-hop and informs its moody atmosphere (Southern, 1997). Southern also connects hip-hop to the experiential themes and atmosphere found in field hollers and work songs sung by slaves and dock labourers. Gospel traditions add elements such as preaching interplay, rhetoric, and self-expression within a society that is hostile toward aspects of one's identity (Raboteau, 1996; Similly, 2014). Some examples of gospel music resemble hip-hop are The Jubalaires' (1944a, 1944b) tracks "The Preacher and the Bear" and "Noah". The singers showcase rhythmic, syncopated lyrics similar to those of artists found in early hip-hop (Knapp, 2020; Sarachik, 2016). Jazz significantly contributed to hip-hop's sonic and lyrical evolution in a number of ways. Firstly, jazz's improvisational nature, seen in the work of artists like Louis Armstrong, mirrors rap's musical spontaneity, such as that found in freestyles (Edwards, 2009; Fitzgerald & Rubin, 2000; Morin, 2019). Secondly, jazz has been a cornerstone genre for hip-hop to sample from, especially during the Golden Age of hip-hop by renowned artists such as Wu-Tang Clan, Public Enemy, and De La Soul. A clear example of a hip-hop track using a jazz sample is The Digable Planets' (1992) song "Rebirth of Slick (Cool Like Dat)" where the bassline and horns are from Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers' (1978) song

“Stretching”. The bidirectional influence is acknowledged by modern jazz musicians such as Kamasi Washington citing hip-hop’s impact on jazz culture (Lewis, 2016). Simply put, those involved in hip-hop were frequently exposed to jazz growing up and then went on to use it in their creative endeavours, but now the reverse tends to be more common. Overarchingly, music is an indelible part of hip-hop culture and is an extension of longstanding traditions through creative sonic and language elements (Kopano, 2002). Hip-hop’s rich blend of elements and histories—especially with music—has contributed to its global rise in popularity.

Hip-hop emerges from peoples’ lived experiences, reflecting the multiple overlapping forces shaping their world. It balances present-day expression with historical influences, while evolving through its interactions with these forces. Though hip-hop draws from existing traditions, the fusion of these elements has created something greater than the sum of its parts.

Core Elements of Hip-Hop

This section addresses two central themes in hip hop culture: its origins and its core elements. Notably, while there is ambivalence around the precise beginnings of hip-hop culture, there is more confidence about its origins and core elements. Key events and context provide points of reference to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of hip-hop culture’s complexity and significance.

Clive Campbell, otherwise known as DJ Kool Herc, is a pioneering community contributor, starting in the early 1970s. Specifically, him hosting a back-to-school fundraising party for his sister in the Bronx gives us a person, time, and place associated with the coalesced parts that comprise hip-hop culture. As these block parties became progressively more popular, they reached wider audiences and functioned as catharsis for youth who were contending with problems brought upon by historical and contemporary forms of institutional and interpersonal

difficulties (e.g., discrimination, disenfranchisement). From this period and after, identifying the origin of specific aspects of hip-hop culture becomes easier. For instance, documentation supports that DJ Kool Herc introduced the breakbeat style that extends instrumental breaks to create rhythmic sections for dancers (Chang, 2009; Thomas, 2023) and that Grand Wizzard Theodore invented scratching, an intentional disc jockeying (DJing) technique in which audiences, instead of just the DJ, would hear the back-cueing of a record for musical effect (Toop, 1991). Across the timeline of hip-hop culture, scholars have pinpointed its different core elements. Despite there being no unanimously agreed upon perspective of what elements there are, aggregating perspectives lead to the following categories: lyricism (emceeing or MCing), music (DJing, music production), dancing, art (encompassing graffiti, audiovisual entertainment, and fashion), knowledge, entrepreneurship, and language use (Alridge & Stewart, 2005; Gulbay, 2021; Leach, 2008; McCollum, 2019; Riesch, 2005; Rose, 1994; Stovall, 2006). Notably, artists involved in hip-hop often participate through multiple elements, either concurrently, or over the course of their career. On top of this, simply because one does music does not mean that they cannot also do lyricism. Each of the core elements of hip-hop culture represents a distinct, creative, and often interconnected form of expression. They all uniquely contribute to hip-hop's dynamic identity. It is necessary to examine all the elements individually to grasp their distinctiveness and significance.

Lyricism refers to techniques that use elements of language. The most common and recognizable examples of this are MCing and rapping. An easy guideline between these is that virtually every MC raps, but not every person who raps is an MC (Diallo, 2022). An MC's duties are seen as needing to have a wider array of skills, because as the name suggests, they are the Master of Ceremonies. Frequent duties of an MC include presenting artists or contributors to a

show, crowd work, and keeping the event engaging (Cobb, 2007). By comparison, a rapper has a narrower focus on delivering lyrical content by intentionally using spoken word qualities (e.g., rhymes, wordplay, flow, cadence, tone, colloquial language) normally in conjunction with music (Keyes, 2002).

Music itself is complicated to define (Croom, 2012), but for the purposes of this text, it refers to the colloquially understood, sonic, non-linguistic arrangement of sound created using diverse instrumentation and often accompanied by lyrics. Some familiar parts of music are DJing as well as music production. DJing or turntablism refers to techniques that manipulate sounds and create music, effects, beats, and so forth using various pieces of equipment. These terms tend to be used interchangeably, but there are some distinctions. The term *turntablist* is most often attributed to DJ Babu around 1995 (Newman, 2003), who went on to distinguish between a DJ and a turntablist. A turntablist has a more analogue role in creating and transforming music by using techniques like scratching, mixing, and beat juggling, all on physical records (Baldry, 2016; Hansen, 2000; Webber, 2003). A DJ can use the aforementioned techniques, among others, to play and mix records, but this happens electronically (Ross, 2011). Music production is associated with the actions involved with creating music, and in this context, specifically hip-hop. This labour varies from producer to producer but tends to involve higher order responsibilities to the artist, such as sampling, recording, and mixing. As such, music producers may draw on their own experience as artists yet are mainly relegated to the studio. Some contemporary examples of music producers are Timbaland, Metro Boomin, RZA, Alchemist, and Dr. Dre.

Hip-hop dancing is characterized by numerous dancing styles done in conjunction with hip-hop music. Johnson (2015) suggests it tends to be a sidelined element of hip-hop culture,

despite its equally rich origins in African diasporic dance, Californian funk style, and Pan-American underground scenes. The same author goes on to distinguish between the different types of hip-hop dance (e.g., funk styles such as popping and locking) and notes some concurrent evolution between them. Generally, people see hip-hop dance as being synonymous with breakdancing, although this narrowly represents the element as a whole. Chang (2005) remarks that breakdancing solidified into a recognizable form of dance originating in the early 1970s Bronx, connected to James Brown's two-part song "Get on the Good Foot" (1972a, 1972b). At its core, breakdancing is characterized by acrobatic movements, ground-based footwork, spins, and freezes; however, breakdancing began as toprock, an upright orientation of dancing that now tends to begin a performance. Uprock is similar to toprock but is from Brooklyn, simulates physical battling, and is partnered.

The fourth core element of hip-hop is art (Rose, 1994). The most notable type of art within the hip-hop community is graffiti or writing, yet audiovisual media and fashion are becoming increasingly recognized as artforms. However, these latter two arts will not be focused on in this text for the sake of brevity and because graffiti is more well-established in the literature. Graffiti refers to writing, depictions, drawings, or other expressive visual art put onto a surface without permission (Shobe, 2018). The concept of graffiti dates back millennia (McDonald, 2013) and has proliferated across societies to the present day. Uniquely, the modern zeitgeist of graffiti has been primarily influenced by hip-hop culture and arrived from revolutionaries in the late 1960s and early 1970s Philadelphia and New York City. Some aliases of famous artists during that period are Cornbread, TAKI 183, Lady Pink, and others whose identities are now known. A common thread weaving graffiti throughout time are its functions. These include but are not limited to different types of expression, such as social, political,

cultural, artistic, or self-expression, in addition to demarcating territory (Hughes, 2009; Li & Liu, 2023). There are different styles and artistic elements associated with graffiti and its subcultures. Recognizable examples include tags, throw ups, pieces, and wildstyle. Tags are the easiest and most artistically simple graffiti to create, usually leaving a pattern of initials, a moniker, or logo (Berio & Laymarie, 2015; Snyder, 2017). Throw ups, despite the visceral name, are big bubble-style writing that range from being bare-bone letter outlines to chunky and filled (Parks, 2009). Pieces are detailed letter-form graffiti that tend to be very large and feature complex artistic elements (e.g., highlights, shadowing, effects, a background; Gottlieb, 2014). Wildstyle uses these principles, then takes artistic license with it to make the style more abstract and visually busy (Gottlieb, 2014; Lovata & Olton, 2016).

Some authors note lyricism, music, dance, and art as being the four basic elements of hip-hop (Gulbay, 2021; Petchauer, 2009); however, there are some additional commonly recognized elements within literature on hip-hop (KRS-One, 2009). Chief among them, knowledge is recognized as the fifth element of hip-hop (Chetty et al., 2024). Gosa (2015) defines knowledge as twofold. One part of it means knowing information about hip-hop culture, such as its principles, history, figures, and so forth. The other part refers to knowing oneself, especially concerning one's own context, goals, and agency. The idea of a fifth element comes from Afrika Bambaataa of the Universal Zulu Nation (Chang, 2005; Chetty et al., 2024). Knowledge as a core tenet of hip-hop is important because it informs peoples' worldviews and facilitates participation in hip-hop as a cultural force. Pragmatically, it is a common thread between the other four elements. Aspirationally, knowledge acts as the basis for the proliferation and continuation of hip-hop culture. This occurs through fostering reflection and personal connections to a community as well as offering creative ways for one to express their lived

experience and identity. Consequently, gaining agency in the world functions as a path to empowerment.

Two other elements are seen as forming pillars of hip-hop culture. One element is entrepreneurialism. This can create a paradox. Hip-hop is centred around communicating messages that shake the status quo. Yet, capitalizing on this message often garners success through entrepreneurship and transferring more power and better material conditions to that same individual, thus making them part of that status quo they were once against. Being exploited but also empowered through this same exploitation is nonetheless frequently regarded an act of overt political resistance (Neal, 2004). The other element is language and its use. Language surrounding hip-hop is culturally, geographically, and linguistically specific. Hip-hop language serves as a means of identity reinforcement through the creation of ingroups (those part of the culture) and outgroups (those not connected to the culture) via distinctions between terminology, expressions, and so forth. (Cotgrove, 2018; Hidayat & Moehkardi, 2018; Navarro, 2016).

Understanding the core elements of hip-hop provides a foundation for appreciating its artistic depth; however, these elements did not emerge in isolation. Each element reflects a creative response to the struggles of communities historically marginalized by systemic social, economic, and political inequities. Coinciding with the critical element of knowledge, grasping the significance of hip-hop culture also necessitates understanding its history. Going from its origins through to the modern day provides insights into seeing how hip-hop culture has evolved from a local countercultural movement into a global, mainstream phenomenon.

Brief History of Hip-Hop

The history of hip-hop culture reflects its capacity to overcome, challenge, expand, and redefine itself in response to shifting social, cultural, economic, political and technological

landscapes. This project predominantly frames hip-hop's history within the context of music, as that appears to be the most well-studied and documented element of hip-hop culture. Although, other elements are included and discussed where possible. The brief history of hip-hop is comprised of four sections. The first section on early hip-hop explores how it emerged as a creative, and expressive response to systemic disenfranchisement from the wider U.S. society. This same section then demonstrates how hip-hop culture subsequently achieved mainstream prominence and commercial success by aligning with music institutions. The second section focuses on how the Golden Era of hip-hop expanded in complexity while simultaneously balancing its commitment to authenticity with commodification. The third section details hip-hop culture's process of globalization, serving as a vehicle for expression across different societies, reflecting their realities and nuances. The fourth section establishes how modern hip-hop continues to evolve in how it engages with artists, audiences, and institutions, in addition to offering novel challenges and routes for achieving success.

Early Hip-Hop

As hip-hop proliferated and evolved during the late 1970s and early 1980s, it transcended its Bronx roots, thus gaining popularity beyond its birthplace. Both internal and external forces played pivotal roles in pushing hip-hop into the mainstream. Within the culture of hip-hop, the emergence of collectives sought confederation in hopes of diverting youths from illegal activity and instead toward artistic expression as a response to overlapping kinds of hardship and disenfranchisement (Chang, 2009; Diawara, 1998; Fernando, 1995; Rose, 1994; Stapleton, 1998). A prime example of this is Afrika Bambaataa's Universal Zulu Nation, whose collective goal was to find ways to battle artistically instead of physically and to follow in the pathways of

previous cultural movements by becoming commercialized to overcome adverse personal and systemic challenges (Diawara, 1998; Fernando, 1995).

Despite this, the popularization of hip-hop culture was not completely grassroots. Due to the popularity and attendance seen at hip-hop events (e.g., block parties), business interests soon uncovered a relatively untapped market to capitalize upon. According to Riesch (2005), Russell Simmons and Rick Rubin were instrumental to breaking hip-hop into mainstream music. Their founding of Def Jam Recordings led to creating successful artists such as LL Cool J and the Beastie Boys, while Simmons was predominantly responsible for the organization, creation, and management of talent like Run-DMC. Eventually, CBS Broadcasting acquired Def Jam Recordings but did not infringe upon their creativity. Rubin hybridized hip-hop with other musical genres to produce hits like Run-DMC's track "Walk This Way" and the Beastie Boys' LP *Licensed to Ill*, a novel tactic that generated popularity across its intended audiences (Beastie Boys, 1986; Riesch, 2005; Run-DMC & Aerosmith, 1986). The commercial success of hip-hop related music facilitated viability for expressing hip-hop culture through means aside from music. Around this time, elements of hip-hop culture permeated into the mainstream culture through multiple ways. This includes more attention being placed on audiovisual spectacles such as Music Television (MTV) music videos, graffiti art by Jean-Michel Basquiat, dance, and non-lyrical vocal percussion techniques like beatboxing (Riesch, 2005; Rose, 1994). Speaking to the intent behind hip-hop, this widespread exposure to the public also extended to messages about sociopolitical consciousness and anecdotal experiences (Rose, 1994).

Golden Era of Hip-Hop

Scholars commonly identify the late 1980s to the early 1990s as the Golden Era of hip-hop (Alridge & Stewart, 2005; Duinker & Martin, 2017). During this period, the culture

underwent noticeable shifts across several elements including lyricism, music, art, language, and fashion. The two most salient and well-documented changes around this time are the music and lyricism of hip-hop. Duinker and Martin (2017) highlight several music-focused changes around this time, such as shifts in sampling practices due to legal concerns, a general slowdown of song tempi to match the serious nature of tracks' content, and an increase to loudness and compression. Vocally, there was an uptick in "singing, choruses, and profanity" (p. 93). Hip-hop also began to hybridize with, or replicate sonic qualities from, genres like pop and rhythm and blues. This is a major step in a trend of hip-hop blending with other musical genres to various extents.

Perhaps the most notable shift during this time, the era saw a cultural change by way of the rise of gangsta rap, a subgenre that attracted criticism for allegedly glorifying violence, gang life, and expressing bigotry, especially towards women and the LGBTQ+ community (Hill, 2009; Riesch, 2005; Ro, 1996). Despite the controversies associated with gangsta rap, this hip-hop era also produced iconic conscious hip-hop albums. Conscious hip-hop is the foil to gangsta hip-hop. While gangsta music is typically associated with vapidness or superficiality through its emphasis on materialism, violence, and chauvinism, conscious rap has a deeper focus on the social, ethnocultural, and political messaging found at the beginning of hip-hop. Frequently, themes within songs focus on individual experiences or critiques against systemic forces of poverty, discrimination, and policing. Riesch (2005) notes several examples of conscious rap songs: "9mm Goes Bang" by Boogie Down Productions (1987), "Fight the Power" by Public Enemy (1989), and "Fuck Tha Police" by Niggaz Wit Attitudes (1988). Acts like A Tribe Called Quest and De La Soul also embody conscious hip-hop through writing introspective and thought-provoking themes into their music. The popularity of gangsta rap can be attributed to its

polarizing and upfront themes despite its controversies; however, an incidental consequence of this is that messages can sometimes be overshadowed by narratives that disproportionately shape and negatively colour hip-hop culture's image.

Companies, like that of Def Jam Recordings, capitalized on the market hip-hop carved out, especially through music and audiovisual media. Corporations' audiences included those familiar with and involved in the experiences of oppression, poverty, and gang violence but made more of a profit from people who could not understand these adverse experiences, such as white youth and people of moderate or higher socioeconomic status (Kitwana, 2005; Strode & Wood, 2006). Despite fears of a connection between violent music and actual violence, there is no conclusive evidence linking the two, even in youths. One interpretation of this is that controversies surrounding hip-hop were often driven by a morbid curiosity in witnessing a lifestyle perceived as distant to one's own. Media played a significant role in shaping public perception. Controversies found within elements of hip-hop culture became intensified through major cultural shifts triggered by events like the Rodney King verdict, the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, and the murders of Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls (Hall et al., 2023; Kleinberg & McFarlane, 2020; Riesch, 2005). Controversy is never without commercialization and seeing this philosophy applied to hip-hop culture was no exception. Companies capitalized on the exposure available from the rise of hip-hop's popularity. This has made some in the hip-hop sphere, such as Jay-Z and Dr. Dre, highly successful.

As hip-hop's Golden Era unfolded, its social influence gained significant traction and extended its impacts far beyond its original communities. The rise of major figures, proliferation of subgenres, and mainstreaming of culture increased the global presence of hip-hop in media. As a result, this set the stage for capturing the attention of diverse audiences. Across the world,

artists and communities embraced the elements of hip-hop culture and reshaped them to reflect their own context, experiences, struggles, and identities.

Globalization of Hip-Hop

The late 1990s and 2000s were marked by hip-hop being adopted into the dominant culture and saw continued success through diversification on both local and global levels. Within the United States, hip-hop moved beyond being merely an East Coast versus West Coast rivalry to one spanning across areas of the country. These styles were predominantly based in g-funk and jazz, alternative, and hardcore. In the wake of hip-hop culture's evolution, regional styles rose up, supported by institutions capitalizing on the success it could yield. A notable example of this is Rick Rubin's production on The Geto Boys' (1990) self-titled remix album. Some of these styles include Southern hip-hop, which developed subgenres like crunk and chopped and screwed, or Midwestern hip-hop, which created chopper and drill. These subgenres continue to have large audiences and have uplifted artists to fame such as Three 6 Mafia, DJ Screw, Tech N9ne, and Pop Smoke. As well, alternative hip-hop, which functioned as a response to the normalization and mainstreaming of different hip-hop genres, began to receive recognition in better proportion to their acclaim. The popularity of alternative hip-hop coincided with declining interest in gangsta rap, having more options when choosing independent record labels, and also seeing some artists find mainstream success, such as Outkast's (2003) double album *Speakerboxx/The Love Below* and Gnarls Barkley's (2006) single, *Crazy* (Recording Industry Association of America, 2006; Reid, 2018).

Relatedly, diversification is not just limited to within the genre but also occurs through collaboration with other types of music. Ordanini et al. (2018) remarks that greater distance between inter-genre music creation is positively associated with commercial success. The

authors attribute this to the coming together of two high performers in each genre representing their desirable qualities; the qualities each of them are additive, instead of the nature of collaboration defaulting to sacrificing pieces from each. A recent example of a successful hip-hop-country collaboration is “Old Town Road (Remix)” by Lil Nas X featuring Billy Ray Cyrus (Lil Nas X, 2019). Perhaps this repeats a pattern of shockingly successful results, as around the late 1990s into the 2000s, hip-hop collaborated with other genres to form rap rock, rapcore (punk and rap), and rap metal in the creation of hits.

Hip-hop was embraced and reinterpreted worldwide, especially by youth. Through their various mediums, artists infused elements of hip-hop with their unique cultural identities and expressed perspectives on issues pertinent to their societies and time. In turn, as hip-hop culture was adopted by different countries, the creation of new subgenres proliferated. For example, hip-hop culture in Brazil places racial and economic issues, particularly within Afro-Brazilian communities, at the thematic forefront (Gates, 2011; Osumare, 2015). Hip-hop in other areas of the world tends to follow the evolution trajectory set by the United States. At first, hip-hop just serves as an outlet for communicating the realities of disenfranchised, marginalized, and racialized populations. Eventually, it becomes commercialized and part of mainstream culture. Because of the malleability of hip-hop, the genre has a capacity for easily resonating with global audiences, instead of being locked to a particular time, place, or culture.

Delving into the history of hip-hop reveals evidence contravening the narrative that the Golden Age of hip-hop came and went. An otherwise linear explanation about the history of hip-hop oftentimes frames all other places’ development as secondary to that of the United States. Granted, there are some reasons why the story of hip-hop culture orbits around the United States. Most notably, early hip-hop culture is localized in that country. Moreover, there is a major

prevalence of people engaged with the culture in the United States, in addition to robust, supportive infrastructure to invest in individuals. However, forgoing focus on hip-hop culture in other countries misses unique histories, developments, and challenges. In other parts of the world, this same period represents burgeoning hip-hop cultures, albeit where individuals had to overcome significant barriers. For example, unlike the United States, where hip-hop elements were controversial yet commercially supported at the time, Canadian hip-hop artists faced a dearth of systemic support coupled with public opposition. Later in this chapter, I will explore the history of hip-hop culture specifically through a Canadian lens.

The greatest piece of evidence questioning whether the Golden Age of hip-hop is over revolves around technological innovations in the field. Technology—such as the internet and social media—were beginning their surge in popularity through the 1990s, eventually becoming commonplace now (Naughton, 2016). The internet allows artists to move away from traditional, institutional media outlets (e.g., television and radio) to flexibly find success through independent means (McLeod, 2005). Critically, the internet has changed monetization, advertising, and accessibility in consuming the fruits of hip-hop culture's labour. At the start of hip-hop culture interacting with the internet, success blossomed through formats like digital downloads and blogs (Thibeault, 2010). Success was elicited through new ways to engage, like peer-to-peer file sharing, blog promotion, and the capacity for receiving widespread feedback. Contemporarily, social media and online video sharing platforms are the dominant ways which artists across elements of hip-hop can share their medium with interested audiences and can acquire success. For instance, content regarding musicians, producers, artists, and dancers can be routinely found at the forefront of websites like YouTube and Soundcloud or on social media such as Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). Social media and video sharing platforms offer

several distinct benefits versus past communication mediums. Notably, artists have wide accessibility in distributing content, are able to sell works or monetize without corporate direction and are able to flexibly interact with and capitalize on niche audiences. Plainly, the internet allows rapid, free sharing of ideas without the need for institutional forces like distributors or record labels as mediators, thus allowing all those who interact with it to potentially become entrepreneurs in their own way. Finding one's best-fitting audience has been helped by improvements to advertising. Through data collection, organizations form algorithms that continue tracking and can even predict engagement with online content, resulting in presenting acutely personal, relevant content to users (Figueiredo & Bolaño, 2017).

Accounting for the ways that technology has developed to benefit individuals engaging with the different elements of hip-hop suggests a more complex narrative behind the status of the Golden Age of hip-hop. Specifically, that hip-hop culture is still living in the midst of a Golden Age, rather than this period having passed after the early 1990s. This is because qualities that define the Golden Age, such as creativity, proliferation, evolving technology, and lyrical and substantive complexity did not stop (Duinker & Martin, 2017). This is most apparent with the local and global proliferation of hip-hop culture, in addition to significant improvements to technology.

The diversification and globalization of hip-hop culture underscore its dynamic nature and its impact as an understated cultural force. By transcending geographical, social, economic, and many other boundaries, hip-hop continues to evolve, serving as a medium for artistic innovation and a voice for representation of the disenfranchised throughout the world.

Modern Hip-Hop

In contemporary times, hip-hop continues to evolve sonically and culturally, staying true to acting as a creative portal that reflects the changing landscape of society, artists, trends, innovations, and its reciprocal musical and cultural impacts. In the mid-2000s, a paradox began moving into the spotlight. In contrast to the burgeoning success of hip-hop through the 1980s and 1990s, the 2000s saw the popularity of the genre crash overall. This was reflected by a 44% drop in album sales since 2000 and decreasing the overall share of total music sales from 13% to 10% (Coates, 2007). Hip-hop music suffered, but relatively speaking, this was part of a larger trend in lower profitability across genres (Sabbagh, 2008). This existed in spite of hip-hop being the most popular genre among young people from ages 8-18, with 65% listening daily; this figure eclipses the second most popular category, alternative rock, at only 32% (Rideout et al., 2005). Amongst the decline in sales and market share that music overall suffered, there were reasons for this that especially impacted hip-hop. One reason is that sampling, a cornerstone of hip-hop music (and even knowledge), became an increasingly pricey aspect of making music (Newton, 2008). Another reason is that the way people consumed music changed too. Specifically, there were more opportunities for interpersonal sharing of music and leveraging the internet to spread information. This contrasts the limited reach one might have spreading physical media; spreading digital media can occur rapidly. Framed another way, the rise of internet-based platforms for music sharing, such social media, YouTube, Soundcloud, and even music applications (e.g., Spotify and Apple Music) has democratized access to and distribution of hip-hop music outside of the gatekeeping reach of institutions. Releasing songs freely and digitally led to the success of artists such as Kid Cudi's (2008) "Day 'n' Nite" and Drake's (2009) "Best I Ever Had".

The present state of modern hip-hop culture allows for artists, especially those away from mainstream, to potentially gain their desired popularity. Consequently, this affords greater flexibility in artists finding this success. Being an artist in an age where information is highly accessible allows people to connect with potential audiences without the need for mediators. In turn, this allows alternatives to develop against the mainstream, such as niche subgenres, experimentation, and often, personal vulnerabilities over-playing as a caricature of oneself or of the genre.

A contemporary development within hip-hop culture is the effective use of social media and streaming. These platforms of expression revolutionize the avenues that artists can take in terms of advertising, engagement, distribution, and more. Because of this great leap in becoming interpersonally connected, collaborations provide greater opportunities for innovation (e.g., technologically) and acknowledging and expressing identity (e.g., regarding gender and sexual identity) within hip-hop culture. Although there is internal and external conflict in hip-hop culture regarding how its qualities have changed, modern hip-hop culture represents a vibrant and ever-evolving multifaceted force that is characterized by diversity, innovation, and social relevance. As the genre continues to change and be a major force in the world, it remains a powerful influence for artistic expression, social change, cultural exploration, and actualizing ideas of success (Morgan & Bennett, 2011).

Canadian Hip-Hop: An Example of the Globalization of Hip-Hop

Canadian hip-hop is a robust example that shows how the global diffusion of the culture is distinct from U.S. expressions. For instance, U.S. hip-hop culture in the 1980s and 1990s was commercially and infrastructurally supported, thus allowing for rapid growth in popularity and evolution amongst its elements. In contrast, Canadian artists around the same time contended

with a dearth of social, cultural, and institutional backing (D’Amico, 2015; Young, 2006). Differences like these can be attributed to when countries started developing their hip-hop culture and may be shrinking because of drivers of globalization, such as heightened access to technologies. Analyzing the Canadian hip-hop experience highlights hip-hop’s inherent malleability coupled with how the genre can be reinterpreted and localized to better reflect its region’s unique overlapping contexts (e.g., social, economic, cultural, political). Consequently, comparing Canadian and the United States’ hip-hop culture evidences the fact that it is a multifaceted, transnational cultural force. Nowadays, Canada is a major player in the global hip-hop scene with artists that reflect both the diversity of elements in hip-hop, and the backgrounds of those who live in it, such as The Weeknd, Snotty Nose Rez Kids, Sidhu Moose Wala, and Nekfeu, (Barker, 2018).

Exploring Canadian hip-hop culture will be comprised of two sections. The first section provides a brief history of Canadian hip-hop, focusing on challenges around establishing infrastructure, gaining mainstream recognition, and finding its space when compared to the U.S.-dominated scene. The second section highlights the rise of Indigenous hip-hop, emphasizing its role as a powerful form of cultural expression and resistance all while navigating a growing presence in Canadian hip-hop culture.

Brief History of Canadian Hip-Hop

Some of the greatest challenges to the existence of Canadian hip-hop culture were with establishing fundamentals—or the infrastructure—to support the existence of artists. One of the first pivotal moments in Canadian hip-hop history was its struggle for visibility on the airwaves. Toronto DJ Ron Nelson played a crucial role by hosting *The Fantastic Voyage* on the now-defunct CKLN-FM, the first Canadian radio show devoted solely to hip-hop (Anderson, 2017;

Infantry, 2011). This groundbreaking program not only circulated music from emerging Canadian artists such as Maestro Fresh Wes, Michie Mee, and the Dream Warriors (Anderson, 2017; Vukets & Infantry, 2011) but also connected Canadian audiences with major U.S. acts like Run-DMC, Public Enemy, Ice Cube, and Queen Latifah through organized events and tours (Campbell, 2014; Parris, 2017; Wilson, 2017). In the early 1990s, while U.S. hip-hop was readily accessible across the Great Lakes and in the Greater Toronto Area, other Canadian cities experienced a dearth of locally produced hip-hop content. *The Fantastic Voyage* aired from 1983 to 1991 and was a trailblazer in hip-hop programming for widespread audiences. Other campus radio stations in Canada such as the University of British Columbia's CiTR-FM followed in these footsteps (Scobie, 2015). Additionally, Brandeis Denham Jolly championed the creation of the first Black Canadian-owned radio station centred on hip-hop, reggae, and R&B. Jolly's initial application to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) was rejected in favour of a country music station (CRTC, 1990), and a subsequent application lost to CBC Radio One's AM-to-FM switch (CRTC, 1997), which prompted critical media backlash that accused the CRTC of betraying the Black community ("When the CRTC denied", 2020; Goddard, 1997). Through continued advocacy via third application and as the CRTC made more radio stations available, CFXJ emerged in 2001 as a vital platform for Canadian hip-hop, R&B, and reggae musicians to propel their careers forward. For instance, CFXJ was the first radio station to play Drake's music (Weaver, 2023).

