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## The Birth of Hip-Hop

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### ABSTRACT

*This research paper is a detailed history of the origins of hip-hop and its 4 main elements which include, Graffiti, MCing, Break Dancing, and DJing. It talks about some of the issues that came with Hip-Hop culture and consists of a timeline of some of the biggest milestones in the history of Hip-Hop. There are a variety of pioneering artists that are talked about in this research paper with some being the fathers of hip-hop! Motivations and the environment of these artists are discussed with information on what it was like on the violent streets of the Bronx, New York. So, let's dive into this complex yet interesting world of Hip-Hop and how the worldwide phenomenon started in the first place.*

**Keywords:** Hip-Hop, Graffiti, DJing, MCing, Rapping, Break dancing, B-Boying

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past three decades, hip-hop has become a global phenomenon that affects youth culture around the world. Although it is often considered a synonym for rapping, the term "Hip-Hop" refers to the four elements of the complex culture: Deejaying, Rhyming, Bboying, which is regarded as the dance form in Hip-Hop culture, and graffiti painting (Ewoodzie 3).

The name of the culture "Hip-Hop" has many points of origin. Still, the most popular one is when Keith Cowboy Wiggins, a member of the Furious Five and Grandmaster Flash started using this term in his performances thus making the term popular. There are many other 'origin stories' for the name like, Hip was an African American slang for something trendy and Hop referred to the type of movement that Hip-Hop dancers performed. ("How did hip-hop get its name?"). But why and how did hip-hop start? What was the purpose of hip-hop as a movement? Let's take a deep dive into the history of this culture and find out.

"Hip Hop originated in the Bronx, New York City in the 1970s. It emerged due to the rapid decline of the Bronx in New York in the late 1970s. In the early 1970s, the Bronx, especially South Bronx became known nationally and internationally as the epitome of urban decay. "The number of people living in high-poverty areas grew by 69%." Economic disinvestment caused poverty, unemployment, and social unrest. This caused frustration and anger, especially to the people of African American and Latino descent." (Ewoodzie 20).

Many scholars believe Hip-Hop began when Clive Campbell aka Kool Herc threw a party in 1973 after moving to New York in 1967. Kool Herc along with Afrika Baambata and Grandmaster Flash appear in all records belonging to the subject of Hip-Hop and its origins, so much so that Kool Herc is now known as the father of Hip-Hop. The term Bboying/Bgirling came from Kool Herc when he once called the dancers at his party Bboys and Bgirls. (Ewoodzie 4).

There were many Hip-Hop icons over the years like Grandmaster Flash, Tupac Shakur, Jean Michel Basquiat, and Crazy Legs. Many of these talented artists didn't only participate in Hip-Hop but also in Black rights, For example, Tupac Shakur, was a very famous rapper in his generation. He was known for his raw and socially conscious lyrics. He was a gifted rapper and a voice for the Black rights movements and equality. (Tate).

Grandmaster Flash is a legend in the aspect of Deejaying, he invented quick mixing and back spinning. His creative style revolutionised the world of Deejaying. He even collaborated with Kool Herc and made hits like The Message. (Wang 84).

Jean Michel Basquiat was a graffiti artist. He was one of the most popular graffiti artists in the 1980s. He started by painting the walls of New York showing his flair in spray painting. Later as he grew he turned to fine art exploring the themes of poverty and race on the canvas. His paintings are now highly sought after and worth millions of dollars. (Fretz 11).

Kenneth James Gabbert, aka Ken Swift, is a second-generation breakdancer, the Rock Steady Crew's former president. He began breakdancing in 1978, at the age of 12 and was inspired by B-boys on the upper west side of Manhattan. "Widely known in the B-Boy world as "the Epitome of a B-Boy," he is universally considered by B-Boys as the individual who has had the greatest influence on break dancing. Ken Swift is credited with the creation of many dance moves. His original footwork and "freeze style" became a foundational part of breaking, which was considered a new concept at the time." (Hip-Hop Education Center)

## **HISTORY OF DEEJAYING**

Deejaying, also known as DJing, has an enriching history dating back to hip-hop culture's early years. The art of deejaying emerged alongside other elements of hip-hop in the Bronx, New York City, in the 1970s. "It began in the Bronx, New York, in the early 1970s, with itinerant African American disc jockeys called "mobile disc jockeys" who would mix pre-recorded hits alternately on two turntables." (Keyes 1). Eventually, mixing records became a competitive art in itself so mobile disk jockeys used to hire rhyming emcees to supplement their verbal performances. (Keyes 1). Kool Herc and Grandmaster Flash were pioneering DJs of the times and were one of the most crucial parts of the Deejaying world. (Ewoodzie 4). Grandmaster Flash, Kool Herc, and many others laid the groundwork for developing DJing and established the foundation for the art form as it is known today. Afrika Bambaataa, Grandmaster Flash and Kool Herc were also known as the "Holy Trinity" of hip-hop.

