

Check the Technique: Hip Hop Culture in Words & on Screen (WRIT 412)



Times/dates: 6:00-8:50 Thursdays, January-April 2021

Instructor: Shane Book

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[Click here for registration details](#)

Course description:

Since the music's birth in the early '70s Boogie Down Bronx, New York, Hip Hop has gone from fringe local musical style to global sound of our era. But Hip Hop is more than rap music: it's an entire culture.

We'll examine Hip Hop culture through its four foundational elements—DJing, MCing, breakdancing and graffiti—but also look at its impact on fashion & slang, politicians & politics, technology & world musical traditions, sports & cinema, and down to the level of everyday physical gesture. Along the way we'll track Hip Hop's history and delve into how it continues to hold such power.

All of our inquiries will be in service of answering a question central to our present moment: what does it mean to live in the Hip Hop Generation?

Proposed films:

- *Wild Style* (1982)
- *Style Wars* (1983)
- *Beat Street* (1984)
- *Boyz N The Hood* (1991)
- *CB4* (1993)
- *Friday* (1995)
- *Ghost Dog: Way of the Samurai* (1999)
- *Scratch* (2001)
- *Dave Chapelle's Block Party* (2004)
- *Slingshot Hip Hop* (2008)
- *This is the Life* (2008)
- *Something From Nothing: The Art of Rap* (2012)

Additional material:

- Tracks and albums (various artists)
- Music videos (various artists)

Proposed assignments:

- Online engagement (20%)
- Two midterm exams, multiple choice (15% / 20%)
- Final exam, multiple choice (45%)