Other ways a lack of institutional support for Canadian hip-hop artists occurred was through a lack of commitment from record labels and media. Oftentimes, these two types of institutions form a symbiotic relationship (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Tschmuck, 2012). Especially before the popularity of the internet, but still currently, record labels have numerous key duties

for the artists they represent; these duties include manufacturing, distributing, producing, promoting, enforcing copyright, in addition to garnering media exposure to platform and narrativize talents (Bielas, 2013; Winder, 2020). Relatedly, the media relies on record labels as a primary source of content that is vital for attracting and retaining audiences. Together, the mutual reliance between record labels and the media establishes an ecosystem where content creation from the former and strategic promotion from the latter drive, sustain, and develop the commercialization of music.

The consequences of a lack of institutional commitment have been seen in several landmark events in the history of Canadian hip-hop. D'Amico (2015) notes, "Canada's pioneering artist was female. Despite Toronto's predominantly male Rap scene, Michie Mee managed to become the first Canadian rapper to sign a record deal with First Priority/Atlantic Records (a powerhouse U.S. label) in 1988" (p. 264). Breaking into the U.S. market is still considered a feat today, with many national artists such as the Tragically Hip, having never found international success. Meanwhile, artists like Salt-N-Pepa, Missy Elliot, and Queen Latifah have remained competitive within the hip-hop ecosystem even as female artists through support from U.S. labels and media. Subsequent experiences such as that of Maestro Fresh Wes, who left Toronto for New York due to insufficient local support, underscore the difficulties faced by Canadian artists (McKinnon, 2005). Despite Maestro's success, his absence signaled a disconnect between the accomplishments of hip-hop artists on domestic level and the willingness of music institutions to recognize and capitalize on their success internationally. Controversy between the Rascalz and the Juno Awards further illuminates these challenges.

The Juno's platform offered recognition for the legitimacy of Canadian hip-hop amongst other similarly popular genres beginning in 1991 through the Rap Recording of the Year award.

The Rascalz won this in 1998 for their album *Cash Crop* (The Rascalz, 1997). Despite this accomplishment, the group was sidelined: their award was presented offstage, and it was untelevised (D’Amico, 2015; “Inside the Junos”, 2018; Walcott, 2022). They refused the award. The 1998 Juno Awards’ scandal revealed a notable problem between Canadian hip-hop artists and institutions. That is, insufficient support from music institutions continued making artists invisible to wider audiences. At the same time, finding commercial success also did not warrant media attention or justify investment by record labels, thus creating a catch-22. The event at the Juno Awards occurred within the wider, racialized context of downplaying other hip-hop-artists at past award ceremonies (Caudeiron & Bowman, 2014; Young, 2006) in addition to the CRTC overturning decisions to create a hip-hop oriented radio station and sparked public discourse and protest (“When the CRTC denied”, 2020; Goddard, 1997). Sol Guy, the Rascalz’s manager, proclaimed, “Urban music, reggae, R&B and rap: that’s all Black music and it’s not represented at the Junos. We decided that until it is, we are going to take a stance” (“Inside the Junos”, 2018, para.1). The Rascalz used their brief time in the limelight to assert how institutional neglect and failures to recognize non-mainstream genres sidelined, delegitimized, and hindered the commercial success and cultural legitimacy of Canadian hip-hop (Flynn, 1998; LeBlanc, 1998). Ironically, after the Juno Awards fallout, the Rascalz collaborated with other notable artists of the era such as rappers Kardinal Offishall, Choclaire, Checkmate, and Thrust to create the 1998 single “Northern Touch” (The Rascalz, 1998). This track was Canada’s first top 100 hip-hop hit since Maestro Fresh Wes’s (1991) “Let Your Backbone Slide” and even played on Black Entertainment Television (BET) in the United States (McPherson, 2023; Power, 2018). From this event, Misfit of the Rascalz expressed the importance of Northern Touch as:

The after effects brought about the feelings and awareness within the media and industry that hip-hop was to be taken seriously, as the artists themselves within the genre were quite focused on having the respect within this country similar to artists of the U.S. and those native to their country. (Chidley-Hill, 2013, para. 30)

The Juno Awards' controversy fueled practical changes within music institutions. The 1998 success of "Northern Touch" winning the MuchMusic Award for Best Rap Video demonstrated that Canadian hip-hop could gain serious media attention and solidified opportunities for creative expression. "Northern Touch" also winning the 1999 Juno Award for Best Rap Recording along with the Rascalz's subsequent televised live performance, marked a breakthrough in bringing hip-hop into the mainstream spotlight (Krewen, 1999; Young, 2006). Relevantly, these publicized victories represented critical steps toward securing legitimacy from the perspective of establishment institutions in and related to the music industry. This came at an especially important time because without a multipronged institutional approach (including radio, media, record labels, and retail channels), Canadian talent risked being poached by well-resourced U.S. corporations. While many changes enacted by organizations like the Juno Awards were consequential and positive, Young (2006) remarks that there is still room for deeper and wider changes to improve artist representation (e.g., ensuring consistent coverage for future directions, especially for diverse artists).

Milestones of success also highlight a persistent disconnect between Canadian and U.S. hip-hop narratives. McKinnon (2005) echoes Canadian comedian Rick Mercer's sentiment:

Too many U.S. labels assume this country is carpeted with ice rinks and igloos. Their urban artist-and-repertoire execs are known for signing hard-luck ghetto stories hand over

fist—provided that the ghettos in question are located somewhere inside the United States. (para. 9)

This quote emphasizes how U.S. hip-hop culture benefits from a well-established narrative of rugged individualism and overcoming adversity. Yet this narrative is often minimized, misinterpreted, or outright forgotten when applied to Canadian hip-hop culture. Authors such as Walcott (2003) and Byers (2012) argue that Canadian media and institutional figures tend to view the experiences of Black and racialized communities in Canada as only approximate to those in the United States, thereby perpetuating a disconnect. Boutros (2020) contextualizes this by using hip-hop artist Drake as an example. Figures such as Drake are frequently criticized for not embodying the same struggles as iconic U.S. artists, despite evidence that many Canadian hip-hop artists, including Michie Mee, emerged from racialized, economically disadvantaged backgrounds (D’Amico, 2015). The pervasive stereotype of an idyllic social harmony in Canada, propagated by the United States media hegemony, obscures the realities of systemic oppression that persist across Canada and thus detracts from the veracity of narratives and themes found in Canadian hip-hop music. Consequently, this may be a contributor as to why U.S. audiences find it difficult to relate to Canadian narratives, impeding both commercial success and broader intercultural recognition (Krewen, 1999).

Together, these disparities underscore the need for a reassessment of institutional support and media representation in Canadian hip-hop. By critically examining these gaps, researchers can better understand how structural inequities and divergent cultural narratives hinder the growth and international appeal of Canadian hip-hop, thereby reinforcing the broader call for reform within the music industry.

Concurrent Rise of Indigenous Canadian Hip-Hop

Canada possesses unique positioning in the world by having a prominent and diverse hip-hop culture that includes Indigenous Canadians. Throughout the history of hip-hop, some of the challenges that have existed for Black Canadians have also existed for Indigenous Canadians. Consequently, this reinforces notions that especially for Black and Indigenous Canadians, the concept of hip-hop is more than just the sum of its parts. Instead, it functions as a cultural force that empowers youth to engage in creative acts of resistance that challenge dominant power structures. Common themes within Indigenous Canadian hip-hop include the history and legacy of residential schools, ongoing land disputes, police brutality, systemic inequities, and discrimination. Some of these themes, especially around historical traumas leading to present circumstances, harm at the hands of institutions meant to help, and racism are frequently found within Black Canadian hip-hop too. Approaching the elements of hip-hop culture with innovative techniques and conversations disrupt notions of a monoculture within hip-hop, such as stigma often associating it with a fast, hardcore lifestyle.

The rise of Indigenous hip-hop culture within Canada does not appear to be thoroughly documented in formal, academic contexts, although there is some consensus on its history (“From Michie Mee to War Party”, 2018). Indigenous Canadian hip-hop started becoming popularized in the 1990s and 2000s, with emerging artists like War Party (some members later formed Team Rezofficial), TRU REZ CREW, and 7th Generation (Caudeiron & Bowman, 2014; Harmsen, 2023). Leveraging progress that had been made by Black Canadian hip-hop groups, War Party’s (2000a; 2000b) album *The Reign* and track “Feeling Reserved” trailblazed progress for the genre by winning Rap Album of the Year and Best Music Video from the Indigenous Music Awards and for being the first Indigenous band to have their music video featured on

MuchMusic (“From Michie Mee to War Party”, 2018; Studio Bell, n.d.). War Party continued seeing success by showcasing their talents internationally (Canadian Artists for Reconciliation & Education, n.d.). Indigenous hip-hop in Canada has grown exponentially in popularity (Rovito & Giles, 2016). There is increased media coverage and institutional support for artists, arriving in the forms of a dedicated radio channel, recognition in awards, television coverage, festivals, exhibits, and even the establishment of a nonprofit organization (Conner, 2013; Cyr, 2005; Gorlewski & Porfilio, 2012; Morris, 2008; Sommerstein, 2014; “Hip station plays aboriginal tunes”, 2009).

Indigenous hip-hop also benefits from technological advances commonly used throughout hip-hop, namely the internet and social media (Hutchings & Rodger, 2018). Digital media allows Indigenous artists to bypass or minimize barriers in their respective industries to communicate with global audiences in a streamlined way (Simpson, 2017). Consequently, global communication through digital media offers new avenues for finding success and facilitates intercultural dialogue and exponentially broadens the reach of Indigenous hip-hop cultural expression.

Indigenous Canadian hip-hop culture emerged as a movement focusing on extending ways of cultural expression and resistance against mainstream institutions that were deleterious to Indigenous goals and the status quo. Practically, these activities underlie the philosophy of a decolonizing praxis, whereby actions work toward dismantling systems of power and oppression while also rectifying the destructive effects of colonialism (Cervantes & Saldaña, 2015; Simpson, 2017). Indigenous hip-hop artists—especially among youth—adopt and leverage the culture to reclaim their identity and contest dominant cultural representation. Individuals do this through using elements of hip-hop to creatively communicate experiences of marination,

disenfranchisement, resilience, among many other themes aimed at decolonization. Articulating these themes function as identify affirmation, space for cultural resurgence, and overt resistance against colonial erasure.

Harmsen's (2023) interviews with Black and Indigenous hip-hop artists reveal similarities between the methods of decolonial praxis and the intent of these practices. Commentary from Mamarudegyal MTHC (Telus Storyhive, 2019) acknowledges the construct similarities between storytellers and MCs, different types of dancers (e.g., Pow Wow dancers and breakdancers), in addition to drummers and DJs. Additionally, both cultures discuss themes of deleterious experiences such as racism, disenfranchisement and colonialism, in addition to positive, hopeful experiences like resilience, future building, justice, and community (Amsterdam, 2013; Fox, 2011; Przybylski, 2018). Similarities continue to how Black and Indigenous cultures innovate hip-hop through adapting language, symbolism, narratives, and themes to suit local realities, leading to hip-hop culture finding new ways to become entrenched in communities.

Overall, learning about the history of hip-hop—from its origins and Golden Era to its globalization and modern incarnation—is critical for understanding the connection between hip-hop and mental health and how it can be leveraged to benefit peoples' mental health. Early hip-hop emerged from marginalized U.S. communities as creative acts of resistance and expression of individual and collective struggles. The alleged Golden Era of hip-hop saw diversification of the genre as well as a rapid evolution across different elements of hip-hop. Subsequently, the globalization of hip-hop reflects its malleability, whereby its elements are adapted by different cultures to address specific, localized issues. This is especially relevant to themes of historically derived trauma, expressing shared experiences, and healing. Contemporary hip-hop sees

technological innovations democratizing and expanding individuals' access and capacity to participate in elements of hip-hop culture. Overcoming barriers and minimizing gatekeeping improves community engagement and offers unique ways for expression. The total history of hip-hop informs reasons for why and how hip-hop culture can be used to improve mental health. Understanding hip-hop's history highlights its complexity, much like the factors influencing mental health, while also showcasing its potential as a tool for healing. Recognizing this allows professionals, especially relevant professionals, to better appreciate how hip-hop culture can support mental health.

Why Understanding the History of Hip-Hop is Important for Mental Health Professionals

Before exploring how exactly hip-hop can be used to support mental health, a more fundamental question must be addressed: Why is it important for mental health professionals to understand the history of hip-hop? Broadly, asking why the history of x matters to y often yields a range of answer. Here, understanding the history of hip-hop is essential to using it effectively and responsibly in mental health contexts, resulting in individual and community betterment.

Knowledge of hip-hop's history helps challenge and dismantle stigma associated with hip-hop culture (Sconiers, 2021; Sule & Inkster, 2020). While certain parts of hip-hop culture—such as derogatory language use in music—can be critiqued, reducing it to just its controversial parts ignores hip-hop's deep historical roots and its ability to provide meaning and resistance. For decades, hip-hop has allowed people to articulate trauma, systemic oppression, and mental health struggles and be a platform for marginalized voices to share personal and collective experiences (Rose, 1994). By understanding this wider context, mental health professionals can more effectively challenge stigma surrounding hip-hop, foster meaningful engagement, and build connections with individuals from communities who resonate with hip-hop culture.

Research supports using hip-hop to improve mental health. Professionally, understanding the history of hip-hop can enhance client treatment outcomes (Thornicroft et al., 2010). This knowledge enables professionals to adopt a more culturally sensitive and intersectional approach to care, that would otherwise disrupt treatment (Pineda, 2022). For example, Canadian hip-hop culture encompasses a wide range of ethnocultural groups and although systemic discrimination is a uniting thread between these communities, their specific experiences and expressions of that discrimination vary. This research matters because conventional models of therapy can miss capturing this complexity. On the client side, stigma is a powerful barrier that dissuades individuals from accessing necessary mental health supports (Lamb et al., 2012; Memon et al., 2016). Aspects found throughout hip-hop like resilience, storytelling, creative expression, and community-building are crucial for therapeutic success and overcoming care gaps. Therefore, integrating hip-hop into mental health care offers culturally competent and relevant treatment by engaging with individuals from communities that have historically been sidelined from mainstream mental health discourse and services.

Basis for Using Hip-Hop to Improve Mental Health

Underlying stereotypical associations with violent, discriminatory, and explicit content, is marked potential for using hip-hop to improve mental health (Emdin, 2010). This is reflected by mental health becoming an increasingly recurrent theme in hip-hop culture. Hart (2019) observes a shift in lyrical content to hip-hop artists addressing mental health concerns, coping strategies, diagnoses, and escapism (e.g., Logic's, 2017 hit song "1-800-273-8255"). This coincides with broader societal changes, namely declining stigma associated with mental health conversations. Kresovich et al.'s (2021) research supports this, finding an increasing number of references to mental health in hip-hop lyrics from 1998–2018. Hart (2019) encapsulates hip-hop's evolution

around mental health, contrasting past silence and stigma with today's growing openness. This rising openness is built on hip-hop culture's tradition to addressing difficult issues and realities. These changes also align with ongoing efforts to reduce barriers and improve engagement with communities that have had limited access to mental health services (Alvarez et al., 2022; Knaak et al., 2017; Levy et al., 2017; Moore, 2018; NeMoyer et al., 2022).

Intersecting with these cultural shifts are individual factors that shape the effectiveness of mental health treatments. Ethnicity is an inextricably linked and salient part of one's identity. For example, Huey et al.'s (2023) meta-analysis of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) treatment modalities across ethnicities shows the benefits associated with the treatment may be less strong due to lack of cultural tailoring. Naeem et al. (2019) posit adjusting therapy according to relevant factors for culture, while still preserving the fundamentals of the underlying treatment, can create better client outcomes. Similarly, Huey et al. (2013) remark that when therapy lacks cultural alignment with clients, disparities arise in its teaching, delivery, maintenance, and efficacy.

Beyond lingering stigma and negative associations linked to hip-hop culture, there is untapped potential for integrating it into therapeutic interactions. Rooted in expressive practices, hip-hop culture is highly inclusive and relational, particularly for disenfranchised youth. Cobbett's (2009) case study demonstrates success in using hip-hop to connect with disadvantaged youth in alternative schooling streams by addressing complex mental health concerns. Building on these positive outcomes, studies such as Rodwin et al.'s (2022) systematic review highlights the efficacy of using hip-hop to benefit mental health. Both sentiments regarding the need for and potential of integrating hip-hop into counselling are not solely echoed by individuals in marginalized communities working on and advocating for improved access to mental health treatments. Research by Jay (2024) details how inadequate cultural tailoring

alienates some clients from the therapeutic process, driving wedges in the connection between practitioners and clients. In response, Jay argues the advantages of incorporating hip-hop into therapy by combining social learning and CBT. Interacting with the elements of hip-hop such as creating music and art, writing lyrics, and dancing leverage interpretation and modelling which supports processing and cognitive restructuring.

To summarize, the crossroads of hip-hop culture and mental health present both opportunities and challenges associated with its therapeutic applications. Hip-hop has long served as a creative outlet for marginalized individuals to express their experiences. In recent years, it has become more open and accommodating in addressing mental health (Hart, 2019; Kresovich et al., 2021). Unfortunately, barriers surrounding the cultural relevance of mental health treatments persist. Many therapeutic approaches fail to account for the lived realities of disenfranchised communities, which can further alienate those already struggling to access care (Huey et al., 2023). Although the research overall is U.S.-centric, it acknowledges the effectiveness and relevance of hip-hop at benefitting mental health in some communities, such as disenfranchised youth (Cobbett, 2009; Rodwin et al., 2022).

Applications of Hip-Hop in Therapy

This section identifies how hip-hop culture can be implemented into therapy. To achieve this, it begins by establishing a link between understanding hip-hop culture's history and fostering effective therapeutic relationships via contemporary, culturally relevant, and evidence-based practices. Then, it expounds on evidence favouring the use of hip-hop in therapeutic applications. This is accomplished by demonstrating how changes to mental health discourse and research support hip-hop as being valuable for engaging with and helping clients' mental health, especially those from marginalized backgrounds.

Connecting Hip-Hop's History to Therapy

Knowledge of hip-hop's history paves ways to create success within professional relationships with clients that benefit from its inclusion into the healing process. For one, the knowledge of hip-hop's history facilitates establishing authentic connections with clients who identify with this culture, yielding understanding, rapport, and trust of client's personal experiences. Additionally, it means professionals better comprehend the underlying history and factors contributing to clients' mental health struggles. This aligns with providing more culturally relevant and trauma-informed interventions. Research from Chowdhary et al. (2014) demonstrates that while there are commonalities that underlie the effectiveness of mental health interventions, their analysis showed statistically significant benefits for culturally adapted treatments. On a similar note, Marsiglia and Booth's (2015) review communicates that precise, culturally adapted treatments have superior outcomes compared to completely standard, untailored treatments. These findings can also encourage clients to process their experiences within broader societal contexts and draw upon their background to form a strengths-focused front to positively impact mental health through resilience, pride, belonging, and empowerment (Dickey & Blakey, 2023). Summarily, these reasons for incorporating hip-hop into practitioners' abilities coincide with therapeutic approaches (e.g., culturally safe practices, feminist perspectives of counselling) and even evidence-based practices, namely creating and maintaining robust therapeutic relationships, providing empirically supported treatments, and often creatively engaging in progress monitoring (Corey, 2020; Dozois, 2014). All of these are within the purview of critical duties when operating as a professional working in mental health care.

Basis for Using Hip-Hop in Therapeutic Applications

Despite the some of the contentious associations that hip-hop is connected to, such as the encouragement of violence and discriminatory themes (Hall et al., 2023; Riesch, 2005; Ro, 1996), there is robust evidence to suggest that hip-hop can be used to therapeutic ends. From its very foundation, elements of hip-hop culture offer expressive avenues for marginalized groups. One index of its therapeutic potential is seen with mental health being a theme in hip-hop. Hart (2019) commentates that musical lyrics that focus on mental health have been found within the idols of the hip-hop scene since the 1990s.

Despite this period being most commonly associated with gangsta rap—known for its focus on violence, drugs, crime, and sexual activity—Hart remarks how major artists and the lyrics within their creative outlets focused on reflective expression of one’s own mental health, detailing coping strategies, commenting on living with diagnoses, and escapism. Although the gangsta rap era is frequently associated with controversial and illicit activities, Hart remarks that artists often used their mediums to reflect upon and creatively express their relationship with mental health. The trajectory of mental health appears to have generally followed society. Effectively, stigma against mental illness has dissipated, leaving room for frank discussions. This notion is reflected in Kresovich et al.’s (2021) findings of an increasing number of references to artists’ mental health from 1998–2018. A quote from Hart’s (2019) article succinctly describes the timeline of changes to the inclusion of mental health themes in hip-hop music:

Previously, in Biggie’s [1994 track] ‘Suicidal Thoughts’, attempts at conversation were stifled by a lack of understanding, while Dizzee’s [2003 song] ‘Sittin’ Here’ represents a paralysis stemming from a lack of conversation. Contrastingly, Logic’s ‘1-800-273-8255’ explicitly encourages men to speak up about mental health issues. (p. 7)

The liberation of discourse around social stigma comes at a relevant time because the state of mental health appears quite poor, especially for some groups over others. Statistics Canada (2023) notes that Canadians reported experiencing worsened mental health for several years and was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, markers of poor mental health, like symptoms related to depression and anxiety, are more common in youth and women. Research aggregated from Gajaria et al. (2021) demonstrate that racialized Canadians have worse interactions with mental health care systems, which is attributable to factors like discrimination, a dearth of culturally competent care options (or any options, at times), stigma, and so forth. Consequently, racialized Canadians are less inclined to access mental health care due to these barriers (Boksa et al., 2015; Chiu et al., 2018; Nelson & Wilson, 2017).

Likewise, young Canadian adults also face barriers (e.g., life stress brought about by natural inexperience) to obtaining mental health support (Murray & Knudson, 2023). Statistics Canada (2025) reports the proliferation of self-identified fair and poor mental health among youth from 2019–2023 increased from 12% to 26%. Additionally, the same source details a 21% decrease from having positive mental health to either fair or poor mental health. Further documents from Statistics Canada (2024) demonstrate that worsened mental health is positively associated with socioeconomic status, ethnicity, Indigenous status, and non-heteronormative sexual identities. Connecting these types of statistics, Kourgiantakis et al. (2023) state that this makes youth (approximately ages 16–24) have the greatest rate of mental health concerns, especially over the last decade.

Results from Levy et al. (2017) note that youth and adults engaged in hip-hop culture are reflective of the population dynamics (e.g., age, ethnicity) who face barriers to mental health support. As well, their challenge to find appropriate support is worsened by individual and

systemic actors that can limit resources or treatment options. Individual factors include lifetime trauma and pre-existing mental health concerns, while systemic factors refer to historical trauma and discrimination. Applied, using hip-hop can provide relevant mental health care for groups that strongly resonate with hip-hop culture and are marginalized from typical care avenues, such as young and/or racialized individuals.

Looking beyond the stigma commonly associated with hip-hop culture uncovers abundant potential for implementing hip-hop into counselling. Notably, when considering the origins and transitions hip-hop has experienced as a collection of different expressive art forms, hip-hop is often highly inclusive and relational, especially for those who are most socially disenfranchised. A case study by Cobbett (2009) demonstrates that, in a mental health support capacity, the use of hip-hop is successful in therapeutically connecting with disadvantaged youth who have complex presenting concerns in alternative schooling streams. Studies demonstrating the efficacy of using hip-hop to benefit peoples' mental health are present in the literature, such as with Rodwin et al. (2022) echoing this sentiment in their systematic review.

Even with a robust basis, other researchers complicate the consensus on hip-hop culture's efficacy at bettering mental health. Robinson et al.'s (2018) systematic review reinforces this notion. Through exploring Olson-McBride & Page (2012), Staum (1993), and Tyson (2002), the systemic review points to how inadequate power, or suboptimal study design generates nonsignificant results or significance depending on a particular statistical analysis. While Robinson et al. (2018) cite a paucity of peer-reviewed academic papers on the utility of hip-hop culture in enhancing mental health, they acknowledge its effectiveness outside of academia and in the community. Another crucial caveat to recognize within this sector of research is its localization of data. Although this follows the origin and coalescence of hip-hop, which then

spread out to the global community, pertinent research is nearly nonexistent outside of the United States. Tyree (2023) is a rare exception being a Canadian example. Tyree conducts interviews with the intent to gain more information about hip-hop's ability to promote wellness. Results from the study indicate that professionals who implement hip-hop interventions in their respective fields feel optimistic about its utility in serving marginalized communities and that its effects are integrative and interconnected instead of discrete. Therefore, considering both favourable and critical research prompts identifying how exactly hip-hop can be used to improve mental health.

Hip-Hop Counselling Approaches

According to Rodwin et al.'s (2022) systematic review, an increase in counselling strategies that integrate hip-hop into therapeutic approaches enhances mental health for some populations. Research generally indicates positive outcomes for practitioners using hip-hop in mental health practices, yet there are risks of exacerbating the mental health concerns being targeted.

A salient example of using hip-hop in therapy is a semi-structured model called Hip-Hop Therapy (HHT). HHT refers to consciously and effectively integrating elements of hip-hop into various kinds of evidence-based treatment modalities in a culturally relevant manner. It began with bibliotherapy and music therapy and has since expanded into expressive arts therapy, CBT, narrative therapy, and feminist therapy (Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tillie Allen, 2005; Tyson, 2002; Tyson et al., 2016). Additively, HHT aims to integrate other important perspectives and knowledge that therapists often adopt, including culturally informed practice, strengths-based perspective, personal empowerment, and recognizing barriers preventing individuals from self-actualization (Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tyson, 2004). Broadly speaking, these perspectives tend to

be widely integrated into therapeutic practices across approaches. Tyson (2002) demonstrates some evidence for the counselling efficacy of HHT. Quantitatively, peer relations improve when measured at post-test compared to that of the control group, and improvements to self-concepts are small but not significant. Qualitatively, the majority of youth participants react positively, express engagement with counselling, and note enhanced self-expression.

Other therapeutic approaches aside from HHT implement components of hip-hop as an avenue for achieving their goals. Tyson (2002) distinguishes HHT from using hip-hop as a main strategy by noting the different foci: HHT focuses on holistically incorporating elements of hip-hop into therapy, whereas other interventions may narrow their focus on a particular or select set of pieces taken from hip-hop culture; most often this manifests as using music as the dominant strategy. In other words, HHT revolves around using the whole culture, whereas other strategies are afforded the grace of using parts of hip-hop culture to accomplish their goals, where other options would be available to potentially meet the same goals. Reflecting the nuances that exist across treatments also means recognizing different degrees of integrating hip-hop into therapy. This can be seen by comparing two pieces of research: one explores hip-hop being used to address trauma and needs in homeless adults with mental health disorders, while the other examines hip-hop in school counselling with youth.

Firstly, Travis et al. (2018) aims to assist homeless adults with severe, persistent types of mental disorders using a MUZUZE hip-hop and empowerment framework in a group setting. Travis et al. purport that this framework addresses complex trauma and needs while also being culturally appropriate for the client population. Within the stages of counselling, group members engage with hip-hop forms of self-expression through listening to music and writing their own songs based on personal experiences, and they learned through psychoeducation the history of

hip-hop and mental health. Carefully integrating multiple components of hip-hop into a therapeutic strategy indicates a shift away from simply using it to achieve a therapeutic end.

Secondly, Levy et al. (2017) opt to include a hip-hop cypher strategy. A cypher refers to a group coming together to collectively engage with hip-hop music in creative, spontaneous, and relatable ways (Watkins & Caines, 2015). Levy et al.'s (2017) results indicate that cyphers are overall beneficial for youth participants in a school counselling setting. Using hip-hop in an expressive art therapy manner fosters emotional intimacy between group participants, creates closeness, and acts in accordance with cultural relevance and sensitivity. Fundamentally, Levy et al. (2017) state: "It afforded the students described herein with the opportunity to engage in important group processes in a safe and welcoming space" (p. 109).

Another cohesive counselling methodology orbiting around the integration of hip-hop into counselling is hip-hop spoken word therapy (HHSWT). HHSWT is an amalgam of CBT, person-centered therapy (PCT), bibliotherapy, and music therapy. HHSWT enacts its change through integral practices of overall hip-hop culture including creating lyrics, roleplaying and cyphers, composing mixtapes and poetry, active listening, and discussion (Levy, 2012, 2019; Levy & Keum, 2014). This therapeutic method connects with and recognizes individuals through using hip-hop music as a means of personal development by enhancing self-concepts, facilitating emotional introspection, and dismantling maladaptive coping mechanisms. HHSWT also shares much of the same foundational literature as HHT, especially those underlying the effectiveness of hip-hop for positively improving mental health within groups that have faced widespread disenfranchisement (Elligan, 2004; Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tyson, 2002; Travis and Deepak, 2011; Washington, 2018).