Afrika Bambaataa is an American Disk Jockey and rapper. He was born on 17th April 1957 and started his DJ career in 1970 (Bradley and DuBois 62). He was a part of the Black Spades, a mighty gang then. He threw his first party in November of 1976 at the Bronx River Community Center and was heavily influenced by DJ Kool Herc's style of music. (Williams 7). He played many different types of music including Funk, Instrumental portions, soul and even commercial jingles. Bambaataa didn't only see Hip-Hop as a platform for music and entertainment but also as a 'force', "helping promote the values of hip-hop that he believed were based on peace, unity, love, and having fun." (Jackson and Anderson 2). He founded the organisation Zulu Nation in 1973 to help raise awareness and put an end to gangster and gang warfare in the South Bronx. (Williams 7) and (Bradley and DuBois 62). The Zulu Nation consisted of people specialising in all 4 aspects of Hip-Hop, graffiti artists, Rap artists, Disk jockeys, and breakdancers who all travelled with Bambaataa. (Jackson and Anderson 2). On their travels, Bambaataa influenced many artists overseas. (Jackson and Anderson 2).

Kool Herc was born in Kingston, Jamaica, on April 16, 1955. In 1967, Kool Herc (aka Clive Campbell) immigrated to New York and settled in the West Bronx. (Peterson 1). Clive was heavily influenced by Jamaican yard culture and incorporated huge amounts of it in his work and music, especially the element of throwing spontaneous parties outside in public spaces. (Peterson 1). He also incorporated ideas and music from Jamaican culture when making his music. Some of his earliest parties were either in Basements or outside public spaces like the park or the streets. (Peterson 1). "Kool Herc was famous for his 6 foot tall speakers, named the Herculoids." (Peterson 1). These Hip-Hop parties were not considered mainstream instead they were considered off the grid. By the 70s DJ Kool Herc's parties had become very well known and popular in the Bronx and even in New York, so much so that Hip-Hop parties were now a better and more affordable alternative to discos. (Peterson 1). Kool Herc influenced many artists who came after him, including Afrika Bambaataa and Grandmaster Flash. He made many contributions to the hip-hop world, and today, he is often called the father of hip-hop.

Many innovations started by DJ Kool Herc which mixed many musical fragments (breaks and breakbeats) from different tracks to create a whole new one. Afrika Bambaataa took this innovation one step further by adding his style to it, he included many different types of kinds of music into his tracks ranging anywhere from soul to even commercial jingles. (Keyes 7). Grandmaster Flash on the other hand took it a few more steps further. He experimented with many different techniques until he invented Back Spinning and Cutting, now known as phasing. Backspinning was a technique that required two identical copies of the same track on two different turntables. One would then be turned counterclockwise to a desired location and then the same would be repeated for the other disk. This would create an echo effect. (Keyes 7). Cutting happens when a disc jockey rhythmically repeats a word or phrase on one turntable during the beats of another recording played on the second turntable. Grandmaster Flash called these techniques together the Quick Mix theory. (Keyes 7). There were many other innovations in the world of DJing for example, the scratching sound is a widespread skill for Disk Jockeys but this technique was invented by Grandwizard Theodore and happened when a DJ moved a record back and forth while the arm's needle still in the groove of the record, thereby producing a scratching like sound. (Keyes 7).

## **HISTORY OF RHYMING**

Rhyming, also known as MCing, is the most popular and famous type of Hip-Hop in the modern age. But this was not the case when the culture of Hip-Hop was being created, in its earlier stages, Hip-Hop was dominated by Disk Jockeys aka DJs. (Ewoodzie 164). After about a decade of Hip-Hop's creation, MCs started to take the stage, instead of having 2 MCs in a crew the crews started having 3 or more even four. (Ewoodzie 164). Not only did MCs influence the culture of Hip-Hop but also clothing at the time, early female artists such as MC Lyte and Roxanne Shante influenced fashion trends such as leather jackets and gold chains for women. (Reese 10). "With the development of routines, MCs became the main source of entertainment while DJs were related to the background." (Ewoodzie 164). In 1979, a new crew took the spotlight overnight, the Sugar Hill Gang released a new piece of music known as "Rapper's Delight". (Ewoodzie 164). Overnight, they gained a newfound popularity and surpassed Grandmaster Flash and his MCs. After this time, DJs were just there for background music, the audience came for the rhyming. (Ewoodzie 164). "Battles no longer focused on the power of the sound system or the DJs' mixing and cutting skills. Instead, they were competitions between MC groups, battles waged through rhyming and routines." (Ewoodzie 164).

