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## Foreword

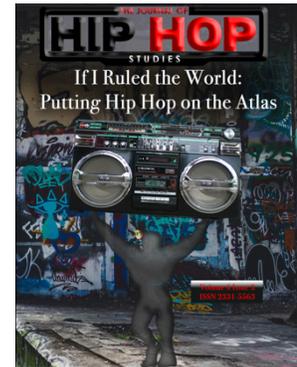
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Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas*

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My journey, in many ways, reflects the ciphaz and flows of this special issue, "If I Ruled the World: Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas." The idea for this special issue came from my time at what became known as "Grimey Cambridge," an international Hip Hop Studies conference at the University of Cambridge. This conference, held in 2016, formally entitled "It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At," included Hip Hop scholars from around the world. This opened my eyes to a world of Hip Hop Studies that had previously eluded me. With this newfound revelation, I thought that I should put out a special issue on international Hip Hop. I then reached out to Daniel White Hodge and Simran Singh. Hodge and I intentionally reached out to a woman and someone from outside of the United States in order to ensure that this special issue was not dominated by a male US-centric perspective.

With the team in place, I started the literature review. Quickly I discovered that this body of literature on global Hip Hop studies was massive. I reached out to the network of Hip Hop scholars I had developed from "Grimey Cambridge" and asked for contributions to a global Hip Hop studies bibliography.

We have included this bibliography in this special issue. Working on this bibliography has revealed the complexities of Hip Hop and Hip Hop studies. Hip Hop is being researched in multiple languages, from various academic disciplines and according to a number of methodological approaches. One component of the study of Hip Hop around the world is resources. Some scholars do not have the institutional support to fully study Hip Hop. This support ranges from access to other scholarly articles to access to Hip Hop scholars who are trained in the field. In true Hip Hop fashion, it is amazing to witness how Hip Hop is being thoroughly researched throughout the world.

The turning point in my understanding of global Hip Hop studies happened when I realized that global Hip Hop studies was solely an artificial boundary created by academia. Whereas I started thinking about international Hip Hop studies out there, I realized that Hip Hop has collapsed those boundaries. In reality, scholars and practitioners cipa and flow with each other across multiple boundaries. There is no "out there" in Hip Hop. Hip Hop did not go global, it has always been a global phenomenon from its inception. "If I Ruled the World" argues that there is no distinction between global Hip Hop studies and Hip Hop. Global Hip Hop studies is Hip Hop studies.

The compilation of "If I Ruled the World" consists of flows and a cipa in and of itself. The late and great Nigerian poet, Ikeogu Oke, blessed us with poems on Tupac

Shakur. Oke's poems bring a new perspective to Tupac and positions Tupac as an African diasporic rapper. This perspective means that Tupac was (and still is) African. The shift in thinking from American to African living in a diaspora changes how we comprehend Tupac's identity and his reach around the world. My article "Can It Be Bigger Than Hip Hop," thoroughly examines Global Hip Hop Studies and lays out the overall argument for "If I Ruled the World: Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas." I contend for a third wave of Global Hip Hop Studies that builds on the work of the first two waves, identifies Hip Hop as an African diasporic phenomenon, and aligns with Hip Hop where there are no boundaries between Hip Hop inside and outside of the United States. Joanna Daguirane Da Sylva adds to the cipa with her examination of Didier Awadi. Da Sylva's excellent work reveals the ways in which Hip Hoppa Didier Awadi elevates Pan-Africanism and uses Hip Hop as a tool to decolonize the minds of African peoples. The interview by Tasha Iglesias and myself of members of Generation Hip Hop and the Universal Hip Hop Museum provides a primary source and highlights two Hip Hop organizations with chapters around the world. Mich Yonah Nyawalo's "Negotiating French Muslim Identities through Hip Hop" details Hip Hop artists Médine and Diam's, who are both French and Muslim, and whose self-identification can be understood as political strategies in response to the French Republic's marginalization of Muslims. In "Configurations of Space and Identity in Hip Hop: Performing 'Global South'," Igor Johannsen adds to this special issue an examination of the spatiality of the Global South and how Hip Hoppas in the Global South oppose global hegemony. The final essay, "'I Got the Mics On, My People Speak': On the Rise of Aboriginal Australian Hip Hop," by Benjamin Kelly and Rhyann Clapham, provides a thorough analysis of Aboriginal Hip Hop and situates it within postcolonialism. Overall, the collection of these essays points to the multiple identities, political economies, cultures, and scholarly fields and disciplines that Hip Hop interacts with around the world.

A special issue of this caliber requires a large contribution from a number of scholars. Inevitably, we will not be able to name everyone, but here is our best effort. We would like to thank the team of reviewers, they copyedited, reviewed essays, and provided excellent feedback: Ashley Payne, Deshonna Collier-Goubil, Jeffrey Coleman, Cassandra Chaney, Xiomara Forbez, David Leonard, Steve Gilbers, Quentin Williams, Kendra Salois, Velda Love, Sarah Napoli, Melvin Williams, Don Sawyer, Eileen O'Brien, Katharine R. Allen, Iyabo F. Osiapem, J. Griffith Rollefson, Sabine Kim and Brett Esaki. I also would like to shout out all who contributed to the bibliography: Greg Schick, Mich Nyawalo, Sara Little, Alex Stevenson, Steven Gilbers, Dave Hook, Alex Crooke, Mary Fogarty, James Cox, Kendra Salois, Anna Oravcová and Silhouette Bushay.

The coming together of "If I Ruled the World" consisted of ciphass and flows around the world, in and of itself. From its inception in Cambridge, the three co-editors are located in Virginia (Travis Harris), Chicago (Daniel White Hodge) and UK (Simran Singh). The authors span the globe and are located in places such as Germany, Nigeria, and Sydney. The range in geographical locations also contributed to our understanding of scholarly norms and the English language. There were differences on when to use

quotes and commas and these were tied both to the theoretical idea being discussed and the individual's conception of grammar. This made the copy editing, of which Sabine Kim did an excellent job leading, challenging. Kim is based in Mainz, Germany, which is a different time zone than the UK, East Coast and Midwest. An example that illustrates the flows that created this issue is Kim, Singh and I editing essays. I would send an essay to Kim, who would then send it to Singh. After Singh finished editing it, she would send it back to Kim who sent it back to me in order to go into the complete issue. Understandably, we are excited to finally present to you "If I Ruled the World: Putting Hip Hop on the Atlas!"