HHSWT proposes to bridge the gap of care toward disenfranchised groups in society that often struggle to adequately meet their needs. Typically, groups that are in situations where they are unable to meet their needs tend to experience this as a result of oppositional societal forces. To reinforce any kind of burgeoning counselling framework, it is also important to be evidence-based, which was previously demonstrated by Tyson (2002, 2003) for his HHT. With HHSWT's relative novelty and nicheness, evidence is limited. Levy (2019) uncovers a significant reduction to participants' negative feelings and stress alongside positive progress in the realms of emotional self-awareness, novel coping strategies, and the development of self-image. The body of evidence for HHSWT exists in an ambiguous state. On one side, there are appropriate reservations for making claims about the research given their small and male-dominated participant pools, while on the other side exhibiting quantitative and qualitative efficacy (Levy, 2019; Tyson, 2006).

Rap therapy is another hip-hop counselling approach. Elligan (2000) notes this approach adopts foundations from culturally imbued counselling, social psychology, and psychotherapy using hip-hop as a vehicle for engagement and as a tool for intervention. Rap therapy intends to resonate with young, African American men connected with hip-hop and who experience systemic, psychobiosocial challenges. Through this pathway, practitioners can expedite building the therapeutic alliance, offer a means for clients to creatively express themselves, and overarchingly, address mental health concerns. Elligan identifies several potential areas where rap therapy can assist with grief processing, identity formation, and behaviour modification (e.g., improving anger management via positive reinforcement). Authors such as Gonzalez and Hayes (2009) confirm the efficacy of rap therapy in rapport building on top of many presenting concerns spawned by the research from Elligan.

One of the lesser known but more modern counselling approaches is by Gulbay (2021), who devised a novel approach titled Integral Hip-Hop Methodology. The author offers therapeutic interventions directed to asylum seeking and migrant youth to assist with their symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Gulbay's approach aims to integrate a full spectrum of hip-hop and adjacent interventions, such as elements of HHT (emceeing, DJing, dance, and art), trauma-informed therapy, mindfulness, empowerment, yoga, and so forth to offer support. Follow-up results from Gulbay's article are not published yet; however, their model offers robust evidence to suggest diverse enhancement to youths' top-down (e.g., psychological) and bottom up (e.g., biological) self-regulation for PTSD symptomology.

Altogether, this section highlights how therapeutic approaches like HHT, HHSWT, rap therapy, and Integral Hip-Hop that revolve around hip-hop, can address a range of mental health concerns. Research supports these approaches while underscoring the importance of having a rigorous methodology and culturally relevant implementation. However, dedicated therapeutic models are not the only formal way hip-hop is used to improve mental health.

Using Hip-Hop to Address Specific Counselling Concerns

Hip-hop can also be used to address specific mental health concerns instead of through a dedicated approach. This reflects more of a bottom-up perspective to conceptualizing interventions whereas approaches adopt more of a top-down perspective. This section illustrates hip-hop's ability to help with specific mental health concerns including, rapport building, identity construction, self-improvement, and various other presenting problems.

Rapport Building or Establishing the Therapeutic Alliance

Research has consistently demonstrated that rapport, or the therapeutic alliance, is vital to working with clients on their mental health. Leach (2005) identifies that rapport is important to

developing communication and trust and improving treatment compliance. In their meta-analysis, Opland and Torrico (2024) demonstrate that rapport is clinically significant in enhancing treatment outcomes, building cultural competence (Travis & Deepak, 2011), and growing client engagement with therapy. Martin et al. (2000) report moderate and reliable associations with these, along with other characteristics that make mental health treatments successful. Integrating hip-hop into counselling offers an additional pathway for professionals to establish, grow, and solidify rapport with clients.

Kobin and Tyson (2006) remark that analyzing hip-hop lyricism can foster the therapeutic alliance. Analyzing lyricism offers insights on how to empower clients through their strengths; offers a pathway for accessible, culturally relevant expression; and neutralizes imbalanced power dynamics between the client and practitioner.

Cobbett (2009) uses a case study to examine how hip-hop can be used to improve accessibility in counselling. The author comments how conducting music therapy informed by hip-hop can better assist students with complex social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties as compared to psychotherapy. Creating a more suitable environment and meeting the client where they are at help forge rapport between the client and counsellor. Cobbett identifies that their cumulative efforts, particularly around building a strong therapeutic alliance, results in marked improvements towards recognizing, processing, and communicating emotions and experiences. Cobbett adds that preexisting rapport and finding an accommodating technique to enhance mental health are instrumental in generating a successful outcome for the client.

Briefly, Waller (2024) affirms that one integral part of HHSWT is to use hip-hop to aid in establishing rapport with clients, and subsequently, work toward goals together.

Identity Construction

From the extant literature, a notable theme of using hip-hop to assist with identity construction is salient. Firstly, Heath and Arroyo (2014) demonstrate another way to integrate hip-hop into therapy is through using narrative therapy and hip-hop lyricism to reauthor identity, thus facilitating therapeutic change. From the same authors' perspective, using a hip-hop strategy is especially important for disenfranchised populations for several processes. This includes transitioning problematic storylines within hip-hop music that individuals relate their personal experiences to and shifting them towards idealized identities and creating, embodying, and communicating one's new identity throughout their personal and social life.

Secondly, Dickens and Lonie (2013) illustrate a comparable point to using hip-hop. Foundationally, the authors highlight how creating music (e.g., hip-hop) provides a coping strategy for the emotional issues of young offenders (or those at risk of becoming young offenders) and can be used to reconstruct a new identity from that which was once aligned with being (or at risk of being) a young offender.

Thirdly, Bramwell (2018) uses hip-hop as a specific treatment paradigm with adult offenders. Bramwell finds that hip-hop facilitates prisoners to better exist under the conditions of their sentences, such as making peace with their prison terms alongside reducing social and ethnocultural barriers between prisoners and staff, in addition to challenging, redefining, and exploring parts of their own identity. Fostering thoughtful engagement with identity construction is a priority because of the overrepresentation of and discrimination against Black and Muslim prisoners.

Fourthly, Travis (2013) cites hip-hop as having use for practitioners in which identity formation has mental health enhancing effects. Through investigating the literature, Travis

discovers a reduction in depressive symptoms through empowering musical engagement and its insulation against the effects of discriminatory actions.

Finally, Solli (2014) represents the effects of using music therapy to enhance identity construction in a case study with a rapper receiving intense psychiatric care. Music therapy is a common therapeutic technique tied to hip-hop therapies (Tyson, 2002). Solli (2014) demonstrates that music therapy facilitates positive identity construction marked by agency, skill, and personal wellness instead of stigmatized and disordered mental health. In this specific case, the intent of this treatment is not to ignore illness as part of one's identity, but to enhance sense of self and readjust positive identity elements to create balance within the entirety of one's identity.

Self-Improvement

Another theme that is prominent within the literature on using hip-hop in counselling is that of self-improvement. Here, self-improvement is portrayed as a broad category encompassing several subthemes within the work of all the authors. While the following examples aim to fill in this category, it is not exhaustive.

Armstrong and Ricard (2016) craft interventions that use creative, hip-hop-oriented techniques to foster enhanced regulation. This is especially important because in this alternate education stream, the individuals attending are at risk for offending or are already young offenders. Armstrong and Ricard identify that using hip-hop in counselling improves agency in acting in accordance with socially constructive coping, alongside self-expression, self-disclosure, and emotional development.

Moreover, Olson-McBride and Page (2012) display the abilities of using hip-hop in counselling by combining with a poetry- and literature-based intervention program. These same

authors draw similarities between the conceptualization of their program, hip-hop therapy, and rap therapy (Elligan, 2004; Tyson, 2002). Olson-McBride and Page's (2012) results show enhancements to self-improvement through increases to participants' self-disclosure capacity and observe downstream improvements like better self-awareness, self-reflection, and prosocial behaviours.

Similarly, Travis et al. (2019) showcases how hip-hop therapies prevents the loss of skills and grows positive mental health in youth over their summer break from school via hip-hop empowerment and therapeutic beat making. Through this integrative intervention, the authors inspire participants' improvement across anxiety, depression, and several youth-development constructs including competence, confidence, community, citizenship, and character. Travis et al. ascribe the positive changes from their hip-hop interventions being partly due to resonating better with the experiences of participants, many of whom were Black and Hispanic.

Adding to this point, Hakvoort (2015) offers an approach to effectively using hip-hop as the main vehicle in achieving goals via music therapy. Through this approach, indexes of self-improvement goals can be identified, such as improving self-concepts and enhancing low-self-esteem, while also deflating overly high self-esteem, finding more prosocial coping strategies, and generating space for free emotional self-expression. Hakvoort mentions that clients verify success in these areas.

Further, Gitonga and Delport (2015) proclaim that using hip-hop is an especially effective way to facilitate engagement with self-concepts. This study blurs the line between using the self for identity construction or self-improvement, as the definition tends to differentiate along with the participant group. In many of the studies previously examined, identity construction is operationalized as a transition away from being an offender or those at risk to

offend. A brief look shows major changes that step away from this trend, namely with Bramwell's (2018) population contemplating their ethnic and religious identities. This raises questions about how personality traits, such as extraversion, contribute to identity development, self-improvement, or possibly both simultaneously. Through using interpretative phenomenological analysis, Gitonga and Delport (2015) uncover that hip-hop promotes agency in participants, along the axes of empowerment and liberation. In context, empowerment operationalizes enhancements made to self-concepts like confidence, acceptance, and awareness, while liberation is defined by being an emotional escape from one's current circumstances.

Other Ways Hip-Hop is Used to Address Specific Concerns

Researchers have found numerous ways to apply hip-hop across counselling contexts to help in the pursuit of mental health related goals. Although there is a wealth of literature convergent on specific issues, it is nonetheless important to recognize novel ways of applying hip-hop to presenting concerns.

Emdin et al. (2016) combine reality pedagogy (RP) with HHSWT to engage disenfranchised groups in learning about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) topics while also receiving mental health support. RP refers to approaching teaching by incorporating the lived experiences and present realities of students into educational curricula (Emdin, 2011). Together, RP and HHSWT establish a flexible, non-restrictive space for marginalized students work through their trauma while also exploring science. Emdin et al. (2016) find students are more successful in communicating emotions, their knowledge of STEM content, and adjusting their perceptions and identity around science topics. At first, this study may appear outside of the realm of counselling's purview, but upon further inspection, it

creatively augments learning with a therapeutic intervention to both improve academic understanding and mental health.

Duncan-Andrade and Morrell's (2000) work is in a similar realm as Emdin et al.'s (2016) by using hip-hop as an educational intervention to improve academic performance in marginalized youth. Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2000) develop literacy skills through framing critical and reality pedagogy alongside hip-hop, because of its cultural relevance. According to the same authors' unit analysis, participants personally engage with the material by tying it to their own experience and context, resulting in gains to their writing, critical analysis abilities, and learning-motivation.

Crooke (2018) focuses on the therapeutic value of beat making through the lens of hip-hop. The author highlights that in music therapy, technologies often intertwined with hip-hop are disregarded and perceived as inferior to analogue music making. According to Vaudreuil et al. (2024), music technology refers to tools such as electronics, software, and apps, in addition to techniques associated with their respective uses that allow individuals to engage with music therapy; this contrasts with music making via conventional, non-technology based physical engagement. The authors add that the intent behind music technology is to foster equal access despite barriers such as income, geography, and physical or cognitive capability. Crooke (2018) identifies that the historic and contemporary practices of hip-hop are intimately connected with beat making via music technology, such as through DJing and music production. As a result, Crooke posits that devaluing this connection dismisses its cultural roots and instead perpetuates narratives that marginalize traditions and communities. Given that music is in many ways foundational to hip-hop culture, it allows for music therapy to be more inclusive and culturally relevant, and thus, therapeutically valuable for one's mental health.

Overall, this section reveals the diverse ways that hip-hop can be incorporated into counselling contexts with potential to address mental health concerns across different populations. This includes building therapeutic rapport, fostering identity construction, and promoting self-improvement in addition to other innovative uses closely related to mental health. These findings demonstrate hip-hop's therapeutic versatility and value.

Yet equally important to consider are the professional responsibilities and considerations that accompany its use. To embody an evidence-based perspective in mental health practice, it is vital to recognize that single points of data cannot comprehensively address the efficacy of using hip-hop to assist with specific client concerns. Thus, in areas where there is novel or limited research, practitioners must take precautions to ensure their work remains ethical and has a strong, scientific basis. Otherwise, attempting to help clients by using specious or speculative evidence can result in worsened or regressive mental health outcomes.

Professional Considerations for Using Hip-Hop in Counselling

Together, evidence from this area of study speaks to the widespread and relevant applicability of using hip-hop as a model or as a vehicle to address specific presenting concerns. Campbell (2023) moderates evidence favouring the use of hip-hop culture to improve mental health by asserting considerations for practitioners potentially implementing it into their repertoires.

Firstly, professionals must consider the client-centred reasons for wanting to integrate hip-hop into mental health focused work. For instance, Campbell identifies subthemes of practitioners who want to be culturally competent and responsive by working effectively in cross-cultural settings and continuously evolve alongside said culture. From this, we can see the

importance of practitioners acknowledging their own relationship to different cultures on top of identifying how hip-hop connects to the cultures they intend to work with.

Secondly, mental health practitioners must consider the relevance of how using hip-hop in their work with clients might be beneficial to attain goals set in the professional relationship. Campbell discovers some relevant areas for the use of hip-hop in counselling such as processing emotions, expressing oneself, and finding interpersonal supports. More areas where hip-hop can be used to achieve mental health related goals exist—like those found in this project—but electing to use hip-hop in addition to or as an alternative to another technique should be an evidence-based decision.

Thirdly, professionals must reflect on their connection to competence in using hip-hop to augment therapeutic work. This point is a combination of Campbell's last two thematic categories. Hip-hop is not explored for its value in therapeutic work because of reasons like misinformation that delegitimizes hip-hop's potential for improving mental health alongside a lack of resources and time in higher education programs to teach it. Professionals often hit the ground running if they wish to learn about hip-hop culture, as the results from Campbell's investigation show minimal education on the subject. Instead, acquiring knowledge requires one to invest in their continuing education, to learn through personal experiences with clients, to draw on their own background, and to engage in supervision. A problem is readily apparent though: it is difficult to gain experience in an area without formal—or even informal—experts, thus reducing accessibility for professionals using hip-hop in mental health applications. Yet, following the self-reflective themes offered in Campbell's research leaves unrestricted, creative, and acutely personalized avenues to find how hip-hop can be used in therapeutic ways that are informed by formal education and professional ethics to uphold a certain standard of care.

This section outlines the need for professionals to critically reflect upon their decision to use hip-hop as a way to better mental health. Research suggests that practitioners should consider their rationale for using hip-hop to improve mental health, its relevance for achieving clients' goals, and one's personal competence in using it effectively. Professionals must balance hip-hop's efficacy at enhancing mental health with these varied considerations to help individuals in ethical, evidence-based, and culturally relevant ways.

CHAPTER III: METHOD AND HANDBOOK CREATION

This chapter explores the method of how this project was created, with emphasis on the handbook component. It begins by outlining the methodology used throughout the project, detailing the strategies and resources employed to gather evidence on hip-hop and mental health. Then, this chapter highlights the rationale for, and technology used in developing the handbook. Finally, it provides an overview of the handbook's structure and contents.

Method

The content found in both this manuscript and handbook is based on an evidence-based, peer reviewed investigation of the literature on hip-hop and mental health. Research was acquired through different techniques. Most of the literature was obtained through databases such as Google Scholar, Connecting Repositories (CORE), Semantic Scholar, Education Resources and Information Center (ERIC), Research Gate, and Science Direct. Finding literature involved systematically searching for relevant key terms and variations on spellings of key terms as well as searching within bibliographies of articles used. Additionally, some articles and periodicals required the use of website archival tools like the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine to investigate. The Wayback Machine allows the retrieval of online content that may not be ascertainable through conventional searching (Arora et al., 2015). YouTube was also used supplementarily to verify research or claims from interviews where available.

Handbook Creation

Information collected throughout the literature review is combined and formatted into a handbook (see Appendix). The goal with this handbook is to make key knowledge about hip-hop and mental health readily available and easily understandable by providing professionals with essential information in a clear and accessible format. To achieve this goal, it was made using

Canva, an online graphic design platform, renowned for its intuitive use, cost-effectiveness, and collaborative features. While Canva lacks the advanced functionalities of software such as Affinity Designer or Adobe programs, its accessibility and ease of use make it well-suited for creating engaging educational materials. Research suggests that incorporating Canva into learning contexts can enhance educational outcomes, which aligns with the goal of this handbook (Jamaludin & Sedek, 2023; Vargas et al., 2022).

Compared to the manuscript portion of the project, the handbook does not maintain the same strictness around American Psychological Association 7th edition formatting compared to the project, favouring brevity and readability. The handbook aims to be accessible and aesthetic, while still maintaining academic integrity.

Handbook Format

This handbook contains three chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview and justification for the handbook's creation. Chapter 2 defines hip-hop's core elements and outlines its historical development. Then, it explores the relationship between hip-hop and mental health, including how hip-hop can be used to improve mental health. Chapter 3 discusses the literature review's findings, identifies its strengths and weaknesses, provides directions for future research, and offers a brief conclusion. The bibliography contains references formatted in APA 7 style.

CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Discussion

Informed by relevant literature on how to create a discussion (see e.g., Gangaraju & Cushman, 2023), this project's discussion will contain the following sections: (a) a summary of key findings, (b) an interpretation and contextualization of the findings, (c) highlight the strengths of the study, (d) highlight the limitations of the study, (e) identify future directions for research, and (f) a conclusion unifying this project.

Summary of Findings from the Literature

Research on hip-hop reveals it to be more than just a musical genre; it is a historically rich, continuously evolving, global, and multifaceted cultural phenomenon rooted in resistance, empowerment, and self-expression (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005; Rose, 1994). Consequently, this project investigates how a thorough understanding of hip-hop can be effectively used by mental health professionals in their practice.

This project contends that a robust understanding of hip-hop's history, connection with mental health, and contemporary methods of application all help establish pathways for using hip-hop in therapeutic ways by mental health practitioners. This is timely because contemporary hip-hop artists increasingly address mental health themes through elements of hip-hop. This trend reflects broader societal movements towards an open dialogue about mental health on top of deconstructing associated stigmas.

Therapeutic approaches and interventions that leverage hip-hop culture can provide culturally responsive engagement, better meeting clients' often complex and dynamic needs. Resultantly, thoughtfully integrating hip-hop into therapy presents valuable opportunities to

improve outcomes for individuals from marginalized communities, for whom conventional or rigid therapies may be less effective with.

Interpretation of Findings from the Literature

Several key interpretations can be drawn from the present findings of this literature review. Adopting hip-hop culture into therapeutic practices is promising for improving mental health outcomes. This is particularly relevant for individuals who resonate with hip-hop culture, which often includes racialized youth. This finding is critical for designing culturally competent mental health treatments because members of these ethnocultural communities have historically faced and continue to experience discrimination and disenfranchisement throughout mental health care systems.

Closely tied to rectifying mental health care inequalities, capitalizing on knowledge about hip-hop's evolution and its contemporary expressions facilitates culturally imbued therapeutic practices. The destigmatization of mental health discourse across society, combined with mounting evidence for using hip-hop to address several presenting concerns helps dismantle barriers to mental health support among diverse populations.

The potential mental health benefits of hip-hop extend beyond individual therapeutic relationships. As a culture rooted in articulating struggles against systemic oppression and inequality, hip-hop-informed therapeutic practices align with social justice- and feminist-oriented mental health work. Programs that resourcefully incorporate hip-hop elements can serve as tools for outreach and community psychology, fostering a greater sense of belonging and collective healing.

In brief, these interpretations of the findings indicate that integrating hip-hop into therapeutic practices holds promise for improving mental health. This is especially relevant for

marginalized youth and addressing disparities in mental health care. In turn, using hip-hop to enhance mental health can promote both individual and community healing.

Strengths

The project possesses several strengths. Spotlighting strengths is essential to balance out recognition of the project's limitations while promoting the soundness and justifiability of the conclusions (Vieira et al., 2019).

Firstly, this project benefits from being an extensive and contemporary review of literature, incorporating a diverse range of sources, including scholarly research, periodicals, and media. The sources span multiple disciplines, such as counseling psychology, music therapy, history, sociology, and medicine. Additionally, the project integrates both qualitative and quantitative studies, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses. By covering both global hip-hop culture and its Canadian context, the project furnishes readers with a nuanced understanding of how different populations engage with hip-hop culture. This reinforces the importance of cultural competence and trauma-informed care for mental health professionals seeking to incorporate hip-hop into their professional practices.

Secondly, the handbook (Appendix) is designed to be practical and user-friendly for mental health professionals. It offers clear guidance on integrating hip-hop into therapy by outlining evidence-based approaches in addition to interventions on specific presenting concerns (e.g., Bramwell, 2018; Gitonga & Delport, 2015; Tyson, 2002). The handbook goes beyond reiterating theory to become a functional tool for improving therapeutic outcomes, particularly for clients connected with hip-hop culture (e.g., some racialized youth). Through furnishing practitioners with clear directions towards actionable strategies, the handbook effectively translates complex research into an informative and applicable format for professional use.

Collectively, these strengths enhance the project's ability to reflect the current understanding of hip-hop's history, elements, and applications in mental health. As a result, this project serves as a transformative resource for professionals seeking to meaningfully and effectively integrate hip-hop culture into therapeutic practices.

Limitations

While this project presents valuable insights regarding the integration of hip-hop into mental health practice by professionals, it must also acknowledge limitations to provide a transparent, well-rounded assessment of its findings. Recognizing these limitations does not invalidate the project's findings; rather, it helps contextualize them while also clarifying their relevance and applicability. Acknowledging limitations ensures that future research can expand knowledge on hip-hop and its applications in mental health (Ross & Bibler Zaidi, 2019).

A limitation is the generalizability of findings. Most of the research reviewed in this project is based on American data and conducted within a U.S. context, with limited exceptions (e.g., Tyree, 2023). A unique contributing factor to this trend is that hip-hop culture has a longer history of academic and institutional recognition in the United States. However, hip-hop manifests differently across national and local contexts, meaning findings from U.S.-based literature may vary in how it applies to other regions. For example, this project examined Indigenous Canadian hip-hop, which has unique histories, experiences, and manifestations of hip-hop elements compared to Black or Native American communities. As a result, the generalizability of research findings may vary depending on cultural and geographical context.

The availability and nature of existing data also constrain the conclusions drawn from this research. Although literature on hip-hop's efficacy in supporting mental health is expanding, many existing studies feature small sample sizes, rely on qualitative methodologies, or use cross-

sectional designs. These aspects of research design present challenges related to internal and external validity, generalizability, replicability, and causality (Faber & Fonseca, 2014; Mwita, 2022; Setia, 2016; Tenny et al., 2022). Alternative designs—such as studies with larger, statistically derived samples, mixed-methods approaches, or longitudinal investigations—could rectify some of these concerns, albeit they also introduce their own trade-offs. Importantly, research design choices are often intentional, reflecting the specific research question, available resources, or methodological constraints (Verhoef & Casebeer, 1997). Therefore, these limitations do not inherently undermine the quality of existing findings but should be considered when interpreting results.

Additionally, there may be biases related to interpreting the data in two forms. To start, many of the studies that explore implementing hip-hop into mental health are advocates. This dual role may introduce confirmation bias in data collection (e.g., via measurement variability or inter-observer variance) or presentation of the results (e.g., emphasizing successful outcomes over other; Popovic & Huecker, 2023). Alternatively, investigating the use of hip-hop culture to improve mental health may be contextually dependent. The literature demonstrates that hip-hop culture and its role in mental health have evolved over time and across settings. As a result, the effectiveness of using hip-hop into improve mental health may differ depending on when (e.g., past stigma surrounding mental health in hip-hop communities) and where (e.g., variations in hip-hop's popularity and institutional support in Canada versus the United States at the same point in time) the research occurred. Yet, neither of these potential biases invalidate research findings. Rather, they acknowledge and emphasize awareness around limitations in research processes and generalizing results.

Another limitation is the dearth of research examining the biological effects of hip-hop culture at bettering mental health. Mental health is often conceptualized through a biopsychosocial model, which integrates biological, psychological, and social factors in understanding mental health conditions and treatment approaches (Borrell-Carrió et al., 2004; Gilbert, 2019). While much of the existing literature contributes to the psychological and social connection between hip-hop and mental health, there are limited examples documenting biological interactions (e.g., Withers et al., 2019). Consequently, further exploration in this area is needed to develop a more holistic understanding of hip-hop's effects on mental health.

Also, the handbook format itself presents limitations. Because of its succinctness, it cannot fully replicate the depth and adaptability of experience or direct training. As well, the handbook will require community feedback and periodic updates to accurately reflect new research and the evolution of hip-hop.

Despite limitations related to generalizability, data availability, potential biases, the absence of biological research in the literature, and constraints of the handbook format, this project nonetheless provides a strong justification for professionals to integrate hip-hop into mental health practices. Existing research on the subject is founded upon proven theoretical foundations and supported by a growing body of original and peer-reviewed evidence. These same studies readily acknowledge their limitations, ensuring its conclusions are appropriately contextualized. As a result, research on the relationship between hip-hop and mental health provides meaningful, balanced insights to lay the foundation for future research upon.

Future Directions

Based on the findings throughout the discussion, strengths, and limitations sections, there are several areas of exploration for academics and practitioners can address via future research.

Investigating these areas will improve the credibility, applicability, and efficacy of using hip-hop to enhance peoples' mental health.

A pressing direction of future research is to expand the scope of data collected on the relationship between hip-hop and mental health. Current findings are predominantly based on U.S. data with limited exceptions (e.g., Tyree, 2023). While this data can provide valuable insights, it cannot capture the diverse manifestations and global experiences of hip-hop, nor mental health. Even just within North America, differences between Canadian and U.S. hip-hop—especially between Black and Indigenous experiences—highlight the need for more research. To remedy this, future research should prioritize investigating the relationship between hip-hop and mental health in diverse contexts. Gathering broader data fosters a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of this connection, illuminate the impacts of cultural factors, and clarify previous findings' universality.

Beyond expanding geographical representation, future research should also enhance the diversity of participants involved in data collection. Many studies rely on small, relatively homogenous, U.S.-centric samples. This poses challenges in extrapolating findings to different social, ethnocultural, and economic contexts because these factors influence access to and engagement with mental health resources. Future research can bridge this gap by fathering data from a wider range of demographics, including ethnocultural background, age, gender, sexuality, and socioeconomic status. This would help ensure that findings more accurately represent diverse communities, thus improving the relevance and applicability of research results.

Another important direction for future research is to strengthen the methodological rigour of studies examining the relationship between hip-hop and mental health. While many of the studies provide rich insights, they can lack generalizability and empirical robustness. Improving

methodologies bolsters the case for implementing hip-hop into mental health practices by professionals. Some key changes future research can make include the following. It can use randomized controlled trials to assess causality and compare effectiveness of hip-hop-based mental health interventions. It can incorporate larger or statistically informed sample sizes for studies to improve power and generalizability (Cohen, 1992; Kemal, 2020). It can adopt longitudinal frameworks to track the long-term mental health effects and outcomes. Or it can implement mixed methods approaches that combine qualitative narratives with quantitative measures metrics to determine the impacts of hip-hop on mental health.

Additionally, future research can investigate the biological underpinnings of the relationship between hip-hop and mental health. Compared to exploring the well-documented psychological and social dimensions of this connection, little attention is paid its biological mechanisms. Using biological findings to establish a more holistic model of this relationship further supports hip-hop as an alternative, evidence-based way of improving mental health. Some crucial areas to explore include the impact of hip-hop on neurological processes, how hip-hop interventions for mental health effect physiology, and hip-hop's connection with neural plasticity and cognitive development.

Given the robust literature demonstrating hip-hop's benefits to mental health, future research should invest in developing more practitioner resources and training. Presently, most mental health practitioners lack training on how to effectively integrate hip-hop into their repertoire (Campbell, 2023). Expanding formal training and resources would equip professionals them with the necessary knowledge and skills to incorporate hip-hop into their work. Some ideas like developing training curricula and establishing interdisciplinary collaborations (e.g., between

fields or with hip-hop experts) might increase practitioners' effectiveness and improve therapeutic accessibility (Jefferson et al., 2025).

Further, the design of the project permits updates and integration of feedback from key stakeholders. These include experienced mental health professionals, experiential experts in hip-hop culture, and members of marginalized communities. This adaptive approach ensures materials continuously remain collaborative and relevant.

Outside of mental health, future research should explore hip-hop's potential in adjacent fields. While some studies have begun investigating its applications in education, public health, and social work, more research is needed to establish a comprehensive evidence base (Emdin et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2018; Travis & Deepak, 2011). Expanding research in these domains can entrench hip-hop's role as a transformative, interdisciplinary force for positive change.

All together, these future directions for research highlight the vast potential for hip-hop to contribute to mental health and beyond. Thoughtfully addressing current limitations in data collection, methodology, understanding biological foundations, professional resourcing, and interdisciplinary relevance would likely yield positive impacts. These actions would not only strengthen the empirical basis for hip-hop's use in mental health care, but also increase its acceptance among mental health professionals, potentially disenfranchised communities, and even policymakers. Ultimately, harnessing hip-hop's power can drive positive changes across domains and foster inclusive, culturally relevant, and evidence-based approaches to enhancing mental health at both individual and community levels.

Conclusions

I began this project only having a tangential idea of what hip-hop meant relative to mental health, alongside misconceived ideas about hip-hop in general, despite my enthusiasm

around it. The present project was instrumental in advancing my knowledge and dismantling superficial narratives about hip-hop. Throughout my research, I uncovered how hip-hop's abundant, and diverse history—from its grassroots origins to its modern, global manifestations—reflects a resilient cultural force that empowers marginalized communities.