One of the most popular rap crews of all time was the Sugar Hill Gang, the members of the crew were Wonder Mike, Big Bank Hank, and Master Gee. (Bradley and DuBois 126). They released 2 albums, Sugar Hill Gang (1980) and 8th Wonder (1982) but they were known for their hit song "Rapper's Delight" which was recorded in the summer of 1979. (Bradley and DuBois 126). The group was formed in 1979 when a record producer named Sylvia Robinson wanted to put together a group to record a rap song. This group had been controversial for many years due to the presence of Big Bank Hank who had been tagged a plagiarist. (D'Amico). He had allegedly been copying and picking up lyrics from a song named 'I Want My Name Back' by Grandmaster Caz and the Cold Crush Brothers. "When Sylvia Robinson signed Wright and O'Brien in the late 1970s, the two Englewood, New Jersey rappers were young and inexperienced in contractual matters, as was the Hip-Hop culture they would come to represent." (D'Amico). Rhyming "was still a largely local and underground music that had yet to make its mark on the mainstream." (D'Amico). The Sugar Hill gang had a rich history with many talented members and was known for the hit rap song 'Rapper's Delight'.

Salt-N-Pepa was a rap crew that revolutionised gender roles in the culture of Hip-Hop. The group had 3 members, Cheryl "Salt" James, Sandra "Pepa" Denton, and Deidra "DJ Spinderella" Roper. "They expanded the possibilities for women in rap by making their brash sexuality and assertiveness not simply stylish but marketable." (Bradley and DuBois 266). They were the first platinum-selling female rappers due to their hits in the 1980s and 1990s and their song 'Tramp' was one of the first hip-hop songs nominated for the Grammy. (Bradley and DuBois 266) Their music did not just limit itself to Hip-Hop instead it crossed over into the pop world too. The group was founded in 1966 by Cheryl James and Sandra Denton who were friends since college. They released their first record in 1986 called 'Hot, Cool & Vicious' which contained a hit song called 'Push It' and earned the group widespread recognition. "In 1995 Salt-N-Pepa won a Grammy award for best rap performance for a duo or group for 'None of Your Business'." ("Salt-N-Pepa | History, Music, Songs, Push It, Shoop, & Facts"). The group finally disbanded in 2002 as the members wanted to pursue their interests. The group earned many awards and achieved great things but their greatest impact on the Hip-Hop world was that they set a standard for Hip-Hop feminism.

Run-D.M.C was one of the most popular rap groups of all time. The group was credited with bringing hip-hop "into the musical and cultural mainstream, introducing what became known as "new-school" rap." (Tate). The album 'Run-D.M.C' was the first gold album in rhyming history and was also the first album to be featured on MTV. Their songs combined Hip-Hop with "screaming guitar solos." (Tate). This helped them gain a signing with Adidas which made them the first non-athletes paid to endorse shoes and sneakers. The original members of the Run-D.M.C were Joseph Simmons-Run, Darryl McDaniels-D.M.C- D.M.C and Jason Mizell. Joseph Simmons was given the nickname - Run because of his fast turntable manipulation, He was the DJ and the leader of the group. (Tate). They soon started performing together and in 1983 released 'It's Like That'.

## **HISTORY OF BBOYING**

Bboying also known as break dancing is one of the four parts of Hip-Hop, it was introduced in the 1960s and 70s and was popularised by the Latinos and African Americans in the Bronx, New York. ("Break dancing | History, Characteristics, Olympics, & Facts"). It incorporated moves and stunts from gymnastics and martial arts. It was "largely improvisational, made up of variations of 'standard' moves or steps, including freezes, power moves, down rock, and top rock." ("Break dancing | History, Characteristics, Olympics, & Facts"). Dance battles were like a less lethal alternative for gang violence in the 1970's Bronx but they weren't foolproof alternatives, breaking may have been "a stylized, rhythmic, aesthetically framed form of combat" but many times it escalated into violence. (George 87) "Peace is volatile when honour is at stake, and the physical heat of the form itself makes for situations that are highly combustible, as scenes from both Breakin' and Beat Street show." (George 87). In these dance battles, crews would dance against each other and then the best members of the crews would go head to head to determine the winner. (Hager 83). It symbolised the rough world of the streets from where it was known to have originated.

Break dancing originally began as a game, kids and teenagers would go against each other in friendly contests and would perform power moves such as spins and physical contortions, etc. (George 79). By the 1980s when Bboying had been around for a few years, a large amount of people felt like break dancing was outdated and was a "fad." (George 79). Many even believed that it would be soon replaced by roller disco. But by 1984, this belief was gone, breaking had not only spread in the USA but also arrived in Canada, Europe and Japan. (George 79). "Breaking had been featured in the 1983 Hollywood film Flashdance, the independent hip-hop musical film Wild Style, and the documentary Style Wars (which aired on PBS), served as the inspiration for the 1984 films Breakin' and Beat Street, and was rumoured to be the subject of fifteen forthcoming Hollywood movies." (George 79). Soon many mainstream artists adopted the breakdancing style and infused it in their routines and performances. ("Break dancing | History, Characteristics, Olympics, & Facts"). Following mainstream artists such as Michael Jackson, many businesses like Levi's and Coca-Cola included break dancing in their advertisements promoting it with their products. "One hundred breakdancers heated the closing ceremonies of the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. And Michael Jackson had given the form national currency." (George 79). Bboying continued to gain popularity in the 1980s. Many news forums talked about Breaking and by this time Bboying was also performed on Broadway, in prison talent shows, at high school proms etc.

The new age of media has given Breaking a new form and meaning. "So to talk about break dancing you have to divide it into two stages: before and after media." (George 83). Before the media, it had a strong cultural and social significance, symbolising the rough streets of the Bronx, New York. It was a form of "urban vernacular dance" and a fusion of sports. (George 83). After the media, breakdancers separated into 2 groups, the pros and amateurs. For the pros, breaking turned into a theatrical art form, with proper vocabulary and techniques. (George 83). Competitions in this age had a whole new meaning, instead of being famous on the streets, break dancers aimed for cash prizes or even roles in movies. (George 83). The amateurs on the other hand had a different aim altogether, the concept of competitions was completely dismissed. Instead, the aim was physical fitness or even being more like the 'street kids' who became famous due to the many news sources and articles on the topic.



## **HISTORY OF GRAFFITI**

“In breaking, rapping, scratching, and style, hip-hop made its mark by bending, twisting, and rewriting the rules. Graffiti, on the other hand, broke the law.” (George 29). Graffiti also known as writing is a style of art usually aimed at unauthorised marking of public spaces using colourful paintings or flashy writing. Originally the method to create graffiti art was to scratch the surface which is why the art style was named graffiti as it meant ‘scratch’. (Stewart 20). It is an antisocial behaviour performed to gain attention or as a form of thrill-seeking. (“Graffiti | Definition, History, & Facts”). Graffiti started in Philadelphia in the mid-1960s. There were 2 types of artists, the territorial markers and the loners.

The territorial markers and youth gangs used graffiti to intimidate and threaten others. (Stewart 13). These graffiti paintings were done on overpasses, buildings, exterior walls etc. Many of these writers often signed their initials or names as a warning to others and to defend their turf. (Stewart 13). Not only was graffiti used as a means of intimidation but also as a racial boast, in Fairmont, a mostly white neighbourhood in north Philadelphia, neighbored by a black community, there was graffiti on a public wall with the phrase, ‘White Power’ and ‘Do Not Enter.’ (Stewart 13). “By contrast, the loner graffiti writers were not usually gang members and did not defend territory. They followed the city's main transport arteries and had only one intention: to get their names out.” (Stewart 14). Bobby Kidd, Cool Earl and Cornbread were some of the earliest large-scale graffiti artists who sprayed their names in unusual places and were among the first to use spray cans for graffiti.

The risk of getting caught was a big part of graffiti, the bigger the risk writers took, the more respect they got. (Stewart 14). If a writer's hits were big enough or the places the graffiti was done on were risky enough, their peers would call the artist ‘King of the Walls’. When this title was gained the artist would put a crown on top of their name. (Stewart 14). This ‘tradition’ originated in Philadelphia and was soon adopted by the writers of New York. Competitiveness between artists was common at the time and fueled an urge to one-up each other. (Stewart 14). Tity Peace Sign spray painted on an elephant at the Philadelphia Zoo, Bobby Kidd used a police car as his canvas while his friends distracted the cops. In the late 1960s, Cornbread spraypainted, ‘Cornbread welcomes you to Philadelphia’ on the signs at the airport making him one of the most famous graffiti artists of all time. (Stewart 14).