Hip-hop is more than just music. It is a dynamic, multifaceted tool that can be conscientiously leveraged to address mental health concerns and promote deep, culturally responsive care. Creating this project serves as a creative, practical, and accessible resources that intends to bridge the gap between theory and practice. My hope is that these materials not only enrich the knowledge of professionals in mental health and related fields, but foster meaningful discourse among practitioners, researchers, clients, communities, and policymakers.

I envision a future where professionals across disciplines recognize and harness the transformative potential of hip-hop for improving peoples' lives. By taking steps to integrate hip-hop into professional practice, we can cultivate more contemporary, inclusive, effective, and culturally relevant methods of care, ensuring its power is used to uplift individuals and their communities.

References

- Alridge, D. P., & Stewart, J. B. (2005). Hip hop in history: Past, present, and future. *The Journal of African American History*, 90(3), 190–195. <https://doi.org/10.1086/jaahv90n3p190>.
- Alvarez, K., Polanco-Roman, L., Samuel Breslow, A., & Molock, S. (2022). Structural racism and suicide prevention for ethnoracially minoritized youth: A conceptual framework and illustration across systems. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 179(6), 422–433. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.21101001>.
- Amsterdam, L. (2013). All the eagles and the ravens in the house say yeah: (ab)original hip-hop, heritage, and love. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 37(2), 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicr.37.2.ckk76874gj573863>.
- Anderson, S. (2017, February 17). *Canadian Hip-Hop heads owe a lot to Ron Nelson and his Fantastic Voyage*. Complex Canada. <https://www.complex.com/music/a/septembreanderson/canadian-hip-hop-heads-owe-ron-nelson-fantastic-voyage>.
- Armstrong, S. N., & Ricard, R. J. (2016). Integrating rap music into counseling with adolescents in a disciplinary alternative education program. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 11(3–4), 423–435. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2016.1214656>.
- Arora, S. K., Li, Y., Youtie, J., & Shapira, P. (2016). Using the wayback machine to mine websites in the social sciences: A methodological resource. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 67(8), 1904–1915. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23503>.
- Baldry, W. J. (2016). *Turntablist performance practice* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Leeds. White Rose eTheses Online. <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/13494/>.
- Barker, A. (2018, May 10). *Canadian Music Week: How Toronto became hip-hop's multicultural nerve center*. Variety. <https://variety.com/2018/music/news/toronto-music-hip-hop-canada-1202804763/>.
- Beastie Boys. (1986). *Licensed to Ill* [Album]. Def Jam Recordings; Columbia Records.
- Bebey, F. (1999). *African music: A people's art*. Chicago Review Press.
- Berio, D., & Leymarie, F. F. (2015). Computational models for the analysis and synthesis of graffiti tag strokes. *Proceedings of the workshop on computational aesthetics*, 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.2312/exp.20151177>.
- Bielas, I. (2013). *The rise and fall of record labels* [Undergraduate thesis]. Claremont McKenna College. Scholarship@Claremont. https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmcc_theses/703/.

- Big Sean (featuring Kendrick Lamar). (2013). Control [Song]. GOOD Music; Def Jam Recordings.
- Blakey, A., & The Jazz Messengers. (1978). Stretching [Song]. On *Reflections in Blue*. Timeless.
- Boksa, P., Joobar, R., & Kirmayer, L. J. (2015). Mental wellness in Canada's Aboriginal communities: striving toward reconciliation. *Journal of Psychiatry & Neuroscience*, 40(6), 363–365. <https://doi.org/10.1503/jpn.150309>.
- Boogie Down Productions. (1987). 9mm goes bang [Song]. On *Criminal Minded*. B-Boy Records.
- Borrell-Carrió, F., Suchman, A. L., & Epstein, R. M. (2004). The biopsychosocial model 25 years later: principles, practice, and scientific inquiry. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 2(6), 576–582. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.245>.
- Boutros, A. (2020). The impossibility of being Drake: Or, what it means to be a successful (Black) Canadian rapper. *Global Hip-hop Studies*, 1(1), 95–114. https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00006_1.
- Bramwell, R. (2018). Freedom within bars: maximum security prisoners' negotiations of identity through rap. *Identities*, 25(4), 475–492. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2017.1287487>.
- Brown, J. (1972a). Get on the good foot - Part 1 [Song]. Polydor Records.
- Brown, J. (1972b). Get on the good foot - Part 2 [Song]. Polydor Records.
- Byers, M. (2012). On the (Im)possibility of Canadian Celebrity. *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*, 12(1).
- Campbell, K. S. (2023). A qualitative exploration of music therapist beliefs, education, and uses of hip hop in clinical practice. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 41(1), e1–e12. <https://doi.org/10.1093/mtp/miac011>.
- Campbell, M. V. (2014). The politics of making home: Opening up the work of Richard Iton in Canadian hip hop context. *Souls*, 16(3–4), 269–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10999949.2014.968978>.
- Canadian Artists for Reconciliation & Education. (n.d.). Rex Smallboy. <https://www.careartistsforreconciliation.ca/rexsmallboy>.
- Caudeiron, D., & Bowman, D. (2014, March 31). Rap. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/rap-emc>.

- When the CRTC denied a 'mainstream Black radio station' for Toronto. (2020, September 18). CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/crtc-black-radio-1990-1.5724579>.
- From Michie Mee to War Party: The lost history of Canadian hip hop. (2018, April 6). CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/episode-384-trump-takes-on-amazon-canadian-hip-hop-a-bitcoin-mining-boom-nafta-vs-bar-bands-and-more-1.4605296/from-michie-mee-to-war-party-the-lost-history-of-canadian-hip-hop-1.4605301>.
- Cervantes M. A., Saldaña L. P. (2015). Hip hop and nueva canción as decolonial pedagogies of epistemic justice. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society*, 4(1), 84-108. <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22167>.
- Chang, J. (2005). *Can't stop, won't stop: A history of the hip-hop generation* (1st ed.). Picador.
- Chang, J. (2009, October 12). *It's a hip-hop world*. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/12/its-a-hip-hop-world/>.
- Chetty, D., Nitzsche, S. A., & Williams, J. A. (2024). Droppin' knowledge: An introduction to the Special Issue: 'The Fifth Element in Hip hop Culture.' *Global Hip Hop Studies*, 5(1), 3–11. https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00091_2.
- Chidley-Hill, J. (2013, May 14). *Hit single "Northern Touch" still notorious 15 years after tearing up charts*. City News Toronto. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2013/05/14/hit-single-northern-touch-still-notorious-15-years-after-tearing-up-charts/>.
- Chiu, M., Amartey, A., Wang, X., & Kurdyak, P. (2018). Ethnic differences in mental health status and service utilization: A population-based study in Ontario, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 63(7), 481–491. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0706743717741061>.
- Chowdhary, N., Jotheeswaran, A. T., Nadkarni, A., Hollon, S. D., King, M., Jordans, M. J. D., Rahman, A., Verdeli, H., Araya, R., & Patel, V. (2014). The methods and outcomes of cultural adaptations of psychological treatments for depressive disorders: A systematic review. *Psychological Medicine*, 44(6), 1131–1146. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291713001785>.
- Coates, T.-N. (2007, August 17). *Hip-hop's down beat*. Time. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120414043615/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1653639,00.html>.
- Cobb, W. J. (2007). *To the break of dawn: A freestyle on the hip-hop aesthetic*. NYU Press.
- Cobbett, S. (2009). Including the excluded: Music therapy with adolescents with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *British Journal of Music Therapy*, 23(2), 15–24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135945750902300203>.

- Cohen, J. (1992). Statistical power analysis. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1(3), 98–101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.ep10768783>.
- Conner, S. (2013, August 27). 1st annual native hip-hop festival hits Vancouver. *The Vancouver Sun*. <https://vancouver.sun.com/entertainment/music/preview-vancouvers-1st-annual-native-hip-hop-festival>.
- Corey, G. (2020). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy, enhanced* (10th edition). Brooks/Cole.
- Cotgrove, L. A. (2018). The importance of linguistic markers of identity and authenticity in German gangsta rap. *Journal of Languages, Texts and Society*, 2, 67–98.
- Crooke, A. H. D. (2018). Music technology and the hip hop beat making tradition: A history and typology of equipment for music therapy. *Voices A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v18i2.996>.
- Croom, A. M. (2012). Music, neuroscience, and the psychology of well-being: a précis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2, 393. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00393>.
- Crossley, S. (2005). Metaphorical conceptions in hip-hop music. *African American Review*, 39(4), 501–512.
- CRTC. (1990). Decision CRTC 90-693. <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/1990/DB90-693.HTM>.
- CRTC. (1997). Decision CRTC 97-362. <https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/1997/DB97-362.HTM>.
- Cyr, B. (2005, February 3). *Hip-hop blowing up in Saskatchewan*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20110720200626/http://carillon.uregina.ca/02.03.05/story5.html>.
- D’Amico, F. (2015). “The mic is my piece”: Canadian Rap, the gendered “Cool Pose,” and music industry racialization and regulation. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 26(1), 255–290. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037204ar>.
- Diallo, D. (2022). “Every MC raps, but not every rapper is an MC”: Examining the MC/rapper rivalry in American rap music. *Volume*, 19(1), 195–208. <https://doi.org/10.4000/volume.10252>.
- Diawara, M. (1998). *In search of Africa*. Harvard University Press.
- Dickens, L., & Lonie, D. (2013). Rap, rhythm and recognition: Lyrical practices and the politics of voice on a community music project for young people experiencing challenging circumstances. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 9, 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2012.11.003>.

- Dickey, A., & Blakey, J. (2023). A theoretical intervention model for using hip-hop therapy in suicide treatment for black males. *Journal of Suicide Prevention*, 5, 23–28. e2023005.
- Digable Planets. (1992). Rebirth of Slick (Cool Like Dat) [Song]. Pendulum Records; Elektra Records.
- Dizzee Rascal. (2003). Sittin' here [Song]. On *Boy In Da Corner*. XL Recordings.
- Dozois, D. J. A., Mikail, S. F., Alden, L. E., Bieling, P. J., Bourgon, G., Clark, D. A., Drapeau, M., Gallson, D., Greenberg, L., Hunsley, J., & Johnston, C. (2014). The CPA presidential task force on evidence-based practice of psychological treatments. *Canadian Psychology*, 55(3), 153–160. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035767>.
- Drake. (2009). Best I ever had [Song].
- Duinker, B., & Martin, D. (2017). In search of the golden age hip-hop sound (1986–1996). *Empirical Musicology Review*, 12(1–2), 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.18061/emr.v12i1-2.5410>.
- Dunbar, W. (1979). *The poems of William Dunbar* (Kinsley, J., Ed). Oxford University Press.
- Duncan-Andrade, J., & Morrell, E. (2000). *Using hip-hop culture as a bridge to canonical poetry texts in an urban secondary English class* (ED442893). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED442893.pdf>.
- Inside the Junos, episode 2: Why Rascalz refused their 1998 award*. (2018, February 13). CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/music/junos/news/inside-the-junos-episode-2-why-rascalz-refused-their-1998-award-1.4532216>.
- Edwards, P. (2009). *How to rap: The art and science of the hip-hop MC*. Chicago Review Press.
- Elligan, D. (2000). Rap therapy: A culturally sensitive approach to psychotherapy with young african american men. *Journal of African American Men*, 5(3), 27–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-000-1002-y>.
- Elligan, D. (2004). *Rap therapy: A practical guide for communicating with youth and young adults through rap music*. Kensington Books.
- Emdin, C. (2010). Affiliation and alienation: Hip-hop, rap, and urban science education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 42(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220270903161118>.
- Emdin, C. (2011). Moving beyond the boat without a paddle: Reality pedagogy, Black youth, and urban science education. *Journal of Negro Education*, 80(3), 284–295.

- Emdin, C., Adjapong, E., & Levy, I. (2016). Hip-hop based interventions as pedagogy/therapy in STEM: A model from urban science education. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 10(3), 307–321. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jme-03-2016-0023>.
- Faber, J., & Fonseca, L. M. (2014). How sample size influences research outcomes. *Dental Press Journal of Orthodontics*, 19(4), 27–29. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2176-9451.19.4.027-029.ebo>.
- Fernando, S. H. (1995). *The new beats: Exploring the music, culture and attitudes of hip-hop*. Payback Press.
- Figueiredo, C., & Bolaño, C. (2017). Social media and algorithms: Configurations of the lifeworld colonization by new media. *International Journal of Information Ethics*, 26. <https://doi.org/10.29173/irrie277>.
- Fitzgerald, K. (2000). *Freestyle: The art of rhyme* [Film]. Bowery Films; Organic Films; The Centre for Hop-Hop Education; VH1 Television.
- Flynn, A. (1998, April 3). Rappers irked by marginalization: Rascalz member Misfit claims the Junos would have ensured teen viewers by featuring more rap. *The Vancouver Sun*.
- Fox, K. M., Riches, G., & Dubnewick, M. (2011). Juxtaposing aboriginal hip-hop, local heavy metal scenes, and questioning public recreation/leisure services. *Canadian Journal for Traditional Music*, 38(1), 88–101.
- Gajaria, A., Guzder, J., & Rasasingham, R. (2021). What's race got to do with it? A proposed framework to address racism's impacts on child and adolescent mental health in Canada. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 30(2), 131–137. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8056965/>.
- Gangaraju, R., & Cushman, M. (2023). How we write a manuscript discussion. *Research and Practice in Thrombosis and Haemostasis*, 7(8), 102267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpth.2023.102267>.
- Gates, H. L. (2011). *Black in Latin America*. New York University Press.
- Gilbert P. (2019). Psychotherapy for the 21st century: An integrative, evolutionary, contextual, biopsychosocial approach. *Psychology and Psychotherapy*, 92(2), 164–189. <https://doi.org/10.1111/papt.12226>.
- Gitonga, P. N., & Delport, A. (2015). Exploring the use of hip hop music in participatory research studies that involve youth. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(8), 984–996. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2015.1020929>.
- Gnarls Barkley. (2006). Crazy [Song]. Downtown Records; Warner Bros. Records.

- Goddard, P. (1997, August 2). How the CRTC sold out Toronto decision to reject 'urban' format for 99.1 was power play, pure and simple. *Toronto Star*, H.2.
- Gonzalez, T., & Hayes, B. G. (2009). Rap music in school counseling based on Don Elligan's rap therapy. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 4(2), 161–172.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401380902945293>.
- Gorlewski, J., & Porfilio, B. (2012). Revolutionizing environmental education through Indigenous hip-hop culture. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 17, 46-61.
- Gosa, T. L. (2015). The fifth element: Knowledge. In J. A. Williams (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to hip-hop* (pp. 56–70). Cambridge University Press.
- Gottlieb, L. (2014). *Graffiti art styles: A classification system and theoretical analysis*. McFarland.
- Gulbay, S. (2021). Exploring the use of hip hop-based music therapy to address trauma in asylum seeker and unaccompanied minor migrant youth. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 21(3). <https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v21i3.3192>.
- Hakvoort, L. (2015). Rap music therapy in forensic psychiatry: Emphasis on the musical approach to rap. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 33(2), 184–192.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/mtp/miv003>.
- Hall, B., Khan, R., & Eslea, M. (2023). Criminalising Black trauma: Grime and drill lyrics as a form of ethnographic data to understand “gangs” and serious youth violence. *Genealogy*, 7(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy7010002>.
- Hip Hop Therapy (2020, May 29). *Reimagining hip hop therapy* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zogsYscwmt4>.
- Hansen, K.F. (2000). Turntable Music. In: Jonsson, L., Oversand, K. & Breivik, M. (Eds.), *Musikklidenskapelig Årbok 2000* (pp. 145-160). Norwegian University of Science and Technology.
- Harmesen, N. (2023, July 20). How Black and Indigenous communities have connected through rap. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/music/shad-dj-shub-mamarudegyal-interviews-collaboration-hip-hop-1.6911489>.
- Hart, R. (2019). Man down: The evolution of masculinity and mental health narratives in rap music. *Reinvention: An International Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 12(1), 1–17.
- Heath, T., & Arroyo, P. (2014). 'I gracefully grab a pen and embrace it ': Hip-hop lyrics as a means for re-authoring and therapeutic change. *International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, (3), 31–38.

- Henderson, E. A. (1996). Black nationalism and rap music. *Journal of Black Studies*, 26(3), 308–339.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2013). *The cultural industries* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Hidayat, T. Z., & Moehkardi, R. R. D. (2018). Slang in American and British hip-hop/rap song lyrics. *Lexicon*, 5(1), 84–94. <https://doi.org/10.22146/lexicon.v5i1.41284>.
- Hill, M. L. (2009). Scared straight: Hip-hop, outing, and the pedagogy of queerness. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 31(1), 29–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410802629235>.
- Hip station plays aboriginal tunes*. (2009, December 15). Winnipeg Free Press. <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/life/2009/12/15/hip-station-plays-aboriginal-tunes>.
- Huey, S. J., Jr, Park, A. L., Galán, C. A., & Wang, C. X. (2023). Culturally responsive cognitive behavioral therapy for ethnically diverse populations. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 19(1), 51–78. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-080921-072750>.
- Hughes, M. L. (2009). *Street art & graffiti art: Developing an understanding* [Master's thesis]. Georgia State University. ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/art_design_theses/50/.
- Hutchings, S., & Rodger, D. (2018). Reclaiming Australia: Indigenous hip-hop group A.B. Original's use of Twitter. *Media International Australia*, 169(1), 84–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878x18803382>.
- Infantry, A. (2011, January 28). *CKLN board 'not going to lie down' after licence revoked*. Toronto Star. https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/ckln-board-not-going-to-lie-down-after-licence-revoked/article_97de0b7c-6198-5b4e-bbf0-927e5893f86f.html.
- Jamaludin, N. F., & Sedek, S. F. (2024). CANVA as a digital tool for effective student learning experience. *Journal of Advanced Research in Computing and Applications*, 33(1), 22–33. <https://doi.org/10.37934/arca.33.1.2233>.
- Jay, K. (2024, February 16). *Guest blog: How Hip Hop Therapy is reshaping mental health care*. Mental Health America. <https://mhanational.org/blog/guest-blog-how-hip-hop-therapy-reshaping-mental-health-care>.
- Jefferson, L., Waddington, A., Johnson, S., & Ohrt, J. (2025). Hip-hop and rap music interventions on mental health and well-being: A systematic review. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 20(1), 31–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2024.2305294>.
- Johnson, I. K. (2015). Hip-hop dance. In J. A. Williams (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop* (pp. 22–31). Cambridge University Press.

- Kemal Ö. (2020). Power analysis and sample size, when and why?. *Turkish Archives of Otorhinolaryngology*, 58(1), 3–4. <https://doi.org/10.5152/tao.2020.0330>.
- Keyes, C. L. (2002). *Rap music and street consciousness*. Chicago: University of Illinois.
- Kid Cudi. (2008). Day 'n' nite [Song].
- Kitwana, B. (2005). *Why white kids love hip-hop: Wankstas, wiggers, wannabes, and the new reality of race in America*. Basic Civitas Books.
- Kleinberg, B., & McFarlane, P.T. (2020). Violent music vs violence and music: Drill rap and violent crime in London. *ArXiv*, abs/2004.04598, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2004.04598>.
- Knaak, S., Mantler, E., & Szeto, A. (2017). Mental illness-related stigma in healthcare: Barriers to access and care and evidence-based solutions. *Healthcare Management Forum*, 30(2), 111–116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0840470416679413>.
- Knapp, F. (2020, December 16). *This 1930s quartet didn't know it, but they were rap's first recorded artists*. Messy Nessy Chic. <https://www.messynessychic.com/2020/12/16/this-1930s-quartet-didnt-know-it-but-they-were-raps-first-recorded-artists/>.
- Kobin, C., & Tyson, E. (2006). Thematic analysis of hip-hop music: Can hip-hop in therapy facilitate empathic connections when working with clients in urban settings? *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33(4), 343–356. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2006.05.001>.
- Kopano, B. N. (2002). Rap music as an extension of the Black rhetorical tradition: “Keepin' it real”. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 26(4), 204–214.
- Kourgiantakis, T., Markoulakis, R., Lee, E., Hussain, A., Lau, C., Ashcroft, R., Goldstein, A. L., Kodeeswaran, S., Williams, C. C., & Levitt, A. (2023). Access to mental health and addiction services for youth and their families in Ontario: perspectives of parents, youth, and service providers. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 17(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-023-00572-z>.
- Kresovich, A., Reffner Collins, M. K., Riffe, D., & Carpentier, F. R. D. (2021). A content analysis of mental health discourse in popular rap music. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 175(3), 286–292. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2020.5155>.
- Krewen, N. (1999, March 7). *Kinder, gentler rap, eh?: Canadians hip-hop onto centre stage*. Ottawa Citizen. <https://web.archive.org/web/20081022104623/http://www.octopusmediaink.com/CitizenHipHop.html>.
- KRS-One. (2009). *The gospel of hip-hop: The first instrument*. powerHouse Books.

- Lamb, J., Bower, P., Rogers, A., Dowrick, C., & Gask, L. (2012). Access to mental health in primary care: a qualitative meta-synthesis of evidence from the experience of people from “hard to reach” groups. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*, 16(1), 76–104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363459311403945>.
- Lapassade G., & Rousselot P. (2009). *Rap il furore del dire*. Bepress.
- Leach, A. (2008). “One day it’ll all make sense”: Hip-hop and rap resources for music librarians. *Notes*, 65(1), 9–37. <https://doi.org/10.1353/not.0.0039>.
- Leach, M. J. (2005). Rapport: a key to treatment success. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, 11(4), 262–265. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctcp.2005.05.005>.
- LeBlanc, L. (1998, April 4). Rascalz refuse award to protest Junos: Rap act wants R&B portion of ceremony televised. *Billboard*. 110(14), 54.
- Levy, I. (2012). Hip-hop and spoken word therapy with urban youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 25(4), 219–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2012.736182>.
- Levy, I. P. (2019). Hip-hop and spoken word therapy in urban school counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, 22(1b), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759x19834436>.
- Levy, I., & Keum, B. T. (2014). Hip-hop emotional exploration in men. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 27(4), 217–223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2014.949528>.
- Levy, I., Emdin, C., & Adjapong, E. S. (2017). Hip-hop cypher in group work. *Social Work With Groups*, 41(1–2), 103–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2016.1275265>.
- Lewis, J. (2016, October 6). *The new cool: How Kamasi, Kendrick and co gave jazz a new groove*. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/06/new-cool-kamasi-kendrick-gave-jazz-new-groove>.
- Li, W., & Liu, P. (2023). Evoking nostalgia: Graffiti as medium in urban space. *SAGE Open*, 13(4), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231216600>.
- Lil Nas X (featuring Billy Ray Cyrus). (2019). Old town road (Remix) [Song]. Columbia Records.
- Logic (featuring Alessia Cara & Khalid). (2017). 1-800-273-8255 [Song]. Visionary Music Group; Def Jam Recordings.
- Lovata, T. R., & Olton, E. (Eds.). (2016). *Understanding graffiti: Multidisciplinary studies from prehistory to the present*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315416137>.

- Maestro Fresh-Wes. (1989). Let your backbone slide [Song]. Attic Records; LeFrak-Moelis Records.
- Marsiglia, F. F., & Booth, J. M. (2015). Cultural adaptation of interventions in real practice settings. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 25(4), 423–432. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731514535989>.
- Martin, D. J., Garske, J. P., & Davis, M. K. (2000). Relation of the therapeutic alliance with outcome and other variables: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68(3), 438–450. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.68.3.438>.
- McCollom, S. (2019, October 30). *Hip hop: A culture of vision and voice*. The Kennedy Centre. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/media/hip-hop/hip-hop-a-culture-of-vision-and-voice/>.
- McDonald, F. (2013). *The popular history of graffiti: From the ancient world to the present*. Skyhorse Publishing.
- McKinnon, M. (2005, March 22). *Border block: Canadian hip-hop vs. America*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20050323004143/http://www.cbc.ca/arts/music/canadianhiphop.html>.
- McLeod, K. (2005). MP3s are killing home taping: The rise of internet distribution and its challenge to the major label music monopoly. *Popular Music and Society*, 28(4), 521–531. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007760500159062>.
- McPherson, D. (2023, August 11). *50 years of hip-hop: Master T on Canada's rap pioneers and continuing legacy*. Amplify. [https://amplify.nmc.ca/50-years-of-hip-hop-master-t-on-canadas-rap-pioneers/#:~:text=Maestro%20Fresh%20Wes%20\(Wesley%20Williams,1991%20in%20the%20newly%20created](https://amplify.nmc.ca/50-years-of-hip-hop-master-t-on-canadas-rap-pioneers/#:~:text=Maestro%20Fresh%20Wes%20(Wesley%20Williams,1991%20in%20the%20newly%20created).
- Memon, A., Taylor, K., Mohebati, L. M., Sundin, J., Cooper, M., Scanlon, T., & de Visser, R. (2016). Perceived barriers to accessing mental health services among black and minority ethnic (BME) communities: a qualitative study in Southeast England. *BMJ Open*, 6(11), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2016-012337>.
- Moore, K. L. (2018). Mental health service engagement among underserved minority adolescents and young adults: A systematic review. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 5(5), 1063–1076. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-017-0455-9>.
- Morgan, M., & Bennett, D. (2011). Hip-hop & the global imprint of a Black cultural form. *Daedalus*, 140(2), 176–196.

- Morin, S. (2018, February 15). The convergence of jazz and hip-hop, from Louis Armstrong to Kendrick Lamar. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/music/read/the-convergence-of-jazz-and-hip-hop-from-louis-armstrong-to-kendrick-lamar-1.5057102>.
- Morris, C. (2008, September). Rezoofficial hit number one on Much Music Rap City. *Alberta Sweetgrass*, 1.
- Murray, J. K., & Knudson, S. (2023). Mental health treatment and access for emerging adults in Canada: a systematic review. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1088999. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1088999>.
- Mwita, K. M. (2022). Strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research in social science studies. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 11(6), 618-625. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i6.1920>.
- Naeem, F., Phiri, P., Rathod, S., & Ayub, M. (2019). Cultural adaptation of cognitive-behavioural therapy. *BJPsych Advances*, 25(6), 387–395. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bja.2019.15>.
- Naughton, J. (2016). The evolution of the internet: From military experiment to general purpose technology. *Journal of Cyber Policy*, 1(1), 5–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619>.
- Navarro, J. (2016). WORD: Hip-hop, language, and Indigeneity in the Americas. *Critical Sociology*, 42(4–5), 567–581. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920515569916>.
- Neal, M. A. (2004). Up from hustling: Power, plantations, and the hip-hop mogul. *Socialism and Democracy*, 18(2), 157–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08854300408428405>.
- Nelson, S. E., & Wilson, K. (2017). The mental health of Indigenous peoples in Canada: A critical review of research. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 176, 93–112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.01.021>.
- NeMoyer, A., Cruz-Gonzalez, M., Alvarez, K., Kessler, R. C., Sampson, N. A., Green, J. G., & Alegría, M. (2022). Reducing racial/ethnic disparities in mental health service use among emerging adults: Community-level supply factors. *Ethnicity & Health*, 27(4), 749–769. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13557858.2020.1814999>.
- Newman, M. (2003). *History of turntablism*. Pedestrian. <https://www.autistici.org/2000-maniac/texts/pedestrian%20history%20of%20turntablism.pdf>.
- Newton, M. (2008, November 28). *Is sampling dead?*. SPIN Magazine. <https://www.spin.com/2008/11/sampling-dying/>.
- Niggaz Wit Attitudes. (1988). Fuck tha police [Song]. On *Straight Outta Compton*. Ruthless Records; Priority Records.