“Subway graffiti altered the environment of New York City and left its mark on the consciousness of millions of subway riders in the 1970s.” (Stewart 19). The magnitude of the phenomenon was unlike that of another city. In 1967, the word ‘graffiti’ was seen in New York for the first time in the “New York City Transportation Authority report on “subway good manners,” which included a list of thirty-nine directives for subway behaviour.”(Stewart 19). One of the 39 directives included, Don't write graffiti. Articles on graffiti were very uncommon between the 1950s to 1971 but by the end of 1971, there was a huge increase in the number of reports on graffiti. (Stewart 19). Soon there were millions of people reading these reports building huge audiences for graffiti. In the day and age, writers wanted their nicknames to be well known so they welcomed publicity. “They transformed a traditionally clandestine activity into something akin to commercial advertising.”(Stewart 19). Many experimented with their logos, some even changed their names as they liked designs of letters made by others and wanted to incorporate them.

“Soon, linear graffiti began to cover New York City. Many different names appeared on walls during the summer of 1969, the majority of them in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan.” (Stewart 20). Many of these names were quickly scribbled on with markers and felt tip pens. Soon a new mystery appeared, the name ‘Taki 183’. (Stewart 20). The name had spread all around Washington Heights. The nickname belonged to a writer named Demetrios. (Stewart 20). The nickname had been given to him by his family since he was an infant, he had started writing graffiti in his neighbourhood and later targeted George Washington High School, while he was attending summer school there. He and his friends soon started targeting the subway, where they would go on Sundays. (Stewart 20)

## **ISSUES THAT AROSE WITH HIP-HOP (BETWEEN THE 1960S AND 1990S)**

Over the years many different issues and questions arose “since Hip-Hop's transition from a local South Bronx, regional, and New York-based phenomenon to a national and subsequently international one.” (Price 45). Some questioned the authenticity while others questioned membership. (Price 45). During the 1970s, while hip-hop was still developing and hadn't turned into a global phenomenon, these issues were often dismissed and often irrelevant. “Artists were simply motivated to articulate their despair and celebrate their self-determination through the foundational elements of DJing, graffiti tagging, b-boying/b-girling, MCing, and later beat-boxing and producing.” (Price 45). Yet once the expression became international and started spreading out from its epicentre, many challenged the authenticity of the Hip-Hop groups outside New York due to the differences in sound, dialect and sentiments. (Price 46). During the 1980s new questions regarding membership started arousing such as, “Do practitioners have more rights and privileges within the community than the fans or onlookers, who are inspired and affected by this uniquely intimate and often accessible form of expression? Is inclusion into the realm of Hip-Hop based on participation as an artist, or can participation as a consumer offer the same entitlement to claim Hip-Hop affiliation? Is Hip-Hop only for Blacks? Latinos and Latinas? Is the culture only for the poor and downtrodden? For those who are broken and forgotten?” (Price 46). There were many more questions like these and they complicated the culture even further. There were never any definitive answers to these questions but the sentiments behind each of these questions were valid, any quick answers would usually be due to bias and stereotypes. (Price 46).

## **BIGGEST MILESTONES IN HIP-HOP BETWEEN 1965 AND 1980 (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)**

In 1965, graffiti started gaining popularity with the help of a teenage writer named Cornbread. The next year, the father of hip-hop, Clive Campbell moved from Jamaica to the Bronx, New York, he was known for being one of the biggest pioneers of hip-hop. (Price 105).

In 1969, Don Campbell invented the Campbellock, renamed locking and came under breakdancing, in Los Angeles, California. The dance style was made popular by B-boys and B-girls at the time. Later father of electro-funk and godfather of hip-hop, Afrika Bambataa started Deejaying in 1970 and in the same year, a new dance style was being created called the Catch On. (Price 105).