- Notorious B.I.G. (1994). Suicidal thoughts [Song]. On *Ready to Die*. Bad Boy Records; Arista Records.
- Olson-McBride, L., & Page, T. F. (2012). Song to self: Promoting a therapeutic dialogue with high-risk youths through poetry and popular music. *Social Work with Groups*, 35(2), 124–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2011.603117>.
- Opland, C. & Torrico, T. J. (2024). *Psychotherapy and therapeutic relationship* (PMID 39383291). National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK608012/>.
- Ordanini, A., Nunes, J. C., & Nanni, A. (2018). The featuring phenomenon in music: how combining artists of different genres increases a song's popularity. *Marketing Letters*, 29(4), 485–499. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-018-9476-3>.
- Osumare, H. (2015). Keeping it real: Race, class, and youth connections through hip-hop in the U.S. & Brazil. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 37, 6-18. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/humjsocrel.37.6>.
- Outkast. (2003). *Speakerboxxx/The Love Below* [Album]. Arista Records.
- Parks, M. (2009). *Writing on the walls: Graffiti and civic identity* [Master's thesis]. University of Ottawa. uO Research. <https://ruor.uottawa.ca/items/55254239-4af2-417d-96af-ca7cbaec4d9e>.
- Parks, W. (1986). Flyting, sounding, debate: Three verbal contest genres. *Poetics Today*, 7(3), 439–458. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1772505>.
- Parris, A. (2017, March 31). *He's one of Toronto's first great hip hop radio stars — and also one of its last*. CBC Arts. <https://www.cbc.ca/arts/he-s-one-of-toronto-s-first-great-hip-hop-radio-stars-and-also-one-of-its-last-1.4050218>.
- Petchauer, E. (2009). Framing and reviewing hip-hop educational research. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(2), 946–978. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308330967>.
- Pineda, A. (2022, July 22). *Embracing hip-hop music in mental health treatment*. National Alliances on Mental Illness. <https://www.nami.org/mental-health-systems/embracing-hip-hop-music-in-mental-health-treatment/>.
- Popovic, A., & Huecker, M.R. (2023). *Study bias* (PMID 34662027). National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK574513/>.
- Power, T. (2018, August 22). *An oral history of Northern Touch — the most important rap collaboration in Canadian history*. CBC Arts. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/q/wednesday->

- [jan-31-2018-northern-touch-oral-history-alan-frew-and-more-1.4510809/an-oral-history-of-northern-touch-the-most-important-rap-collaboration-in-canadian-history-1.4510825.](#)
- Przybylski, L. (2017). Customs and Duty: Indigenous hip hop and the US–Canada Border. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 33(3), 487–506. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2016.1222880>.
- Public Enemy. (1989). Fight the power [Song]. Motown Record Company.
- Raboteau, A. J. (1996). *A fire in the bones*. Beacon Press.
- Recording Industry Association of America. (2006, July 31). *Diamond awards*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20060818085906/http://www.riaa.com/gp/bestsellers/diamond.asp>.
- Reid, P. (2018, October 25). That time Gnarlz Barkley removed ‘Crazy’ from music stores. *The Music Network*. <https://themusicnetwork.com/gnarls-barkley-removed-their-hit-crazy-from-music-stores/>.
- Rideout, V., Roberts D. F., & Foehr, U. G. (2005). *Generation M: Media in the lives of 8-18 year-olds*. The Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/generation-m-media-in-the-lives-of-8-18-year-olds-report.pdf>.
- Riesch, R.J. (2005). *Hip hop culture: History and trajectory* [Master’s thesis]. Southern Illinois University Carbondale. OpenSIUC. https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1046&context=gs_rp.
- Ro, R. (1996). *Gangsta: Merchandizing the rhymes of violence*. St. Martin’s Press.
- Robinson, C., Seaman, E. L., Montgomery, L., & Winfrey, A. (2018). A review of hip hop-based interventions for health literacy, health behaviors, and mental health. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 5(3), 468–484. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-017-0389-2>.
- Rodwin, A. H., Shimizu, R., Travis, R., Jr, James, K. J., Banya, M., & Munson, M. R. (2022). A systematic review of music-based interventions to improve treatment engagement and mental health outcomes for adolescents and young adults. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 40(4), 537–566. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-022-00893-x>.
- Rose, T. (1994). *Black noise*. Wesleyan University Press.
- Ross, A. (2011). *Listen to this*. Picador.
- Ross, P. T., & Bibler Zaidi, N. L. (2019). Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 8(4), 261–264. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-00530-x>.

- Rovito, A., & Giles, A. R. (2016). Outside looking in: Resisting colonial discourses of aboriginality. *Leisure Sciences*, 38(1), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2015.1057661>.
- Run-DMC & Aerosmith. (1986). Walk this way [Song]. Profile Records; Geffen Records.
- Sabbagh, D. (2008, June 18). *Music sales fall to their lowest level in over twenty years*. The Sunday Times.
https://web.archive.org/web/20110825025812/http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/media/article4160553.ece.
- Sarachik, J. (2016, July 11). *The Jubalaires were doing gospel rap back in the 1940s*. Rapzilla.
<https://rapzilla.com/2016-07-the-jubalaires-were-doing-gospel-rap-back-in-the-1940s/>.
- Scobie, N. (2015). “Jamaican funk - Canadian style”: *Diasporic dialogue and hybridized identity in the music of Michie Mee* [Master’s thesis, Carleton University]. Carleton University Institutional Repository.
<https://repository.library.carleton.ca/concern/etds/1r66j2005>.
- Sconiers, R. D. (2021, July 27). *Mental health and hip-hop: An undeniable super team for healing & wellness*. Mental Health America. <https://www.mhanational.org/blog/mental-health-and-hip-hop-undeniable-super-team-healing-wellness>.
- Setia M. S. (2016). Methodology Series Module 3: Cross-sectional Studies. *Indian journal of dermatology*, 61(3), 261–264. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5154.182410>.
- Shobe, H. (2018). Graffiti as communication and language. In *Handbook of the Changing World Language Map* (pp. 1–18). Springer International Publishing.
- Similly, L. E. (2014). *Make it plain, preacha': African American rhetorical license, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), and a modern rendering of epideictic rhetoric* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Texas at Arlington. MavMatrix.
https://rc.library.uta.edu/uta-ir/bitstream/handle/10106/24781/similly_dissertation.pdf.
- Simpson, L. (2017). *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Snyder, G. J. (2017). Long live the tag: Representing the foundations of graffiti. In K. Avramidis & M. Tsilimpounidi (Eds.), *Graffiti and street art: Reading, writing and representing the city* (pp. 264–273). Routledge.
- Solli, H. P. (2014). Battling illness with wellness: a qualitative case study of a young rapper’s experiences with music therapy. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 24(3), 204–231.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08098131.2014.907334>.

- Sommerstein, D. (2014, January 3). *Hip-hop's aboriginal connection*. National Public Radio. <https://www.npr.org/2014/01/04/259428743/hip-hops-aboriginal-connection>.
- Southern, E. (1997). *The music of Black Americans: A history* (3rd ed.). WW Norton.
- Stapleton, K. R. (1998). From the margins to mainstream: The political power of hip-hop. *Media, Culture & Society*, 20(2), 219-234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016344398020002004>.
- Statistics Canada. (2023). *Insights on Canadian Society: Mental disorders and access to mental health care* (No. 75-006-X). <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00011-eng.pdf?st=6v486LVf>.
- Statistics Canada. (2024). Inequalities in mental health, well-being and wellness in Canada. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/inequalities/report.html#>.
- Statistics Canada. (2025, January 16). *Rising mental health concerns among youth*. Stats Can Plus. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/7642-rising-mental-health-concerns-among-youth>.
- Stovall, D. (2006). We can relate: Hip-hop culture, critical pedagogy, and the secondary classroom. *Urban Education*, 41(6), 585–602. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085906292513>.
- Strode, T., & Wood, T. (2006). *The hip-hop reader*. Pearson.
- Studio Bell. (n.d.). *War Party*. <https://www.studiobell.ca/war-party>.
- Sule, A., & Inkster, B. (2020, December 9). *How hip-hop's progressive narratives are helping to tackle mental health stigma*. BMJ Blogs. <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2020/12/09/raps-battle-with-mental-health-how-hip-hops-progressive-narratives-are-helping-to-tackle-stigma/>.
- Sun, Y., Lu, X., Williams, M., & Thompson, W. F. (2019). Implicit violent imagery processing among fans and non-fans of music with violent themes. *Royal Society Open Science*, 6(3), 181580. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.181580>.
- Telus Storyhive. (2019, September 23). *The Foundation: Indigenous hip hop in Canada* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rl5o3AcfMss>.
- Tenny, S., Brannan, J.M., & Brannan, G.D. (2022). *Qualitative study* (PMID 29262162). National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470395/>.
- The Geto Boys. (1990). *The Geto Boys* [Album]. Def American Recordings; Warner Bros. Records.

- The Jubalaires. (1944a). Noah [Song]. On *Presenting The Jubalaires*. King Records.
- The Jubalaires. (1944b). The Preacher and the Bear [Song]. On *Presenting The Jubalaires*. King Records.
- The Rascalz (featuring Kardinal Offishall, Checkmate, Thrust, & Choclaire). (1998). Northern touch [Song]. Figure IV Entertainment.
- The Rascalz. (1997). *Cash Crop* [Album]. ViK. Recordings; Figure IV Entertainment.
- Thibeault, M. D. (2010). Hip-hop, digital media, and the changing face of music education. *General Music Today*, 24(1), 46–49.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371310379097>.
- Thomas, B. A. (2023, August 11). *How hip-hop was born 50 years ago in a block party in the Bronx*. Smithsonian Magazine. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-the-block-party-became-an-urban-phenomenon-180980560/>.
- Thornicroft, G., Rose, D., & Mehta, N. (2010). Discrimination against people with mental illness: What can psychiatrists do? *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment: The Royal College of Psychiatrists' Journal of Continuing Professional Development*, 16(1), 53–59.
<https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.bp.107.004481>.
- Tillie Allen, N. M. (2005). Exploring Hip-Hop Therapy with high-risk youth. *Praxis*, 5, 30–36.
- Toop, D. (1991). *Rap attack 2: African rap to global hip-hop*. Serpent's Tail.
- Travis, R., & Deepak, A. (2011). Empowerment in context: Lessons from hip-hop culture for social work practice. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 20(3), 203–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2011.594993>.
- Travis, R., Gann, E., Crooke, A. H. D., & Jenkins, S. M. (2019). Hip hop, empowerment, and therapeutic beat-making: Potential solutions for summer learning loss, depression, and anxiety in youth. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 29(6), 744–765.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2019.1607646>.
- Travis, R., Jr. (2013). Rap music and the empowerment of today's youth: Evidence in everyday music listening, music therapy, and commercial rap music. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 30(2), 139–167. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-012-0285-x>.
- Travis, R., Rodwin, A. H., & Allcorn, A. (2018). Hip hop, empowerment, and clinical practice for homeless adults with severe mental illness. *Social Work With Groups*, 42(2), 83–100.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2018.1486776>.
- Tschmuck, P. (2012). *Creativity and innovation in the music industry*. Springer.

- Tyree, J. A. (2023). *Keepin' it weal in "The 514": Hip-Hop as a tool to promote well-being in Montreal's marginalized communities* [Master's thesis]. Concordia University. Spectrum Research Repository. <https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/id/eprint/991833/>.
- Tyson, E. H. (2002). Hip-hop therapy: An exploratory study of a rap music intervention with at-risk and delinquent youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 15(3), 131–144. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1019795911358>.
- Tyson, E. H. (2004). Rap music in social work practice with African-American and Latino youth: A conceptual model with practical applications. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 8(4), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1300/j137v08n04_01.
- Tyson, E. H. (2006). Rap-music Attitude and Perception Scale: A validation study. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 16(2), 211–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731505281447>.
- Vargas , I. M., Cabrera, C. I. G., Cortez, C. A. A., Apaza, I. M. A., & Reátegui, M. D. (2022). The canva platform and meaningful learning in regular basic education. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S7), 643–658. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS7.11213>.
- Vaudreuil, R., Nordstrom, M., DeGraba, T., & Pasquina, P. (2024). The role of technology in music therapy, occupational therapy, and co-treatment of an injured United States service member. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 34(1), 13–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08098131.2024.2397795>.
- Verhoef, M. J., & Casebeer, A. L. (1997). Broadening horizons: Integrating quantitative and qualitative research. *The Canadian Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 8(2), 65–66. <https://doi.org/10.1155/1997/349145>.
- Vieira, R. F., Lima, R. C. de, & Mizubuti, E. S. G. (2019). How to write the discussion section of a scientific article. *Acta Scientiarum Agronomy*, 41(1), 42621. <https://doi.org/10.4025/actasciagron.v41i1.42621>.
- Vukets, C., & Infantry, A. (2011, April 16). *Dead air for Ryerson community station*. https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/dead-air-for-ryerson-community-station/article_417c3a62-e4ed-5ddf-a428-0ad9d64f7694.html.
- Walcott, R. (2003). *Black like who?: Writing Black Canada*. Insomniac Press.
- Walcott, S. (2022, October 14). *The history of hip-hop in Canada*. Black Voice. <https://www.blackvoice.ca/2022/10/14/art-literature-and-entertainment/the-history-of-hip-hop-in-canada/>.
- Waller, E. (2024). Treating trauma: Hip-hop Spoken Word Therapy, mindfulness, and collaborative therapy. *International Journal of Collaborative-Dialogic Practices*, 13(1), 83-91.

- War Party. (2000a). *The Reign* [Album]. Arbor Records Ltd.
- War Party. (2000b). Feeling reserved [Song]. On *The Reign*. Arbor Records Ltd.
- Washington, A. R. (2018). Integrating Hip-Hop culture and rap music into social justice counseling with Black males. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 96(1), 97–105. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12181>.
- Watkins, P., & Caines, R. (2015). Cyphers: Hip-Hop and Improvisation. *Critical Studies in Improvisation*, 10(1), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.21083/csieci.v10i1.3518>.
- Weaver, J. (2023, August 28). *Canadian hip-hop got huge without help. It shouldn't have had to, say artists*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/hip-hop-50-canada-1.6933413>.
- Webber, S. W. (2003). *Turntable technique: The art of the DJ*. Berklee Press.
- Wilson, K. (2017, June 7). *An oral history of hip-hop shows at the Concert Hall*. NOW Toronto. <https://nowtoronto.com/music/an-oral-history-of-hip-hop-shows-at-the-concert-hall/>.
- Winder, P. P. (2020). *Tension in the industry: An analysis of the conflict between recording artists and record labels over the rights to music ownership* [Undergraduate thesis]. University of Texas at Austin. Texas ScholarWorks. <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/items/f1da4171-25be-406f-9147-5c6da67e497a>.
- Withers, J. W., Muzzolon, S. B., & Zonta, M. B. (2019). Influence of adapted hip-hop dancing on quality of life and social participation among children/adolescents with cerebral palsy. *Arquivos de Neuro-Psiquiatria*, 77(10), 712–722. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0004-282X20190124>.
- Young, D. (2006). Ethno-racial minorities and the Juno awards. *Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie*, 31(2), 183-210. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20058696>.

Appendix

THE HIP-HOP AND MENTAL HEALTH HANDBOOK FOR MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

HUNTER VOLK

Honours Bachelor of Arts (Honors), University of Alberta, 2021

A project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of:

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

Faculty of Education
University of Lethbridge
LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA, CANADA

© Hunter Volk, 2025

Dedication

I AM NOT A SELF-MADE MAN.

—ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER IN *TOOLS OF TITANS:
THE TACTICS, ROUTINES, AND HABITS OF BILLIONAIRES, ICONS, AND
WORLD-CLASS PERFORMERS*

I wish to thank everyone at the Edmonton YWCA who helped me in completing my education. Applying what I have studied for a long time was a significant transition, and you made it easier, showed me respect, challenged me, and ensured I was seen as a valuable member of the team. I have found solidarity alongside many people who share a mission for providing those who most need help with the care they deserve. It was a pleasure to learn more about you all. I hope my experiences at the YWCA set the tone for what it will be like to continue in this field.

I also need to thank all my relations who supported me: my friends, my family, and my partner. I worked tremendously hard throughout my education to reach the position I'm currently in; however, I could never have gone as far without all the ways you've supported me. For all your help along the way, I am forever grateful.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Drs. Thelma Gunn and Doug Checkley for their support throughout this project as my supervisor and committee member respectively.

I would also like to thank Lisa Grieve, who edited my project in accordance with the Guidelines for Ethical Editing of Graduate Student Texts set forth by Editors Canada. Lisa provided stylistic and copy editing for multiple chapters and helped format the manuscript.



Abstract

Hip-hop culture is a dynamic, multifaceted movement with profound relevance to mental health practice, particularly for marginalized communities, albeit one that few professionals have experience with. Practitioners can develop more creative, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed approaches by having a stronger understanding of hip-hop culture, establishing its connection to mental health, and identifying how hip-hop can be used to improve mental health. This project articulates a literature review of several critical areas including a brief history of hip-hop culture, the elements of hip-hop, viewing hip-hop through a Canadian lens, the connection between hip-hop and mental health, and applying hip-hop to mental health practices. This project is informed by the research found in the project and translates the findings into an accessible, interdisciplinary guide for mental health professionals seeking to better understand hip-hop culture and incorporate it into their practice. By increasing visibility and accessibility in understanding the relationship between hip-hop culture and mental health, these two resources aim to improve professionals' engagement with hip-hop as a therapeutic tool in working with diverse client populations where it is relevant.

Keywords: Hip-Hop, Mental Health, Counselling, Therapy, Culture, History, Handbook, Canada

About the Manual

Through expression we can find a path to heal.
This handbook is your guide for clients who connect with hip-hop.

Overview

- This handbook was designed using Canva, an online graphic design platform, for its intuitive use, cost-effectiveness, and collaborative features.
 - Research indicates that Canva enhances educational outcomes (Jamaludin & Sedek, 2023; Vargas et al., 2022).
- The handbook prioritizes accessibility and aesthetic appeal while maintaining academic integrity.

Handbook Format

- This handbook contains 3 chapters and a bibliography containing references formatted in APA 7th edition style.
- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the project.
- Chapter 2 defines hip-hop's core elements and outlines its historical development. Then, this chapter explores the relationship between hip-hop and mental health, including how hip-hop can be used to improve mental health.
- Chapter 3 discusses the project's findings, identifies its strengths and weaknesses, provides direction for future research, and offers a brief conclusion.

Method

- This handbook is grounded in an extensive, evidence-based, and peer-reviewed literature review.
- Findings from the literature review were compiled into this structured handbook. This handbook serves as a concise reference for mental health practitioners on using hip-hop in mental health applications.

Table of Contents



DEDICATION – [PAGE 2](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – [PAGE 2](#)

ABSTRACT – [PAGE 3](#)

ABOUT THE MANUAL – [PAGE 4](#)

- **OVERVIEW** – [PAGE 4](#)
- **HANDBOOK FORMAT** – [PAGE 4](#)
- **METHOD** – [PAGE 4](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS – [PAGE 5](#)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION – [PAGE 8](#)

- **THE IMPORTANCE OF HIP-HOP'S HISTORY IN MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE** – [PAGE 9](#)
- **RATIONALE FOR UNDERSTANDING HIP-HOP HISTORY AS A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS** – [PAGE 9](#)
- **PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE** – [PAGE 10](#)
- **AUDIENCE CONSIDERATIONS** – [PAGE 11](#)

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW – PAGE 12

- LITERATURE REVIEW INTRO – PAGE 13
- BEGINNINGS OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 13
- HIP-HOP'S ROOTS REFLECT A COALESCENCE OF DIVERSE INFLUENCES – PAGE 14
- HIP-HOP'S GENESIS IS DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE REALITIES ARTISTS FACE – PAGE 14
- THE CORE ELEMENTS OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 15
- LYRICISM – PAGE 16
- MUSIC – PAGE 16
- DANCE – PAGE 17
- ART – PAGE 17
- ADITONAL ELEMENTS – PAGE 18
- BRIEF HISTORY OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 19
- EARLY HIP-HOP – PAGE 19
- GOLDEN ERA OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 20
- GLOBALIZATION OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 21
- GLOBALIZATION CHALLENGES IDEAS OF A BYGONE GOLDEN AGE – PAGE 23
- MODERN HIP-HOP – PAGE 24
- CANADIAN HIP-HOP: A DEMONSTRATION OF THE GLOBALIZATION OF HIP-HOP – PAGE 24
- ESTABLISHING CANADIAN HIP-HOP – PAGE 25
- CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO ESTABLISHING CANADIAN HIP-HOP – PAGE 26
- TAKEAWAYS FROM FAILING TO ESTABLISHING CANADIAN HIP-HOP – PAGE 27
- CONCURRENT RISE OF INDIGENOUS CANADIAN HIP-HOP – PAGE 28
- INTERCULTURAL PARALLELS WITH INDIGENOUS CANADIAN HIP-HOP – PAGE 29
- A BRIEF SUMMARY OF HIP-HOP'S HISTORY – PAGE 30
- WHY UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF HIP-HOP IS IMPORTANT FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS – PAGE 31
- BASIS FOR USING HIP-HOP TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH – PAGE 32
- APPLICATIONS OF HIP-HOP IN COUNSELLING – PAGE 33
- USING HIP-HOP IN THERAPEUTIC APPLICATIONS – PAGE 34
- HIP-HOP COUNSELLING APPROACHES – PAGE 35
- USING HOP-HIP TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC COUNSELLING CONCERNS – PAGE 36
- RAPPORT BUILDING OR ESTABLISHING THE THERAPEUTIC ALLIANCE – PAGE 36
- IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION – PAGE 37
- SELF-IMPROVEMENT – PAGE 37
- OTHER WAYS HIP-HOP IS USED TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC CONCERNS – PAGE 38
- PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING HIP-HOP IN COUNSELLING – PAGE 39

Table of Contents

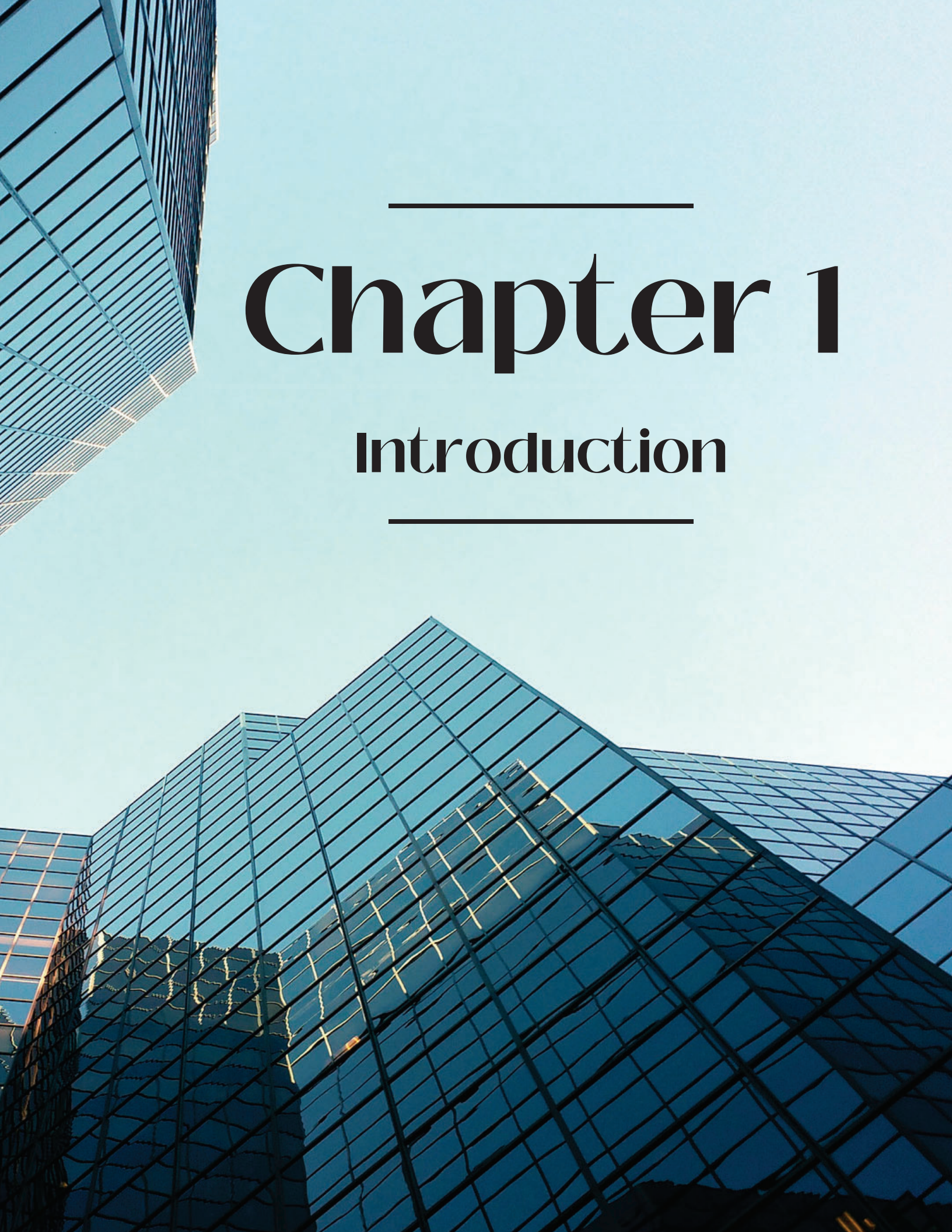


CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS – PAGE 40

- DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS INTRO – PAGE 41
- SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS – PAGE 42
- INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS – PAGE 42
- STRENGTHS – PAGE 43
- LIMITATIONS – PAGE 44
- FUTURE DIRECTIONS – PAGE 45

CONCLUSIONS – PAGE 46

REFERENCES – PAGE 47

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several modern skyscrapers with glass facades. The buildings are arranged in a way that creates a sense of height and depth, with lines converging towards the top of the frame. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The text 'Chapter 1' is centered in the upper half of the image, and 'Introduction' is centered below it. Both text elements are flanked by horizontal lines.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Importance of Hip-Hop's History in Mental Health Professional Practice

- Hip-hop is a global, evolving, and multifaceted culture that influences personal style, political expression, customs, and identity (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005).
- It reflects life factors such as cultural, ethnic, social, economic, political, and geographic experiences while emphasizing resilience, creativity, and self-expression (Chang, 2009; Diawara, 1998; Fernando, 1995; Henderson, 1996; Leach, 2008; McCollum, 2019; Rose, 1994; Stapleton, 1998).

Rationale for Understanding Hip-Hop History as a Mental Health Professionals

- Understanding hip-hop culture:
 - Fosters authentic connections with clients who relate to it.
 - Builds rapport, trust, and connection to clients' lived experiences.
 - Helps professionals recognize historical and systemic factors impacting clients' mental health.
- Using hip-hop in mental health contexts can:
 - Promote culturally relevant and trauma-informed interventions.
 - Encourage clients to process experiences within broader societal contexts and harness their background for strengths-based healing.
 - Support key factors in mental health such as resilience, pride, belonging, and empowerment.
- Integrating hip-hop into mental health aligns with evidence-based care (Corey, 2020; Dozois, 2014):
 - Culturally safe practices.
 - Feminist perspectives in counselling.
 - Developing strong therapeutic relationships.
 - Providing empirically supported treatments.
 - Engaging in progress monitoring.



Project Significance

- This project consists of a manuscript and handbook that mental health practitioners, such as counsellors, therapists, psychologists, social workers, and others can use if they are interested in integrating hip-hop into their professional work.
- This project is significant in several ways:
 - Deconstructs stigma around hip-hop and instead show the potential for using hip-hop in mental health for certain populations.
 - Synthesizes research and explores strategies around how hip-hop can help clients with their concerns.
 - Presents accessible, evidence-based information on how practitioners can include hip-hop into their work, offering unique ways to foster client engagement, build rapport, and promote empowerment.
 - Reduces the burden of independent study for professionals and presents hip-hop as a valuable therapeutic tool.



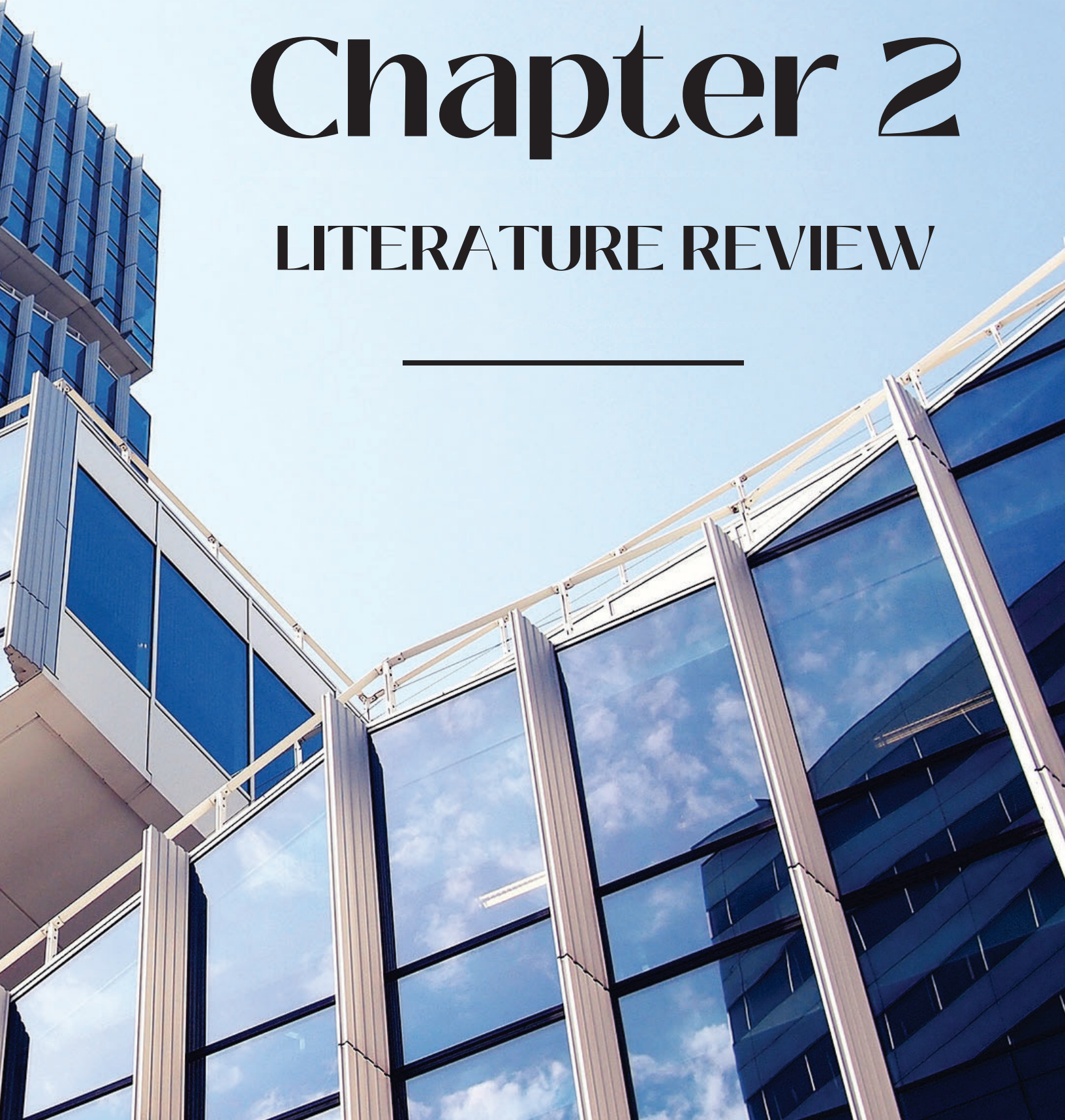
Audience Considerations

- **Accessibility:** This handbook is designed to be shared onto other mediums beyond its initial university repository. This removes barriers to ensure freer use of this content by mental health professionals.
- **Formatted for Readability:** This handbook uses clear language, follows a logical, familiar structure for its professional audiences, and encourages those interested in learning more to explore the accompanying manuscript and references.
- **Openness to Continuous Refinement:** This entire project welcomes refinements based on updated research, alongside feedback from professionals and enthusiasts of diverse backgrounds.
- **Representing Potential to Professionals:** While few professionals currently use hip-hop in their mental health work, knowledge of its implementation is attainable for practitioners and potentially beneficial across a wide range of clients and concerns.



Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW



Literature Review Intro

- This handbook contains the following:
 - Exploring the history of hip-hop from its origins to the present.
 - Focusing on hip-hop in the Canadian context.
 - Connecting hip-hop to mental health.
 - Demonstrating hip-hop's potential for improving mental health.
 - Identifying the exactly how hip-hop is used by mental health professionals and for what purposes.

Beginnings of Hip-Hop

- Hip-hop originated as a sociocultural phenomenon in the Bronx during the 1970s.
- It offered African American and Hispanic youth ways to creatively express their political, economic, cultural, historical, and social realities (Alridge & Steward, 2005; Crossley, 2005; Henderson, 1996; Leach, 2008; McCollum, 2019)
- Hip-hop has evolved beyond this original form to become highly influential in personal styles, political perspectives, customs, attitudes, and geography (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005).

Hip-hop's roots reflect a coalescence of diverse influences

- African griots and European bards or minstrels contributed storytelling with musical elements to hip-hop (Bebey, 1999).
- Historical poetic jousting resembles hip-hop's lyrical competition. *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie* is an example of this that dates back to the 1500s (Dunbar, 1979; Parks, 1986).
- Blues reflects both jazz's and hip-hop's themes of struggle and moody atmosphere (Southern, 1997).
- Gospel traditions add elements such as preaching interplay, rhetoric, syncopated lyricism, and self-expression within a society that is hostile toward aspects of one's identity (Raboteau, 1996; Similly, 2014).
- Jazz significantly contributed to hip-hop's sonic and lyrical evolution through its improvisational nature and being a longstanding source for samples. Many artists in both hip-hop and jazz acknowledge the bidirectional influences of each culture on the other (Lewis, 2016).

Hip-hop's genesis is deeply rooted in the realities artists face

- Hip-hop reflects the overlapping forces that shape peoples' lives.
- Hip-hop both embraces modernity and adapts historical materials to create its current forms.
- Hip-hop's interactions with other cultures has led to bidirectional influences.
- Because of hip-hop's high adaptability, flexibility, and cultural compatibility, it has evolved from a localized force to a global one.
- Although parts of hip-hop culture may not be new, the sum of its parts has become more powerful and meaningful than them individually.

Core Elements of Hip-Hop

- Exploring hip-hop's history identifies many key figures alongside the core elements of hip-hop such as DJ Kool Herc and Grand Wizzard Theodore (Chang, 2009; Thomas, 2023; Toop, 1991).
- Research recognizes several elements of hip-hop culture (Alridge & Stewart, 2005; Gulbay, 2021; Leach, 2008; McCollum, 2019; Riesch, 2005; Rose, 1994; Stovall, 2006):
 - Lyricism (emceeing/MCing).
 - Music (DJing, production).
 - Dance.
 - Art (graffiti).
 - On top of other emerging elements: knowledge, entrepreneurship, and language.
- Elements are often interconnected, engaged with simultaneously, and uniquely contribute to hip-hop's dynamic identity.
- Understanding hip-hop's elements is crucial for recognizing its artistic depth and appreciating how hip-hop has evolved to become a global phenomenon.



Lyricism

- Refers to techniques involving language and encompasses MCing and rapping. These terms are not interchangeable.
 - Virtually every MC raps, but not every rapper MCs (Diallo, 2022).
 - MCing involves broader crowdwork skills (Cobb, 2007).
 - Rapping focuses on delivering lyrical content with accompanying music (Keyes, 2002).

Music

- Difficult to define, but broadly refers to the colloquial, non-linguistic arrangements of sound, often with lyrics (Croom, 2012).
- This term often encompasses DJing/turntablism and music production:
 - DJing/turntablism manipulates sounds using equipment to create music. Turntablism emphasizes analogue music creation via scratching, mixing, and beat juggling (Baldry, 2016; Hansen, 2000; Newman, 2003; Webber, 2003). DJing performs these music creation techniques more electronically (Ross, 2011).
 - Music production is characterized by its higher order responsibilities such as sampling, recording, and mixing for music artists.
- Producers may also be musicians but mainly work in studios.

Dance

- Refers to various dance styles performed alongside hip-hop music.
- Breakdancing is a key style from early hip-hop history but there are many other types, such as funk dances (Chang, 2005).
 - Breakdancing features acrobatics, footwork, spins, and freezes.
 - Evolved from toprock (upright dancing), which is similar to uprock (simulates partnered physical battling).
- Dance is often sidelined when learning about hip-hop's elements, but actually has a rich history (Johnson, 2015).

Art

- Commonly refers to graffiti, which are unauthorized visual depictions put onto a surface (Shobe, 2018).
 - Graffiti has origins dating back millennia, but modern interpretations originate in the late 1960s/early 1970s (McDonald, 2013).
- Graffiti serves as a method of social, political, cultural, artistic, and self-oriented expression and marking territory (Hughes, 2009; Li & Liu, 2023).
- Graffiti styles:
 - Tags: simple initials/logos (Berio & Laymarie, 2015; Snyder, 2017)
 - Throw ups: bubble letter writings (Parks, 2009)
 - Pieces: large and detailed works (Gottlieb, 2014)
 - Wildstyles: abstract and visually complex works (Gottlieb, 2014; Lovata & Olton, 2016).

Additional Elements

- Some sources identify lyricism, music, dance, and art as the four basic elements (Gulbay, 2021; Petchauer, 2009).
- Knowledge is commonly recognized as the fifth element, introduced by Afrika Bambaataa (Chang, 2005; Chetty et al., 2024).
 - Knowledge refers to understanding hip-hop culture and oneself (Gosa, 2015). It connects all elements, informs one's worldview, facilitates participation, and fosters agency and reflection.
- Entrepreneurialism is another element, defined by garnering metrics of success (e.g., money, popularity, and opportunities).
 - Some see this as creating a paradox, while others view it as an act of political resistance (Neal, 2004).
- Another possible element is language.
 - Language signals group membership through the comprehension of colloquial communication (Cotgrove, 2018; Hidayat & Moehkardi, 2018; Navarro, 2016).



Brief History of Hip-Hop

- Throughout time, hip-hop culture is dynamic, consistently challenging, expanding, and redefining itself in response to ever-evolving contexts.
- Early hip-hop emerged as a creative, expressive response to systemic disenfranchisement from U.S. society.
 - Eventually, music institutions capitalized on its popularity and it became more commercialized.
- The supposed Golden Era of hip-hop saw rapid, varied growth across elements of its culture and balanced authenticity with commodification.
- The globalization of hip-hop meant the culture became a vehicle for nuanced expression across diverse societies.
- Modern hip-hop continues to evolve the culture, creating new challenges but also new pathways to achieve success.

Early Hip-Hop

- Hip-hop exploded in popularity beyond the Bronx in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to both internal and external factors:
 - Internally, collectives formed to redirect youth from illicit activities to artistic expression in response to hardship, discrimination, and disenfranchisement (Chang, 2009; Diawara, 1998; Fernando, 1995; Rose, 1994; Stapleton, 1998).
 - Famous example: Afrika Bambaataa's Universal Zulu Nation.
 - Externally, music businesses recognized that hip-hop culture was connected to untapped markets available to commercialize.
 - Figures like Russell Simmons and Rick Rubin were important in bringing hip-hop to the mainstream through collaborations with artists like LL Cool J, the Beastie Boys, and Run-DMC (Riesch, 2005).
 - Successful genre blending with hip-hop demonstrated the malleability of hip-hop in appealing to broader audiences.
- The commercial success of hip-hop music enabled the expression of sociopolitical consciousness and personal stories found in hip-hop culture through multiple mediums like television, art, and dance (Rose, 1994).

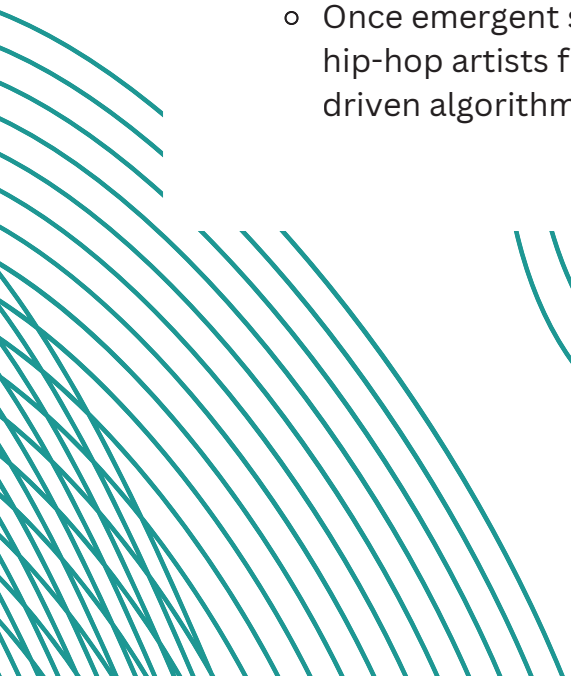
Golden Era of Hip-Hop

- The late 1980s to early 1990s is recognized as hip-hop's Golden Era (Alridge & Stewart, 2005; Duinker & Martin, 2017).
- Hip-hop underwent major shifts across lyricism, music, art, language, and fashion (Duinker & Martin, 2017).
 - Examples of changes reflecting this shift: greater sampling issues, more genre blending, and increases in loudness and profanity.
- This era is marked by the rise of gangsta rap, a rap subgenre criticized for glorifying violence, gangs, and bigotry (Hill, 2009; Riesch, 2005; Ro, 1996).
- In contrast, conscious hip-hop focused on social, ethnocultural, and political introspection and messaging, similar to early hip-hop.
 - Gangsta rap's popularity overshadowed conscious rap's messaging.
- Commercialization and controversy became further intertwined.
 - Corporations capitalized on previously underrecognized hip-hop markets and profited from groups who were far removed from experiences of oppression, poverty, and gang violence (Kitwana, 2005; Strode & Wood, 2006).
 - Controversies were partly driven by a morbid curiosity about unfamiliar lifestyles, but largely through media discourse surrounding landmark cultural events such as the Rodney King verdict, 1992 Los Angeles Riots, and murders of Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls (Hall et al., 2023; Kleinberg & McFarlane, 2020; Riesch, 2005).
- Hip-hop rapidly grew in popularity to have a global presence.



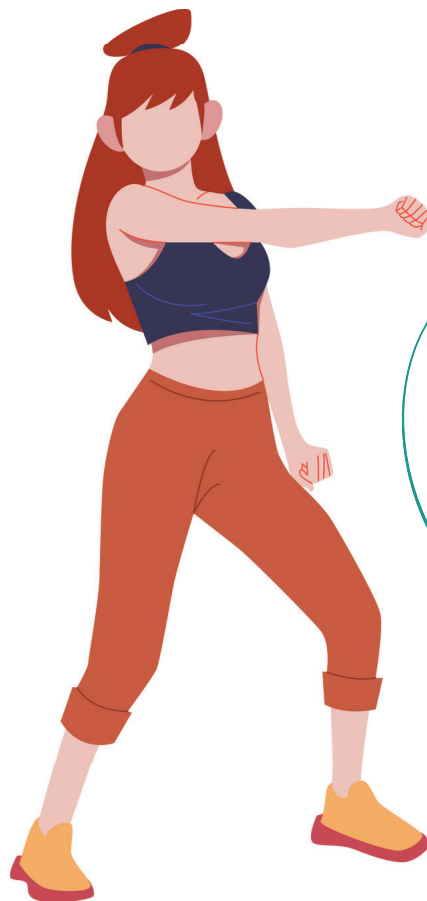


Globalization of Hip-Hop

- The late 1990s to 2000s marked the globalization of hip-hop, while it also became even more mainstream and successful in the U.S.
 - Hip-hop became diversified in the U.S.:
 - Regional styles emerged that represented new audiences available to commercialize (e.g., Southern crunk and Midwestern drill).
 - Alternative hip-hop gained recognition thanks to declining interest in gangsta rap, more record label options, and finding commercial success with early artists like Outkast and Gnarls Barkley.
 - Inter-genre diversification proved to be successful despite distances between the collaborating genres (Ordanini et al., 2018).
 - Hip-hop was embraced and reinterpreted worldwide, becoming infused with local identity and expression.
 - For example, Brazilian hip-hop strongly focuses on racial and economic issues in Afro-Brazilian communities (Gates, 2011; Osumare, 2015).
 - Hip-hop's global evolution often mirrored the U.S.'s trajectory:
 - Hip-hop begins as a creative outlet of expression for disenfranchised groups, then eventually becomes commercialized and mainstream.
 - Technology became increasingly paramount to artists' success by transforming monetization, advertising, audience engagement, and accessibility (McLeod, 2005; Naughton, 2016; Thibeault, 2010).
 - Once emergent social media and video platforms now dominate how hip-hop artists find success, especially with innovations like data-driven algorithms for audiences (Figueiredo & Bolaño, 2017).
- 
- 

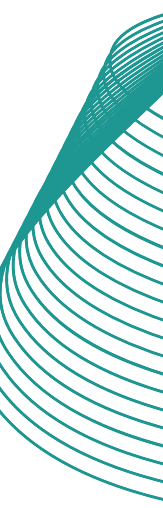
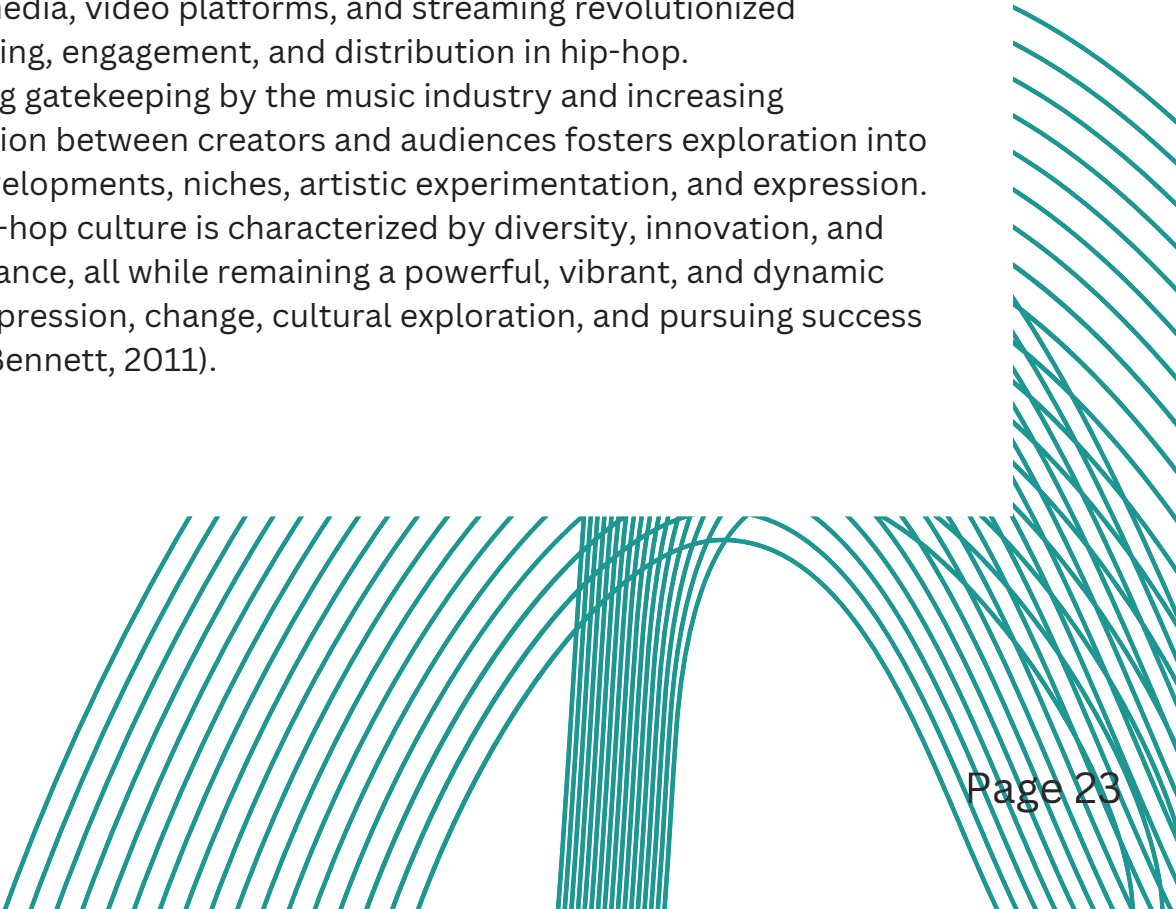
Globalization Challenges Ideas of a Bygone Golden Age

- The idea that the Golden Age of hip-hop is over is contested.
 - Viewing hip-hop's history as solely U.S.-centric overlooks unique developments across the globe.
 - While U.S. hip-hop culture had supportive infrastructure and a large presence in music, other countries around the same time were developing these systems and overcoming analogous barriers.
 - For example, during the U.S.' Golden Age, Canadian hip-hop culture lacked institutional support and faced heavy public opposition.
 - Many qualities of the Golden Age of hip-hop like creativity, global proliferation, technological advancement, and complexity have continued, or become even more present (Duinker & Martin, 2017).
- In the midst of a Golden Age or not, hip-hop culture's globalization and diversification reflects its rise to becoming a significant force in artistic innovation and expressing disenfranchisement across the world.





Modern Hip-Hop

- 
- Hip-hop culture continues to evolve, yet remains as a creative outlet for expressing the realities of marginalized groups.
 - The 2000s saw a significant decline in hip-hop's overall popularity, albeit being part of a larger trend across music (Coates, 2007; Sabbagh, 2008).
 - Despite this, hip-hop stayed the most popular genre amongst youth (Rideout et al., 2005).
 - Several factors influenced hip-hop's popularity:
 - Increased sampling costs (Newton, 2008).
 - Changes to music consumption and sharing.
 - Internet platforms democratizing music distribution and access.
 - This final factor created new opportunities for artists.
 - For example, free digital releases of music contributed to the success of artists like Kid Cudi and Drake.
 - The present state of hip-hop allows greater flexibility in how artists, especially those outside the mainstream, can achieve success.
 - Social media, video platforms, and streaming revolutionized advertising, engagement, and distribution in hip-hop.
 - Reducing gatekeeping by the music industry and increasing connection between creators and audiences fosters exploration into new developments, niches, artistic experimentation, and expression.
 - Modern hip-hop culture is characterized by diversity, innovation, and social relevance, all while remaining a powerful, vibrant, and dynamic force for expression, change, cultural exploration, and pursuing success (Morgan & Bennett, 2011).
- 

Canadian Hip-Hop: A Demonstration of the Globalization of Hip-Hop

- Canadian hip-hop is important for understanding the global diffusion of hip-hop culture as distinct from U.S. expressions.
 - In the 1980s-1990s, while U.S. hip-hop culture had commercial, social, cultural, and institutional support, Canadian artists lacked this (D'Amico, 2015; Young, 2006).
 - These differences can be attributed to when countries started developing their hip-hop culture. They may also be shrinking because of drivers of globalization such as greater access to technology.
 - Canada is now a major player in the worldwide hip-hop scene.
- Canadian hip-hop highlights its impressionability to reflect a region's unique characteristics.
 - Canadian artists like the Weeknd, Snotty Nose Rez Kids, Sidhu Moose Wala, and Nekfeu reflect the diversity of hip-hop elements and the backgrounds of those living in the country (Barker, 2018).



Establishing Canadian Hip-Hop

- Some of the greatest challenges for Canadian hip-hop culture were in establishing infrastructure to support artists.
 - In the early 1990s, U.S. hip-hop culture was easily accessible in the Great Lakes region and Greater Toronto Area. Canadian cities lacked locally produced and aired hip-hop content.
 - Early support manifested as DJ Ron Nelson's *The Fantastic Voyage* on CKLN-FM (1983-1991), the first Canadian radio show dedicated to hip-hop (Anderson, 2017; Infantry, 2011).
 - This show featured now important Canadian artists like Maestro Fresh Wes, Michie Mee, and the Dream Warriors, and connected Canadian audiences with U.S. hip-hop acts (Anderson, 2017; Campbell, 2014; Parris, 2017; Vukets & Infantry, 2011; Wilson, 2017).
 - *The Fantastic Voyage* trailblazed programming for other hip-hop radio stations, such as CiTR-FM in British Columbia (Scobie, 2015).
- Brandeis Denham Jolly advocated for a Black Canadian-owned radio station focused on hip-hop, reggae, and R&B.
 - After backlash from his rejected applications, CFXJ emerged in 2001, becoming an important platform for Canadian hip-hop, R&B, and reggae (Goddard, 1997; Weaver, 2023; “When the CRTC denied”, 2020).
- Canadian hip-hop artists lacked commitment from and space in the symbiotic relationship between record labels and media (Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Tschmuck, 2012).
 - Labels create content and media strategically promotes said content, driving the commercialization of music.

Consequences of Failing to Establishing Canadian Hip-Hop

- Disconnectedness between success and institutional recognition meant artists struggled breaking into international markets, thus compelling them to sign with U.S. labels (D'Amico, 2015; McKinnon, 2005).
- The Juno Awards controversy represents how insufficient support made artists invisible, and commercial success did not guarantee attention.
 - The Rascalz won the 1998 Rap Recording of the Year award for their album *Cash Crop*. However, their award was presented offstage and untelevised (CBC Music, 2018; D'Amico, 2015; "Inside the Junos", 2018; Walcott, 2022). The Rascalz refused the award, revealing issues between Canadian hip-hop artists and institutions.
 - This occurred within a highly racialized context (Caudeiron & Bowman, 2014; Goddard, 1997; "When the CRTC denied", 2020; Young, 2006).
 - The Rascalz used their platform to address institutional neglect and highlight the lack of Black music representation at the Junos (CBC Music, 2018; Flynn, 1998; LeBlanc, 1998).
- During the aftermath, the Rascalz's 1998 single "Northern Touch" was Canada's first top 100 hip-hop hit since 1991 and even played on Black Entertainment Television (McPherson, 2023; Power, 2018).
 - "Northern Touch's" success was instrumental in legitimizing Canadian hip-hop and sparking change within music institutions (Chidley-Hill, 2013; Krewen, 1999; Young, 2006).

Takeaways from Failing to Establishing Canadian Hip-Hop

- Hip-hop artists' success highlights a disconnect between Canadian and U.S. hip-hop narratives.
 - Canadian media tends to view the experiences of racialized communities as approximate to those in the U.S., whereas the reverse is not seen as true (Boutros, 2020; Byers, 2012; D'Amico, 2015; Walcott, 2003).
 - Pervasive stereotypes of idyllic social harmony may detract from the veracity of Canadian hip-hop narratives.
 - This may contribute to U.S. audiences failing to find these narratives relatable, thus impeding the commercial success and intercultural recognition of Canadian hip-hop (Krewen, 1999).
 - Examining these gaps helps scholars understand how inequities and divergent narratives hinder the international growth and appeal of Canadian hip-hop.
- Overall, this brief history underscores a need to reform the institutional support and media representation Canadian hip-hop culture receives.



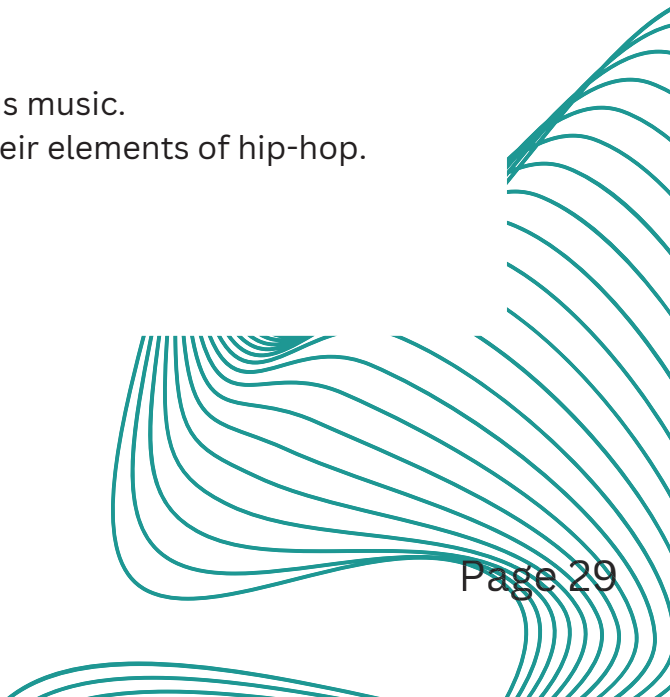
Concurrent Rise of Indigenous Canadian Hip-Hop

- Canada is unique in having a prominent and diverse hip-hop culture that includes Indigenous peoples, although it is not well documented in formal, academic contexts (“From Michie Mee to War Party”, 2018).
 - There is some overlap in the challenges, experiences, and themes present in Black and Indigenous Canadian hip-hop.
 - This reinforces hip-hop as being a cultural force that empowers youth to resist dominant power structures.
- Indigenous artists often use innovative methods to challenge hip-hop monoculture and associated stigmas.
- Canadian hip-hop began gaining popularity in the 1990s and 2000s with artists like War Party (later Team Rezofficial), TRU REZ CREW, and 7th Generation (Caudeiron & Bowman, 2014; Harmsen, 2023).
 - War Party achieved recognition with their breakthrough album *The Reign* and track Feeling Reserved.
 - Their creations won Rap Album of the Year and Best Music Video at the Indigenous Music Awards and made them the first Indigenous band to have a music video on MuchMusic (“From Michie Mee to War Party”, 2018; Studio Bell, n.d.).
 - War Party achieved international success (Care Artists for Reconciliation, n.d.).





Intercultural Parallels with Indigenous Canadian Hip-Hop

- 
- Indigenous hip-hop in Canada has grown significantly in popularity partially due to increased media coverage and institutional support (Conner, 2013; Cyr, 2005; Gorlewski & Porfilio, 2013; “Hip station plays aboriginal tunes”, 2009; Morris, 2008; Sommerstein, 2014; Rovito & Giles, 2016)
 - Indigenous hip-hop benefits from technology, especially the internet and social media, to help artists bypass barriers and communicate with global audiences (Hutchings & Rodger, 2018; Simpson, 2017).
 - This facilitates success and intercultural dialogue, significantly broadening the reach of Indigenous hip-hop cultural expression.
 - Indigenous Canadian hip-hop culture emerged as a movement focused on a decolonizing praxis (Cervantes & Saldaña, 2015; Simpson, 2017).
 - This means working to dismantle power systems and address the effects of colonialism through cultural expression and resistance.
 - Indigenous artists use hip-hop culture to reclaim their identity and contest dominant cultural representations through communicating experiences of marginalization, disenfranchisement, and resilience, among other decolonization-focused themes.
 - This facilitates identity affirmation, cultural resurgence, and resistance against colonial erasure.
 - Similarities between Black and Indigenous creators in their elements of hip-hop (Amsterdam, 2013; Fox, 2011; Harmsen, 2023; Przybylski, 2018; Telus Storyhive, 2019):
 - Using a decolonial praxis.
 - Roles in hip-hop and traditional Indigenous music.
 - Addressing similar themes in deploying their elements of hip-hop.
- 

A Brief Summary of Hip-Hop's History

- Early hip-hop was a form of resistance and expression for marginalized U.S. communities.
- The Golden Era saw diversification and evolution.
- Globalization shows hip-hop's adaptability for addressing local issues, including trauma and healing.
- Contemporary hip-hop uses technology to democratize access and expression.
- Understanding this history of hip-hop is crucial for understanding its connection to and potential for mental health.



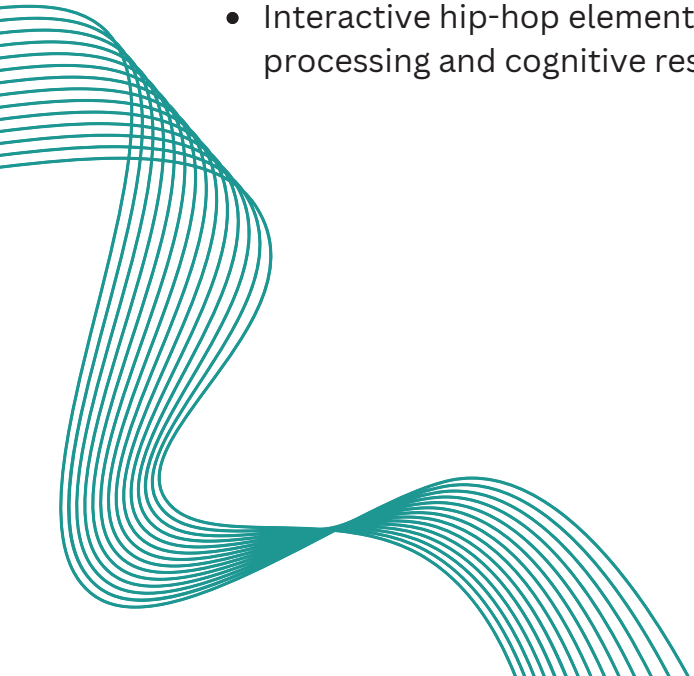
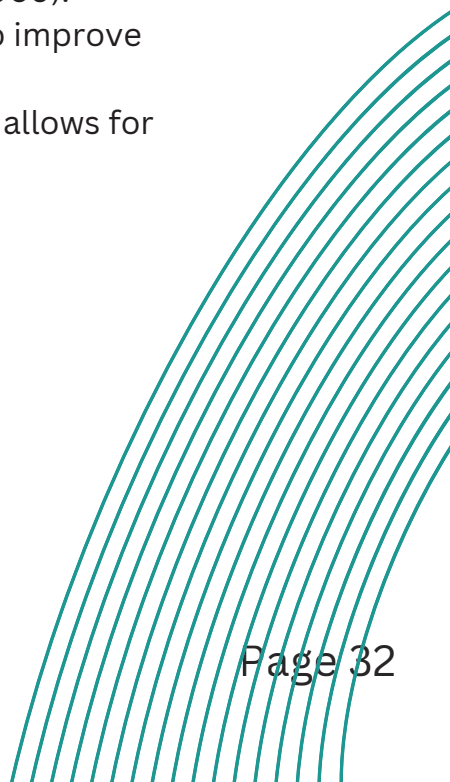


Why Understanding the History of Hip-Hop is Important for Mental Health Professionals

- Understanding the history of hip-hop helps challenge and dismantle stigma associated with the culture (Sconiers, 2021; Sule & Inkster, 2020).
 - Stigma can deter individuals from seeking necessary mental health support (Lamb et al., 2012; Memon et al., 2016).
 - Hip-hop has been a longstanding outlet for marginalized groups to express societal struggles, trauma, and mental health challenges for decades (Rose, 1994).
 - Ignoring this discounts its significance.
 - Understanding hip-hop's history can improve client treatment outcomes (Thornicroft et al., 2010).
 - Understanding it promotes a more culturally sensitive understanding of the present context amongst people who identify with hip-hop culture alongside greater intersectionality, preventing treatment derailment (Pineda, 2022).
 - Hip-hop can be particularly useful because not all communities connect with conventional, Western therapies.
 - Many communities have also been excluded from mental health considerations.
 - Understanding hip-hop's history fosters emotional connection, helps express personal struggles, and creates communities that offer solidarity, understanding, and shared identity.
- 



Basis for Using Hip-Hop to Improve Mental Health

- Mental health is a recurring theme in hip-hop, challenging stereotypes of the genre as solely about controversial content (Emdin, 2010).
 - Hip-hop lyrics have seen increased focus on mental health from 1998 onward (Hart, 2019; Kresovich et al., 2021).
 - This coincides with reduced societal stigma around mental health discussions.
 - Increased openness about mental health aligns with movements to improve engagement in diverse communities with reduced access to mental health services (Alvarez et al., 2022; Knaak et al., 2017; Levy et al., 2017; Moore, 2018; NeMoyer et al., 2022).
 - Mental health treatments are influenced by personal factors like ethnicity and culturally adjusting therapy while still preserving its core principles to improve outcomes (Huey et al., 2023; Naeem et al., 2019).
 - Therapeutic approaches often fail to account for the realities of those in disenfranchised communities, thereby further alienating those needing care (Huey et al., 2023).
 - Hip-hop is an inclusive and relational way to conduct therapy which is especially important for disenfranchised youth (Cobbett, 2009).
 - Several other authors' conclusions support using hip-hop to improve mental health (Jay, 2024; Rodwin et al., 2022).
 - Interactive hip-hop elements (music creation, lyrics, dance) allows for processing and cognitive restructuring.
- 
- 

Applications of Hip-Hop in Counselling

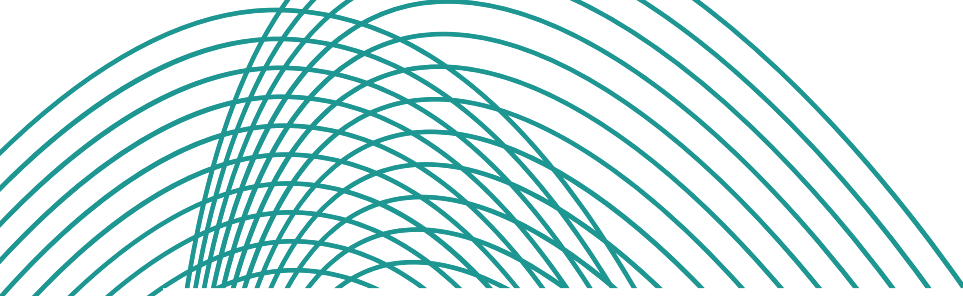
- Understanding hip-hop's history can help clients who benefit from its inclusion in the healing process.
 - This knowledge fosters understanding, rapport, and trust with practitioners regarding clients' personal experiences.
 - This facilitates a better understanding of the historical and contextual factors contributing to clients' mental health struggles, which informs more culturally relevant and trauma-informed interventions.
- Research indicates the benefits of culturally adapted treatments in mental health compared to untailored ones (Chowdhary et al., 2014; Marsiglia & Booth, 2015).
 - Clients can draw upon their background and experiences to develop strengths-focused approaches that positively impact mental health through resilience, pride, belonging, and empowerment (Dickey & Blakey, 2023).
- Integrating hip-hop into mental health aligns with evidence-based care practices (Corey, 2020; Dozois, 2014).





Using Hip-Hop in Therapeutic Applications

- Despite controversy, evidence supports hip-hop's therapeutic use (Hall et al., 2023; Riesch, 2005; Ro, 1996).
 - Researchers confirm an increase to hip-hop lyrical content focusing on mental health from 1998 onward, which coincides with reduced societal stigma around mental health (Hart, 2019; Kresovich et al., 2021).
 - The liberation of mental health discourse is timely with relevant research:
 - Racialized Canadians have worse interactions with mental health care systems due to discrimination, lack of culturally competent care, and stigma, resulting in them accessing mental health care less (Boksa et al., 2015; Chiu et al., 2018; Gajaria et al., 2021; Nelson & Wilson, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2023).
 - Canadian youth have worsened mental health in recent years (Kourgiantakis et al., 2023; Statistics Canada, 2025).
 - This is linked to barriers in obtaining mental health support and identity factors, such as indigeneity and socioeconomic status (Murray & Knudson, 2023; Statistics Canada, 2024).
 - Those engaged in hip-hop culture often reflect the demographics that face barriers to mental health support (Levy et al., 2017).
 - Incorporating hip-hop into mental health care can provide relevant assistance for groups who resonate with it (Cobbett, 2009).
 - Research against using hip-hop in mental health cites methodological concerns and finding mixed or inconclusive results (Robinson et al., 2018).
- 



Hip-Hop Counselling Approaches

- Counselling that integrates hip-hop enhances mental health for some populations (Rodwin et al., 2022).
- Hip Hop Therapy (HHT) integrates hip-hop elements into evidence-based treatment modalities (Hall, 2020; Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tillie Allen, 2005; Tyson, 2002, 2006).
 - HHT also incorporates culturally informed practice, strengths-based perspectives, empowerment, and addresses barriers to self-actualization (Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tyson, 2004).
- Hip Hop Spoken Word Therapy (HHSWT) combines cognitive behavioural therapy, person-centered therapy, bibliotherapy, and music therapy and uses hip-hop's elements to enact positive changes in areas such as self-concept, emotional introspection, and coping strategies (Levy, 2012, 2019; Levy & Keum, 2014).
 - HHSWT shares foundational literature with HHT, emphasizing hip-hop's effectiveness for disenfranchised groups (Elligan, 2004; Kobin & Tyson, 2006; Tyson, 2002; Travis and Deepak, 2011; Washington, 2018).
- Rap therapy uses culturally imbued counselling, social psychology, and psychotherapy, with hip-hop as a tool (Elligan, 2000).
- All these approaches have at least some degree of evidence supporting their specific use (Gonzalez & Hayes, 2009; Levy, 2019; Tyson, 2002).
- A more recent development is Integral Hip Hop Methodology, which integrates HHT elements, trauma-informed therapy, mindfulness, empowerment, and yoga which proves effective for helping marginalized groups with complex mental health concerns (Gulbay, 2021).
- Some authors use hip-hop as a component, not the main framework (Levy et al., 2017; Travis et al., 2018; Tyson, 2002).



Using Hip-Hop to Address Specific Counselling Concerns

- Instead of using an entire approach dedicated to hip-hop to improve mental health, it can be used to address specific mental health problems.
 - Conceptualizing therapeutic interventions through a dedicated approach (e.g., HHT, HHSWT, rap therapy) may mean practitioners have a narrower capacity to address particular concerns.
- Using hip-hop to address specific counselling concerns is more of a bottom-up perspective to conceptualizing interventions, whereas approaches adopt more of a top-down perspective.
- Practitioners must use evidence-based approaches when integrating hip-hop, especially in novel or limited research areas, to avoid negative mental health outcomes.

Rapport Building or Establishing the Therapeutic Alliance

- Rapport is clinically vital for (Leach, 2005; Martin et al., 2000; Opland & Torrico, 2024; Travis & Deepak, 2011):
 - Treatment efficacy, compliance, and outcomes.
 - Client factors like engagement, communication, and trust.
 - Incorporating hip-hop in mental health can build rapport by:
 - Empowering clients through strengths, providing culturally relevant expression, and neutralizing power imbalances (Kobin & Tyson, 2006).
 - Improving emotional recognition, communication, and accessibility for clients with complex needs (Cobbett, 2009).
 - Aiding goal alignment (Waller, 2024).
- 

Identity Construction

- Evidence supporting the use of hip-hop into to help with identity construction is highly salient:
 - Hip-hop lyricism can facilitate re-authoring identity, particularly for disenfranchised populations (Heath & Arroyo, 2014).
 - Music creation helps at-risk youth reconstruct identity away from negative associations (Dickens & Lonie, 2013).
 - Hip-hop facilitates identity exploration and adjustment for adult offenders, addressing social and ethnocultural barriers (Bramwell, 2018).
 - Identity formation through hip-hop reduces depressive symptoms and buffers against discrimination (Travis, 2013).
 - Integrating music therapy with hip-hop supports positive identity construction, balancing illness with personal wellness (Solli, 2014; Tyson, 2002).

Self-Improvement

- Research supports using hip-hop to facilitate self-improvement.
 - Hip-hop-oriented interventions enhance emotional regulation in at-risk youth (Armstrong & Ricard, 2016).
 - Hip-hop combined with poetry and literature increases self-disclosure, self-awareness, and prosocial behaviors (Elligan, 2004; Olson-McBride & Page, 2012; Tyson, 2002).
 - Hip-hop therapies prevent skill loss and promote positive mental health, particularly in Black and Hispanic youth (Travis et al., 2019).
 - Hip-hop music therapy facilitates self-concept enhancement and prosocial coping (Hakvoort, 2015).
 - Hip-hop promotes agency, empowerment, and emotional liberation in self-concept development (Gitonga & Delpont, 2015).

Other Ways Hip-Hop is Used to Address Specific Concerns

- Research demonstrates other ways to use hip-hop in addressing mental health:
 - Combining reality pedagogy with hip-hop strategies engages disenfranchised students in better STEM learning and trauma processing (Emdin et al., 2016; Emdin, 2011).
 - Hip-hop, framed with critical and reality pedagogy, improves literacy skills in marginalized youth (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2000).
 - Recognizing the cultural significance and utility of music technology in hip-hop enhances inclusivity in music therapy (Crooke, 2018; Vaudreuil et al. 2024).



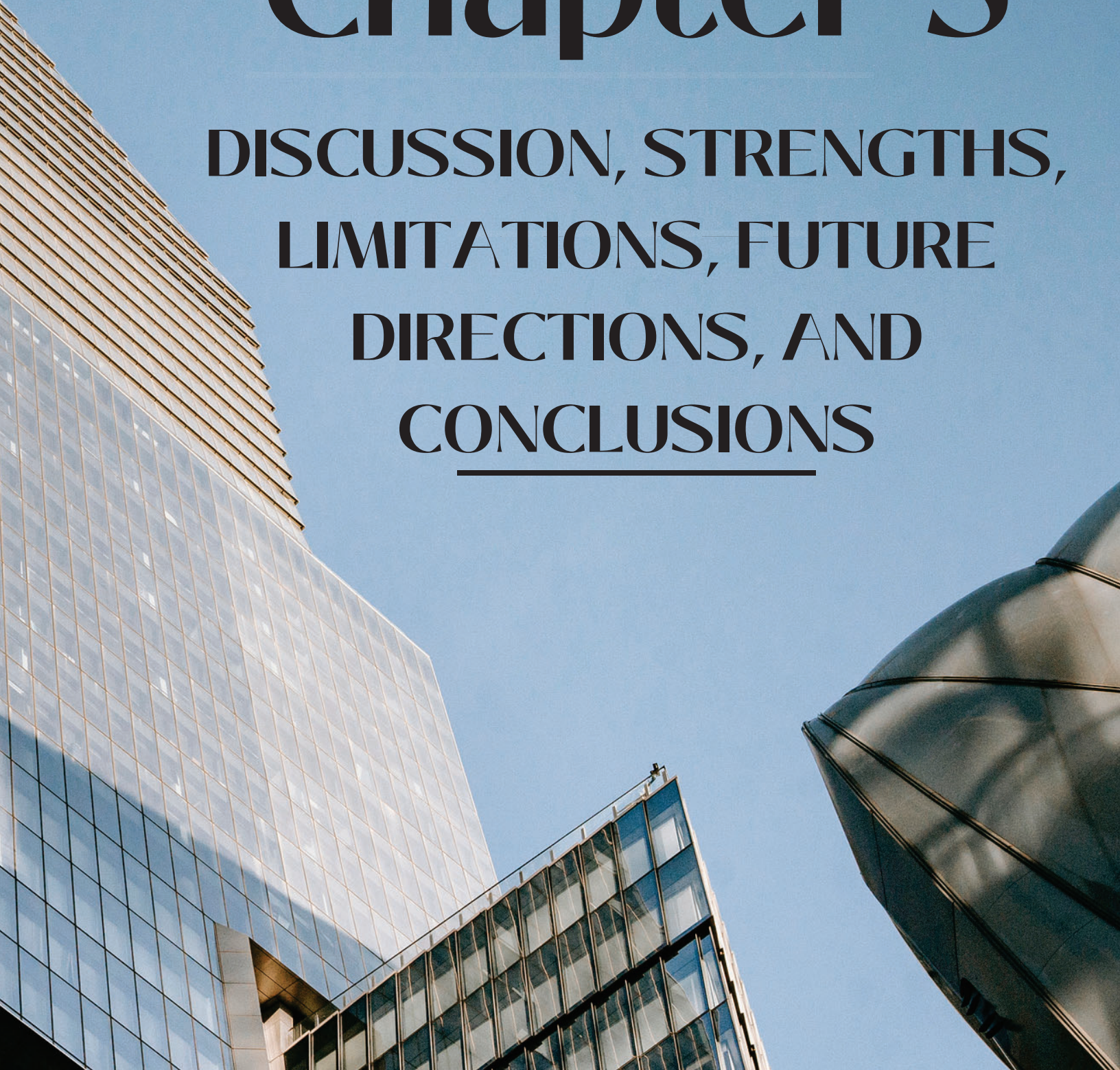
Professional Considerations for Using Hip-Hop in Counselling

- Campbell (2023) identifies professional considerations for practitioners seeking to use hip-hop in their mental health work:
 - Practitioners must have a client-centered and culturally responsive rationale for integrating hip-hop, such as enhancing cultural competence and responsiveness.
 - Professionals should reflect on their own cultural relationships and how hip-hop connects to their clients' cultures.
 - Integrating hip-hop to achieve client goals should be evidence-based.
 - Practitioners should be aware of and address misinformation that delegitimizes hip-hop's therapeutic potential.
 - Professionals must pursue continuing education, learn from client experiences, draw on personal backgrounds, and engage in supervision.
 - This builds competence and rectifies the lack of adequate training in higher education programs on hip-hop's therapeutic applications.
 - A lack of formal experts creates challenges for practitioners seeking to find consultation on integrating hip-hop into mental health practices.
- Self-reflection, combined with formal education and ethical standards guides the personalized and effective use of hip-hop in therapy.



Chapter 3

**DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS,
LIMITATIONS, FUTURE
DIRECTIONS, AND
CONCLUSIONS**



DISCUSSION, STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, FUTURE DIRECTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS Intro

- Informed by relevant literature (see e.g., Gangaraju & Cushman, 2023), this discussion section will contain the following parts:
 - A summary of key findings.
 - An interpretation and contextualization of the findings.
 - Highlight the strengths of the study.
 - Highlight the limitations of the study.
 - Identify future directions for research.
 - Offer a conclusion.



Summary of Key Findings

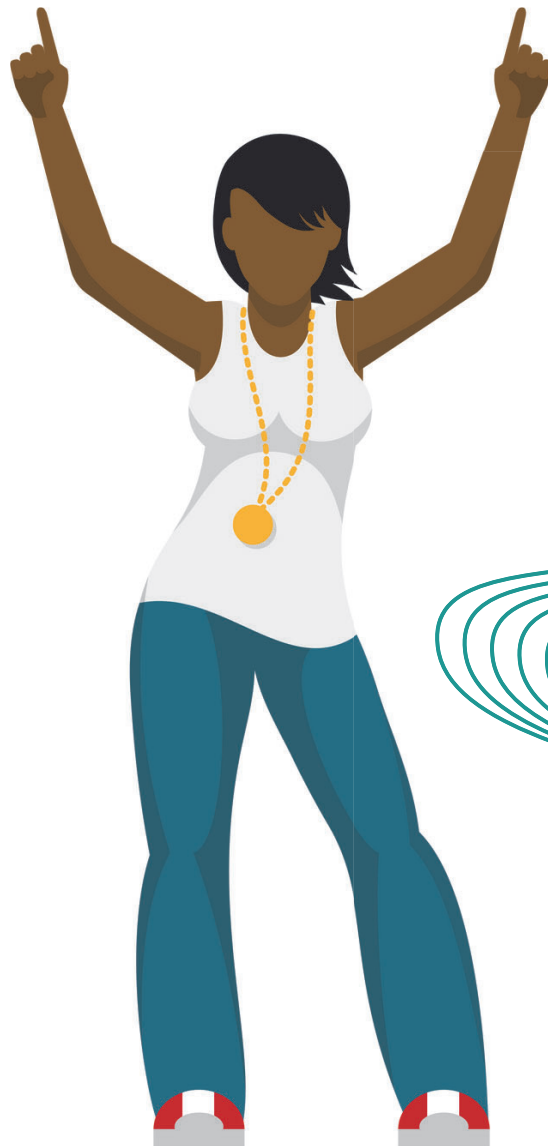
- Hip-hop is a multifaceted phenomenon with historical depth, based on resistance, empowerment, and self-expression (Lapassade & Rousselot, 2009; Riesch, 2005; Rose, 1994).
- Understanding hip-hop's history and application enable its therapeutic use.
 - This is relevant because of the societal shifts towards openness about discussing mental health.
- Integrating hip-hop into mental health practices has a wealth of evidence justifying its use.
 - This is important to understand because of its effectiveness at improving mental health outcomes, especially for some clients from certain marginalized communities.

Interpretation of Findings

- Implementing hip-hop into therapeutic practices shows ample promise for improving mental health outcomes, particularly for clients from marginalized communities.
 - Knowledge of hip-hop facilitates culturally imbued therapeutic practices, which contributes to addressing discrimination and disenfranchisement faced by some groups when interacting with mental health care systems.
 - Hip-hop's role in destigmatizing mental health discourse helps dismantle barriers to individuals finding support.
 - Hip-hop-informed practices strongly align with social justice and feminist mental health perspectives and can be used to foster belonging and facilitate community outreach.
- 

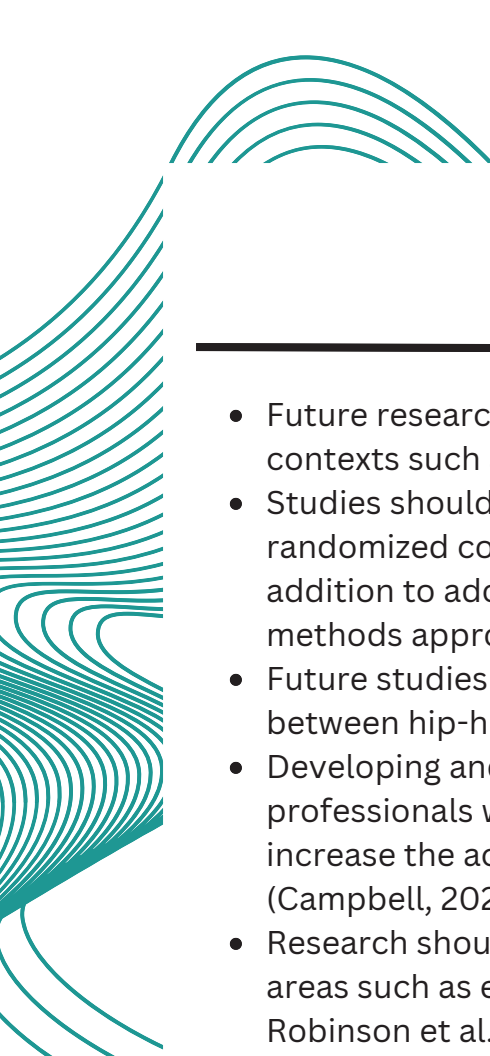
Strengths

- The literature review is extensive and incorporates diverse sources across adjacent disciplines.
- Exploring the history of hip-hop, including examining it through a Canadian lens provides a rich and culturally-relevant understanding of hip-hop.
- Presenting findings from the literature review in a handbook format is an accessible way to demonstrate how hip-hop can be used in professional mental health practices.



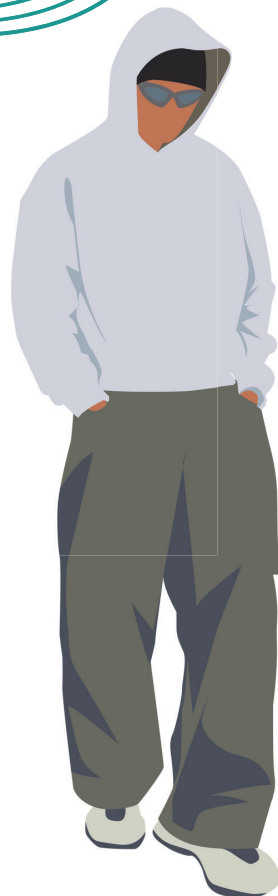
Limitations

- Acknowledging limitations in this project ensures that future research can expand knowledge on hip-hop and its applications in mental health in original and necessary ways (Ross & Bibler Zaidi, 2019).
- Generalizability of the present findings are driven mostly by research being localized to the U.S., with limited exceptions (see e.g., Tyree, 2023).
- Small sample sizes and the prevalence of using qualitative only methodologies constrains the validity and universality of results.
- Biases in data interpretation may exist in two ways:
 - First, researchers often have dual roles, where they both study and advocate for using hip-hop in mental health. This may introduce confirmation bias or conflicts of interest (Popovic & Huecker, 2023)
 - Second, the relationship between hip-hop and mental health varies greatly depending on both when and where the research occurred.
 - For example, the stigma and popularity of hip-hop changes depending on time in its history and across settings.
- There is limited research on the biological underpinnings of hip-hop and mental health, versus research on its psychological and social foundations.
- A handbook format means its succinctness limits depth and requires ongoing updates to maintain relevancy as a resource for professional use.



Future Directions

- Future research should prioritize data collection from diverse and global contexts such as across different demographics and countries.
- Studies should strengthen their methodological rigor through using randomized controlled trials, gathering more appropriate sample sizes, in addition to adopting longitudinal studies and research using mixed-methods approaches (Cohen, 1992; Kemal, 2020).
- Future studies should explore the biological angle of the relationship between hip-hop and mental health.
- Developing and expanding formal resources and training for mental health professionals wanting to use hip-hop in their practices is a priority that can increase the accessibility and effectiveness of mental health supports (Campbell, 2023; Jefferson et al., 2025).
- Research should explore the interdisciplinary applications of hip-hop in areas such as education, public health, and social work (Emdin et al., 2016; Robinson et al., 2018; Travis & Deepak, 2011).





Conclusions

THE REALITY

Hip-hop is a dynamic and potentially transformative tool for addressing mental health concerns and promoting culturally responsive care.

THE METHOD

This project's aim is to bridge theory and practice, fostering discourse among professionals, researchers, and communities.

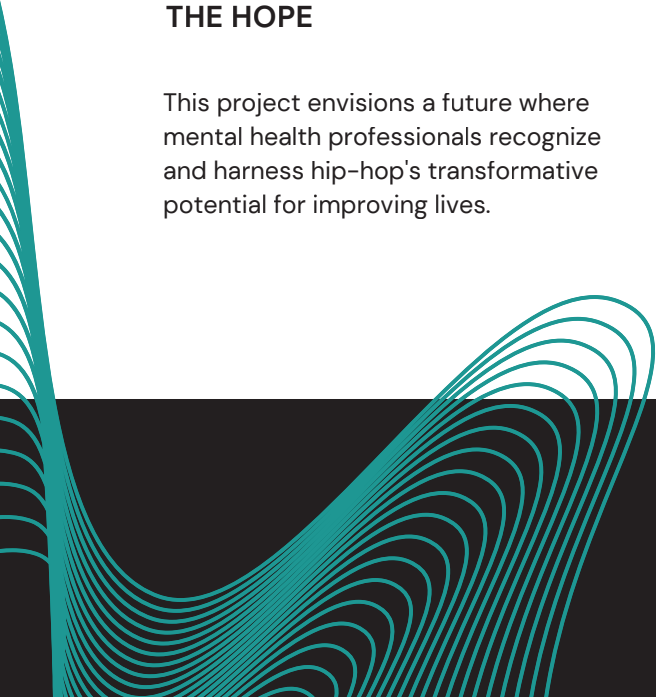
THE HOPE

This project envisions a future where mental health professionals recognize and harness hip-hop's transformative potential for improving lives.



COPYRIGHT

All images and graphics are provided by Canva software.



References

- Aldridge, D. P., & Stewart, J. B. (2005). Hip hop in history: Past, present, and future. *The Journal of African American History*, 90(3), 190–195.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/jaahv90n3p190>
- Alvarez, K., Polanco-Roman, L., Samuel Breslow, A., & Molock, S. (2022). Structural racism and suicide prevention for ethnoracially minoritized youth: A conceptual framework and illustration across systems. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 179(6), 422–433.
<https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.21101001>
- Amsterdam, L. (2013). All the eagles and the ravens in the house say yeah: *(ab)original hip-hop, heritage, and love*. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 37(2), 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicr.37.2.ckk76874gj573863>
- Anderson, S. (2017, February 17). *Canadian Hip-Hop heads owe a lot to Ron Nelson and his Fantastic Voyage*. Complex Canada.
<https://www.complex.com/music/a/septembreanderson/canadian-hip-hop-heads-owe-ron-nelson-fantastic-voyage>
- Armstrong, S. N., & Ricard, R. J. (2016). Integrating rap music into counseling with adolescents in a disciplinary alternative education program. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 11(3–4), 423–435.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2016.1214656>
- Baldry, W. J. (2016). *Turntablist performance practice* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Leeds. White Rose eTheses Online.
<https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/id/eprint/13494/>
- Barker, A. (2018, May 10). *Canadian Music Week: How Toronto became Hip-Hop's multicultural nerve center*. Variety.
<https://variety.com/2018/music/news/toronto-music-hip-hop-canada-1202804763/>
- Bebey, F. (1999). *African music: A people's art*. Chicago Review Press.
- Berio, D., & Leymarie, F. F. (2015). Computational models for the analysis and synthesis of graffiti tag strokes. *Proceedings of the workshop on computational aesthetics*, 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.2312/exp.20151177>
- Boksa, P., Joobor, R., & Kirmayer, L. J. (2015). Mental wellness in Canada's Aboriginal communities: striving toward reconciliation. *Journal of Psychiatry & Neuroscience*, 40(6), 363–365. <https://doi.org/10.1503/jpn.150309>
- Boutros, A. (2020). The impossibility of being Drake: Or, what it means to be a successful (Black) Canadian rapper. *Global Hip Hop Studies*, 1(1), 95–114.
https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00006_1
- Bramwell, R. (2018). Freedom within bars: maximum security prisoners' negotiations of identity through rap. *Identities*, 25(4), 475–492.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2017.1287487>
- Byers, M. (2012). On the (Im)possibility of Canadian Celebrity. *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture*, 12(1).
- Campbell, K. S. (2023). A qualitative exploration of music therapist beliefs, education, and uses of hip hop in clinical practice. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 41(1), e1–e12.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/mt/pmiac011>
- Campbell, M. V. (2014). The politics of making home: Opening up the work of Richard Iton in Canadian hip hop context. *Souls*, 16(3–4), 269–282.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10999949.2014.968978>

References

- Canadian Artists for Reconciliation & Education. (n.d.). Rex Smallboy. <https://www.careartistsforreconciliation.ca/rexsmallboy>.
- Caudeiron, D., & Bowman, D. (2014, March 31). *Rap*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/rap-emc>.
- Cervantes M. A., Saldaña L. P. (2015). Hip hop and nueva canción as decolonial pedagogies of epistemic justice. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society*, 4(1), 84-108. <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22167>.
- Chang, J. (2005). *Can't stop, won't stop: A history of the hip-hop generation* (1st ed.). Picador.
- Chang, J. (2009, October 12). *It's a hip-hop world*. *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/12/its-a-hip-hop-world/>.
- Chetty, D., Nitzsche, S. A., & Williams, J. A. (2024). Droppin' knowledge: An introduction to the Special Issue: 'The Fifth Element in Hip Hop Culture.' *Global Hip Hop Studies*, 5(1), 3-11. https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00091_2.
- Chiu, M., Amartey, A., Wang, X., & Kurdyak, P. (2018). Ethnic Differences in Mental Health Status and Service Utilization: A Population-Based Study in Ontario, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 63(7), 481-491. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0706743717741061>.
- Chowdhary, N., Jotheeswaran, A. T., Nadkarni, A., Hollon, S. D., King, M., Jordans, M. J. D., Rahman, A., Verdeli, H., Araya, R., & Patel, V. (2014). The methods and outcomes of cultural adaptations of psychological treatments for depressive disorders: A systematic review. *Psychological Medicine*, 44(6), 1131-1146. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291713001785>.
- Coates, T.-N. (2007, August 17). Hip-hop's down beat. *Time*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120414043615/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1653639,00.html>.
- Cobb, W. J. (2007). *To the break of dawn: A freestyle on the hip hop aesthetic*. NYU Press.
- Cobbett, S. (2009). Including the excluded: Music therapy with adolescents with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *British Journal of Music Therapy*, 23(2), 15-24. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135945750902300203>.
- Cohen, J. (1992). Statistical power analysis. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1(3), 98-101. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.ep10768783>.
- Conner, S. (2013, August 27). 1st annual native hip-hop festival hits Vancouver. *The Vancouver Sun*. <https://vancouversun.com/entertainment/music/preview-vancouvers-1st-annual-native-hip-hop-festival>.

References

- Corey, G. (2020). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy, enhanced* (10th edition). Brooks/Cole.
- Cotgrove, L. A. (2018). The importance of linguistic markers of identity and authenticity in German gangsta rap. *Journal of Languages, Texts and Society*, 2, 67–98.
- Crooke, A. H. D. (2018). Music technology and the Hip Hop beat making tradition: A history and typology of equipment for music therapy. *Voices A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v18i2.996>.
- Croom, A. M. (2012). Music, neuroscience, and the psychology of well-being: a précis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2, 393. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00393>.
- Crossley, S. (2005). Metaphorical conceptions in hip-hop music. *African American Review*, 39(4), 501–512. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40033689>.
- Cyr, B. (2005, February 3). *Hip-hop blowing up in Saskatchewan*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20110720200626/http://carillon.uregina.ca/02.03.05/story5.html>.
- D'Amico, F. (2015). “The mic is my piece”: Canadian Rap, the gendered “Cool Pose,” and music industry racialization and regulation. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 26(1), 255–290. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1037204ar>.
- Diallo, D. (2022). “Every MC raps, but not every rapper is an MC”: Examining the MC/rapper rivalry in American rap music. *Volume*, 19(1), 195–208. <https://doi.org/10.4000/volume.10252>.
- Diawara, M. (1998). *In search of Africa*. Harvard University Press.
- Dickens, L., & Lonie, D. (2013). Rap, rhythm and recognition: Lyrical practices and the politics of voice on a community music project for young people experiencing challenging circumstances. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 9, 59–71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2012.11.003>.
- Dickey, A., & Blakey, J. (2023). A theoretical intervention model for using hip-hop therapy in suicide treatment for black males. *Journal of Suicide Prevention*, 5, 23–28. e2023005. <https://issp.ir/article-1-53-en.pdf>.
- Dozois, D. J. A., Mikail, S. F., Alden, L. E., Bieling, P. J., Bourgon, G., Clark, D. A., Drapeau, M., Gallson, D., Greenberg, L., Hunsley, J., & Johnston, C. (2014). The CPA presidential task force on evidence-based practice of psychological treatments. *Canadian Psychology*, 55(3), 153–160. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0035767>.
- Duinker, B., & Martin, D. (2017). In search of the golden age hip-hop sound (1986–1996). *Empirical Musicology Review*, 12(1–2), 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.18061/emr.v12i1-2.5410>.
- Dunbar, W. (1979). *The poems of William Dunbar* (Kinsley, J., Ed). Oxford University Press.
- Duncan-Andrade, J., & Morrell, E. (2000). *Using hip-hop culture as a bridge to canonical poetry texts in an urban secondary English class* (ED442893). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED442893.pdf>.
- Elligan, D. (2000). Rap therapy: A culturally sensitive approach to psychotherapy with young african american men. *Journal of African American Men*, 5(3), 27–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12111-000-1002-y>.

References

- Elligan, D. (2004). *Rap therapy: A practical guide for communicating with youth and young adults through rap music*. Kensington Books.
- Emdin, C. (2010). Affiliation and alienation: hip-hop, rap, and urban science education. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 42(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220270903161118>.
- Emdin, C. (2011). Moving beyond the boat without a paddle: Reality pedagogy, Black youth, and urban science education. *Journal of Negro Education*, 80(3), 284–295.
- Emdin, C., Adjapong, E., & Levy, I. (2016). Hip-hop based interventions as pedagogy/therapy in STEM: A model from urban science education. *Journal for Multicultural Education*, 10(3), 307–321. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jme-03-2016-0023>.
- Fernando, S. H. (1995). *The new beats: Exploring the music, culture and attitudes of hip-hop*. Payback Press.
- Figueiredo, C., & Bolaño, C. (2017). Social media and algorithms: Configurations of the lifeworld colonization by new media. *International Journal of Information Ethics*, 26. <https://doi.org/10.29173/irie277>.
- Fox, K. M., Riches, G., & Dubnewick, M. (2011). Juxtaposing aboriginal hip hop, local heavy metal scenes, and questioning public Recreation/Leisure services. *Canadian Journal for Traditional Music*, 38(1), 88–101. <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/MC/article/view/20203/23305>.
- From Michie Mee to War Party: The lost history of Canadian hip hop. (2018, April 6). CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/episode-384-trump-takes-on-amazon-canadian-hip-hop-a-bitcoin-mining-boom-nafta-vs-bar-bands-and-more-1.4605296/from-michie-mee-to-war-party-the-lost-history-of-canadian-hip-hop-1.4605301>.
- Gajaria, A., Guzder, J., & Rasasingham, R. (2021). What's race got to do with it? A proposed framework to address racism's impacts on child and adolescent mental health in Canada. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 30(2), 131–137. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8056965/>.
- Gangaraju, R., & Cushman, M. (2023). How We Write a Manuscript Discussion. *Research and Practice in Thrombosis and Haemostasis*, 7(8), 102267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpth.2023.102267>.
- Gates, H. L. (2011). *Black in Latin America*. New York University Press.
- Gitonga, P. N., & Delport, A. (2015). Exploring the use of hip hop music in participatory research studies that involve youth. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18(8), 984–996. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2015.1020929>.
- Goddard, P. (1997, August 2). How the CRTC sold out Toronto decision to reject 'urban' format for 99.1 was power play, pure and simple. *Toronto Star*, H.2.
- Gonzalez, T., & Hayes, B. G. (2009). Rap music in school counseling based on Don Elligan's rap therapy. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 4(2), 161–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401380902945293>.
- Gorlewski, J., & Porfilio, B. (2012). Revolutionizing environmental education through Indigenous hip hop culture. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education*, 17, 46–61.
- Gosa, T. L. (2015). The fifth element: Knowledge. In J. A. Williams (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to hip-hop* (pp. 56–70). Cambridge University Press.
- Gottlieb, L. (2014). *Graffiti art styles: A classification system and theoretical analysis*. McFarland.
- Gulbay, S. (2021). Exploring the use of hip hop-based music therapy to address trauma in asylum seeker and unaccompanied minor migrant youth. *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*, 21(3). <https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v21i3.3192>.

References

- Hakvoort, L. (2015). Rap music therapy in forensic psychiatry: Emphasis on the musical approach to rap. *Music Therapy Perspectives*, 33(2), 184–192. <https://doi.org/10.1093/mtp/miv003>.
- Hall, B., Khan, R., & Eslea, M. (2023). Criminalising Black trauma: Grime and drill lyrics as a form of ethnographic data to understand “gangs” and serious youth violence. *Genealogy*, 7(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy7010002>.
- Hansen, K.F. (2000). Turntable Music. In: Jonsson, L., Oversand, K. & Breivik, M. (Eds.), *Musikklienskapelig Årbok 2000* (pp. 145-160). Norwegian University of Science and Technology.
- Harmsen, N. (2023, July 20). How Black and Indigenous communities have connected through rap. *CBC*. <https://www.cbc.ca/music/shad-dj-shub-mamarudegyal-interviews-collaboration-hip-hop-1.6911489>.
- Hart, R. (2019). Man down: The evolution of masculinity and mental health narratives in rap music. *Reinvention: An International Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 12(1), 1–17.
- Heath, T., & Arroyo, P. (2014). 'I gracefully grab a pen and embrace it': Hip-hop lyrics as a means for re-authoring and therapeutic change. *International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, (3), 31–38.
- Henderson, E. A. (1996). Black nationalism and rap music. *Journal of Black Studies*, 26(3), 308–339. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2784825>.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2013). *The cultural industries* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Hidayat, T. Z., & Moehkardi, R. R. D. (2018). Slang in American and British hip-hop/rap song lyrics. *Lexicon*, 5(1), 84–94. <https://doi.org/10.22146/lexicon.v5i1.41284>.
- Hill, M. L. (2009). Scared straight: Hip-hop, outing, and the pedagogy of queerness. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 31(1), 29–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410802629235>.
- Hip station plays aboriginal tunes*. (2009, December 15). Winnipeg Free Press. <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/life/2009/12/15/hip-station-plays-aboriginal-tunes>.
- Huey, S. J., Jr, Park, A. L., Galán, C. A., & Wang, C. X. (2023). Culturally responsive cognitive behavioral therapy for ethnically diverse populations. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 19(1), 51–78. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-080921-072750>.
- Hughes, M. L. (2009). *Street art & graffiti art: Developing an understanding* [Master's thesis]. Georgia State University. ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/art_design_theses/50/.
- Hutchings, S., & Rodger, D. (2018). Reclaiming Australia: Indigenous hip-hop group A.B. Original's use of Twitter. *Media International Australia*, 169(1), 84–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878x18803382>.
- Infantry, A. (2011, January 28). CKLN board 'not going to lie down' after licence revoked. *Toronto Star*. https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/ckln-board-not-going-to-lie-down-after-licence-revoked/article_97de0b7c-6198-5b4e-bbf0-927e5893f86f.html.
- Inside the Junos, episode 2: Why Rascalz refused their 1998 award*. (2018, February 13). CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/music/junos/news/inside-the-junos-episode-2-why-rascalz-refused-their-1998-award-1.4532216>.
- Jay, K. (2024, February 16). Guest blog: *How Hip Hop Therapy is reshaping mental health care*. Mental Health America. <https://mhanational.org/blog/guest-blog-how-hip-hop-therapy-reshaping-mental-health-care>.

References

- Jefferson, L., Waddington, A., Johnson, S., & Ohrt, J. (2025). Hip-hop and rap music interventions on mental health and well-being: A systematic review. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 20(1), 31–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2024.2305294>.
- Johnson, I. K. (2015). Hip-hop dance. In J. A. Williams (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop* (pp. 22–31). Cambridge University Press.
- Kemal Ö. (2020). Power Analysis and Sample Size, When and Why?. *Turkish Archives of Otorhinolaryngology*, 58(1), 3–4.
<https://doi.org/10.5152/tao.2020.0330>.
- Keyes, C. L. (2002). *Rap music and street consciousness*. Chicago: University of Illinois.
- Kitwana, B. (2005). *Why white kids love hip hop: Wankstas, wiggers, wannabes, and the new reality of race in America*. Basic Civitas Books.
- Kleinberg, B., & McFarlane, P.T. (2020). Violent music vs violence and music: Drill rap and violent crime in London. *ArXiv*, abs/2004.04598, 1–11.
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2004.04598>.
- Knaak, S., Mantler, E., & Szeto, A. (2017). Mental illness-related stigma in healthcare: Barriers to access and care and evidence-based solutions. *Healthcare Management Forum*, 30(2), 111–116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0840470416679413>.
- Kobin, C., & Tyson, E. (2006). Thematic analysis of hip-hop music: Can hip-hop in therapy facilitate empathic connections when working with clients in urban settings? *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33(4), 343–356.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2006.05.001>.
- Kourgiantakis, T., Markoulakis, R., Lee, E., Hussain, A., Lau, C., Ashcroft, R., Goldstein, A. L., Kodeeswaran, S., Williams, C. C., & Levitt, A. (2023). Access to mental health and addiction services for youth and their families in Ontario: perspectives of parents, youth, and service providers. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 17(1), 4.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-023-00572-z>.
- Kresovich, A., Reffner Collins, M. K., Riffe, D., & Carpentier, F. R. D. (2021). A content analysis of mental health discourse in popular rap music. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 175(3), 286–292.
<https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2020.5155>.
- Krewen, N. (1999, March 7). *Kinder, gentler rap, eh?: Canadians hip-hop onto centre stage*. Ottawa Citizen.
<https://web.archive.org/web/20081022104623/http://www.occupusmediaink.com/CitizenHipHop.html>.
- Lamb, J., Bower, P., Rogers, A., Dowrick, C., & Gask, L. (2012). Access to mental health in primary care: a qualitative meta-synthesis of evidence from the experience of people from “hard to reach” groups. *Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine*, 16(1), 76–104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363459311403945>.
- Lapassade G., Rousselot P. (2009). *Rap il furore del dire*. Bepress.
- Leach, A. (2008). “One day it’ll all make sense”: Hip-hop and rap resources for music librarians. *Notes*, 65(1), 9–37.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/not.0.0039>.
- Leach, M. J. (2005). Rapport: a key to treatment success. *Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice*, 11(4), 262–265.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctcp.2005.05.005>.

References

- Levy, I. (2012). Hip hop and spoken word therapy with urban youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 25(4), 219–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2012.736182>.
- Levy, I. P. (2019). Hip-hop and spoken word therapy in urban school counseling. *Professional School Counseling*, 22(1b), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759x19834436>.
- Levy, I., & Keum, B. T. (2014). Hip-hop emotional exploration in men. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 27(4), 217–223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08893675.2014.949528>.
- Levy, I., Emdin, C., & Adjapong, E. S. (2017). Hip-hop cypher in group work. *Social Work With Groups*, 41(1–2), 103–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2016.1275265>.
- Lewis, J. (2016, October 6). *The new cool: How Kamasi, Kendrick and co gave jazz a new groove*. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/06/new-cool-kamasi-kendrick-gave-jazz-new-groove>.
- Li, W., & Liu, P. (2023). Evoking nostalgia: Graffiti as medium in urban space. *SAGE Open*, 13(4), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231216600>.
- Lovata, T. R., & Olton, E. (Eds.). (2016). *Understanding graffiti: Multidisciplinary studies from prehistory to the present*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315416137>.
- Marsiglia, F. F., & Booth, J. M. (2015). Cultural adaptation of interventions in real practice settings. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 25(4), 423–432. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731514535989>.
- Martin, D. J., Garske, J. P., & Davis, M. K. (2000). Relation of the therapeutic alliance with outcome and other variables: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68(3), 438–450. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.68.3.438>.
- McCollom, S. (2019, October 30). *Hip hop: A culture of vision and voice*. The Kennedy Centre. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/media/hip-hop/hip-hop-a-culture-of-vision-and-voice/>.
- McDonald, F. (2013). *The popular history of graffiti: From the ancient world to the present*. Skyhorse Publishing.
- McLeod, K. (2005). MP3s are killing home taping: The rise of internet distribution and its challenge to the major label music monopoly. *Popular Music and Society*, 28(4), 521–531. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007760500159062>.
- Memon, A., Taylor, K., Mohebbati, L. M., Sundin, J., Cooper, M., Scanlon, T., & de Visser, R. (2016). Perceived barriers to accessing mental health services among black and minority ethnic (BME) communities: a qualitative study in Southeast England. *BMJ Open*, 6(11), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2016-012337>.
- Moore, K. L. (2018). Mental health service engagement among underserved minority adolescents and young adults: A systematic review. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 5(5), 1063–1076. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-017-0455-9>.
- Morgan, M., & Bennett, D. (2011). Hip-hop & the global imprint of a Black cultural form. *Daedalus*, 140(2), 176–196. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23047460>.
- Morris, C. (2008, September). Rezofficial hit number one on Much Music Rap City. *Alberta Sweetgrass*, 1.
- Murray, J. K., & Knudson, S. (2023). Mental health treatment and access for emerging adults in Canada: a systematic review. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1088999. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1088999>.

References

- Naeem, F., Phiri, P., Rathod, S., & Ayub, M. (2019). Cultural adaptation of cognitive-behavioural therapy. *BJPsych Advances*, 25(6), 387–395. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bja.2019.15>.
- Naughton, J. (2016). The evolution of the internet: From military experiment to general purpose technology. *Journal of Cyber Policy*, 1(1), 5–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2016.1157619>.
- Navarro, J. (2016). WORD: Hip-hop, language, and Indigeneity in the Americas. *Critical Sociology*, 42(4–5), 567–581. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920515569916>.
- Neal, M. A. (2004). Up from hustling: Power, plantations, and the hip-hop mogul. *Socialism and Democracy*, 18(2), 157–182. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08854300408428405>.
- Nelson, S. E., & Wilson, K. (2017). The mental health of Indigenous peoples in Canada: A critical review of research. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 176, 93–112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.01.021>.
- NeMoyer, A., Cruz-Gonzalez, M., Alvarez, K., Kessler, R. C., Sampson, N. A., Green, J. G., & Alegría, M. (2022). Reducing racial/ethnic disparities in mental health service use among emerging adults: Community-level supply factors. *Ethnicity & Health*, 27(4), 749–769. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13557858.2020.1814999>.
- Newman, M. (2003). *History of turntablism*. Pedestrian. <https://www.autistici.org/2000-maniac/texts/pedestrian%20history%20of%20turntablism.pdf>.
- Newton, M. (2008, November 28). *Is sampling dead?*. SPIN Magazine. <https://www.spin.com/2008/11/sampling-dying/>.
- Olson-McBride, L., & Page, T. F. (2012). Song to self: Promoting a therapeutic dialogue with high-risk youths through poetry and popular music. *Social Work with Groups*, 35(2), 124–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2011.603117>.
- Opland, C. & Torrico, T. J. (2024). *Psychotherapy and therapeutic relationship* (PMID 39383291). National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK608012/>.
- Ordanini, A., Nunes, J. C., & Nanni, A. (2018). The featuring phenomenon in music: how combining artists of different genres increases a song's popularity. *Marketing Letters*, 29(4), 485–499. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-018-9476-3>.
- Osumare, H. (2015). Keeping it real: Race, class, and youth connections through hip-hop in the U.S. & Brazil. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 37, 6–18. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/humjsocrel.37.6>.
- Parks, M. (2009). *Writing on the walls: Graffiti and civic identity* [Master's thesis]. University of Ottawa. uO Research. <https://ruor.uottawa.ca/items/55254239-4af2-417d-96af-ca7cbaec4d9e>.
- Parks, W. (1986). Flying, sounding, debate: Three verbal contest genres. *Poetics Today*, 7(3), 439–458. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1772505>.
- Parris, A. (2017, March 31). *He's one of Toronto's first great hip hop radio stars — and also one of its last*. CBC Arts. <https://www.cbc.ca/arts/he-s-one-of-toronto-s-first-great-hip-hop-radio-stars-and-also-one-of-its-last-1.4050218>.
- Petchauer, E. (2009). Framing and reviewing hip-hop educational research. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(2), 946–978. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308330967>.
- Pineda, A. (2022, July 22). *Embracing hip-hop music in mental health treatment*. National Alliances on Mental Illness. <https://www.nami.org/mental-health-systems/embracing-hip-hop-music-in-mental-health-treatment/>.

References

- Popovic, A., & Huecker, M.R. (2023). *Study bias* (PMID 34662027). National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK574513/>.
- Przybylski, L. (2017). Customs and Duty: Indigenous Hip Hop and the US–Canada Border. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 33(3), 487–506. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2016.1222880>.
- Raboteau, A. J. (1996). *A fire in the bones*. Beacon Press.
- Rideout, V., Roberts D. F., & Foehr, U. G. (2005). Generation M: *Media in the lives of 8-18 year-olds*. The Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/generation-m-media-in-the-lives-of-8-18-year-olds-report.pdf>.
- Riesch, R.J. (2005). *Hip hop culture: History and trajectory* [Master's thesis]. Southern Illinois University Carbondale. OpenSIUC. https://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1046&context=gs_rp.
- Ro, R. (1996). *Gangsta: Merchandizing the rhymes of violence*. St. Martin's Press.
- Robinson, C., Seaman, E. L., Montgomery, L., & Winfrey, A. (2018). A review of hip hop-based interventions for health literacy, health behaviors, and mental health. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 5(3), 468–484. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-017-0389-2>.
- Rodwin, A. H., Shimizu, R., Travis, R., Jr, James, K. J., Banya, M., & Munson, M. R. (2022). A systematic review of music-based interventions to improve treatment engagement and mental health outcomes for adolescents and young adults. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 40(4), 537–566. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-022-00893-x>.
- Rose, T. (1994). *Black noise*. Wesleyan University Press.
- Ross, A. (2011). *Listen to this*. Picador.
- Ross, P. T., & Bibler Zaidi, N. L. (2019). Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 8(4), 261–264. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-00530-x>.
- Rovito, A., & Giles, A. R. (2016). Outside looking in: Resisting colonial discourses of aboriginality. *Leisure Sciences*, 38(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2015.1057661>.
- Sabbagh, D. (2008, June 18). *Music sales fall to their lowest level in over twenty years*. The Sunday Times. https://web.archive.org/web/20110825025812/http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/media/article4160553.ece.
- Scobie, N. (2015). “Jamaican funk - Canadian style”: *Diasporic dialogue and hybridized identity in the music of Michie Mee* [Master's thesis, Carleton University]. Carleton University Institutional Repository. <https://repository.library.carleton.ca/concern/etds/1r66j2005>.
- Sconiers, R. D. (2021, July 27). *Mental health and hip-hop: An undeniable super team for healing & wellness*. Mental Health America. <https://www.mhanational.org/blog/mental-health-and-hip-hop-undeniable-super-team-healing-wellness>.
- Shobe, H. (2018). Graffiti as communication and language. In *Handbook of the Changing World Language Map* (pp. 1–18). Springer International Publishing.
- Similly, L. E. (2014). *Make it plain, preacha': African American rhetorical license, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), and a modern rendering of epideictic rhetoric* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Texas at Arlington. MavMatrix. https://rc.library.uta.edu/uta-ir/bitstream/handle/10106/24781/similly_dissertation.pdf.

References

- Simpson, L. (2017). *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Snyder, G. J. (2017). Long live the tag: Representing the foundations of graffiti. In K. Avramidis & M. Tsilimpounidi (Eds.), *Graffiti and street art: Reading, writing and representing the city* (pp. 264–273). Routledge.
- Solli, H. P. (2014). Battling illness with wellness: a qualitative case study of a young rapper's experiences with music therapy. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 24(3), 204–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08098131.2014.907334>.
- Sommerstein, D. (2014, January 3). *Hip-hop's aboriginal connection*. National Public Radio. <https://www.npr.org/2014/01/04/259428743/hip-hops-aboriginal-connection>.
- Southern, E. (1997). *The music of Black Americans: A history* (3rd ed.). WW Norton.
- Stapleton, K. R. (1998). From the margins to mainstream: The political power of hip-hop. *Media, Culture & Society*, 20(2), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016344398020002004>.
- Statistics Canada. (2023). *Insights on Canadian Society: Mental disorders and access to mental health care* (No. 75-006 X). <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2023001/article/00011-eng.pdf?st=6v486LVf>.
- Statistics Canada. (2024). Inequalities in mental health, well-being and wellness in Canada. <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/mental-health/inequalities/report.html#>.
- Statistics Canada. (2025, January 16). *Rising mental health concerns among youth*. Stats Can Plus. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/7642-rising-mental-health-concerns-among-youth>.
- Stovall, D. (2006). We can relate: Hip-hop culture, critical pedagogy, and the secondary classroom. *Urban Education*, 41(6), 585–602. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085906292513>
- Strode, T., & Wood, T. (2006). *The hip hop reader*. Pearson. Studio Bell. (n.d.). *War Party*. <https://www.studiobell.ca/war-party>.
- Sule, A., & Inkster, B. (2020, December 9). *How hip-hop's progressive narratives are helping to tackle mental health stigma*. BMJ Blogs. <https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2020/12/09/raps-battle-with-mental-health-how-hip-hops-progressive-narratives-are-helping-to-tackle-stigma/>.
- Telus Storyhive. (2019, September 23). *The Foundation: Indigenous Hip Hop in Canada* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R15o3AcfMss>.
- Thibeault, M. D. (2010). Hip-hop, digital media, and the changing face of music education. *General Music Today*, 24(1), 46–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371310379097>.
- Thomas, B. A. (2023, August 11). *How hip-hop was born 50 years ago in a block party in the Bronx*. Smithsonian Magazine. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-the-block-party-became-an-urban-phenomenon-180980560/>.
- Thornicroft, G., Rose, D., & Mehta, N. (2010). Discrimination against people with mental illness: What can psychiatrists do? *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment: The Royal College of Psychiatrists' Journal of Continuing Professional Development*, 16(1), 53–59. <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.bp.107.004481>.
- Tillie Allen, N. M. (2005). Exploring Hip-Hop Therapy with High-Risk Youth. *Praxis*, 5, 30–36.

References

- Toop, D. (1991). *Rap attack 2: African rap to global hip hop*. Serpent's Tail.
- Travis, R., & Deepak, A. (2011). Empowerment in context: Lessons from hip-hop culture for social work practice. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 20(3), 203–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2011.594993>.
- Travis, R., Gann, E., Crooke, A. H. D., & Jenkins, S. M. (2019). Hip Hop, empowerment, and therapeutic beat-making: Potential solutions for summer learning loss, depression, and anxiety in youth. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 29(6), 744–765. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2019.1607646>.
- Travis, R., Jr. (2013). Rap music and the empowerment of today's youth: Evidence in everyday music listening, music therapy, and commercial rap music. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 30(2), 139–167. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-012-0285-x>.
- Travis, R., Rodwin, A. H., & Allcorn, A. (2018). Hip hop, empowerment, and clinical practice for homeless adults with severe mental illness. *Social Work With Groups*, 42(2), 83–100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2018.1486776>.
- Tschmuck, P. (2012). *Creativity and innovation in the music industry*. Springer.
- Tyree, J. A. (2023). *Keepin' it weal in "The 514": Hip-Hop as a tool to promote well-being in Montreal's marginalized communities* [Master's thesis]. Concordia University. Spectrum Research Repository. <https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/id/eprint/991833/>.
- Tyson, E. H. (2002). Hip hop therapy: An exploratory study of a rap music intervention with at-risk and delinquent youth. *Journal of Poetry Therapy* 15(3), 131–144. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1019795911358>.
- Tyson, E. H. (2004). Rap music in social work practice with African-American and Latino youth: A conceptual model with practical applications. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 8(4), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1300/j137v08n04_01.
- Tyson, E. H. (2006). Rap-music Attitude and Perception Scale: A validation study. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 16(2), 211–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731505281447>.
- Vaudreuil, R., Nordstrom, M., DeGraba, T., & Pasquina, P. (2024). The role of technology in music therapy, occupational therapy, and co-treatment of an injured United States service member. *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy*, 34(1), 13–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08098131.2024.2397795>.
- Vukets, C., & Infantry, A. (2011, April 16). *Dead air for Ryerson community station*. https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/dead-air-for-ryerson-community-station/article_417c3a62-e4ed-5ddf-a428-0ad9d64f7694.html.
- Walcott, R. (2003). *Black like who?: Writing Black Canada*. Insomniac Press.
- Waller, E. (2024). Treating trauma: Hip Hop Spoken Word Therapy, mindfulness, and collaborative therapy. *International Journal of Collaborative-Dialogic Practices*, 13(1), 83-91.
- Washington, A. R. (2018). Integrating Hip-Hop culture and rap music into social justice counseling with Black males. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 96(1), 97–105. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12181>.
- Weaver, J. (2023, August 28). *Canadian hip-hop got huge without help. It shouldn't have had to, say artists*. CBC News. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/hip-hop-50-canada-1.6933413>.
- Webber, S. W. (2003). *Turntable technique: The art of the DJ*. Berklee Press.

References

When the CRTC denied a 'mainstream Black radio station' for Toronto. (2020, September 18). CBC.

<https://www.cbc.ca/archives/crtc-black-radio-1990-1.5724579>

Wilson, K. (2017, June 7). *An oral history of hip-hop shows at the Concert Hall.* NOW Toronto.

<https://nowtoronto.com/music/an-oral-history-of-hip-hop-shows-at-the-concert-hall/>.

Young, D. (2006). Ethno-racial minorities and the Juno awards. *Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie*, 31(2), 183-210. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20058696>.