In 1971, Taki 183 became the first writer to gain popularity with the help of news media. His tags were in an article in the New York Times, which influenced many others to write graffiti. (Price 106). The New York Police Department Bronx Youth Gang Task Force was also created the same year, this was under the command of Deputy Inspector William Lakeman. The following year, a new graffiti crew named Soul Artists was formed by Futura 2000, Tracy 158 and ALI. (Price 106). The United Graffiti Artists was created the same year by Hugo Martinez. It was created "to bring recognition to graffiti artists and to serve as an artistic activist group." (Price 106). In 1973, Kool Herc threw countless deejaying parties in the recreation room of his apartment. He also learned the technique of breaking beats, which made instrumental breakdowns last longer, giving break dancers time to start dancing. (Price 108). In November of the same year, Afrika Bambataa organised the first Universal Zulu Nation meeting, which marked the formal beginning of the hip-hop culture. Spin won the first Taki Award awarded for best grand design. The Razor Gallery in New York became the first place to hold an exhibit of graffiti pieces. (Price 108).

In 1974, Kool Herc moved from throwing parties in his apartment to places such as Twilight Zone and Hevalo and the Sparkle. (Price 108). DJs also began to speak and shout phrases over their music giving birth to rhyiming. (Price 108). In 1975, Mcing started evolving from shouting party phrases over the track. The first MC team was formed including Kool Herc, Clark Kent, Coke La Rock and DJ Timmy Tim and was named Kool Herc and the Herculoids. Not only was the first MC crew formed but DJ Grand Wizard Theodore also invented the technique known as the scratch.

On the 4th of July in 1976, Caine, MAD 103, and Flame 1 became the first writers to cover a whole train in graffiti and called it the Freedom Train. (Price 109). Painting trains was one of the greatest forms of graffiti at the time. Afrika Bambataa's first official Deejaying battle also took place against Disk King Mario at the Junior High School 123. (Price 109). Grandmaster Flash invented one of the greatest techniques in the DJing world known as the Quick Mix Theory. (Price 109). The first ever boombox was also sold in 1976, it was called the Superscope by Marantz. In 1977, the Crash Crew was formed and was one of the first to be recorded. DJ Disco Wiz was also known for being the first Latino Deejay. (Price 109). In 1977, the Rock Steady Crew, one of the most well-known breakdancing crews, was formed. Jack the Rapper held his first annual music convention which was the first convention ever to have rap music. (Price 109). Although there were lots of positive things in 1977, that year DJ Kool Herc got stabbed at one of his parties and disappeared for a while before coming back.

In 1978, the term 'rap' became official and was used by the music industry too. A new club that only played rap music was opened in the Bronx the same year. The Roland 808 was an electronic drum machine and became one of the most popular drum machines at the time. At the time, Grandmaster Flash had become Kurtis Blow's DJ and a new dance known as the Robot was also introduced. In 1979, a new crew named the Cold Crush Brothers was formed and gained immense popularity, playing music and performing live shows around the Bronx. The same year, the first record label that was about rap, Sugarhill Records, created a new crew named the Sugar Hill Gang, they recorded the Rapper's Delight and became the first rap single to hit the top 40 and sell 2 million copies. Grandmaster Flash also formed "the group Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. In addition to Flash, members include Melle Mel (Melvin Glover), Kidd Creole (Nathaniel Glover), Cowboy (Keith Wiggins), Rahiem (Guy Williams), and Mr. Ness a.k.a. Scorpio (Eddie Morris)." Kurtis Blow also recorded Christmas Rapping which helped him the first MC to sign a major record deal with a big record label and the Rock Steady Crew further revolutionised breakdancing by adding acrobatics and stunts.

Lastly, in 1980, Kurtis Blow had the first rap single to be certified gold named The Breaks and it soon went for platinum too. He performed it on Soul Train and became the first MC to appear on national television. The first photos of breakdancing to be published appeared in the New York Post with members of High Times Crew as they got arrested for B-boying at the Washington Heights subway. The Sequence Girls inspired many women to give hip-hop a try with the help of their single Funk You which appeared on the charts.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, hip-hop is a complex and symbolic culture founded in the Bronx, New York. It was created as a form of self-expression and a means of sharing personal experiences in the 1960s due to the state of urban decay in the Bronx which caused many people especially African Americans and Latinos to get frustrated and angry. Many believe that its origin started with the arrival of Clive Campbell in the Bronx in 1967 and his first party in 1973. He is also known as the father of hip-hop with Afrika Bambataa being the godfather. Grandmaster Flash also appeared in many records, so much so that he is also known as one of the founders of hip-hop. There are 4 elements of hip-hop: B-boying, MCing, Deejaying and Writing aka Graffiti. Some famous artists from these categories were Tupac Shakur, Grandmaster Flash, Jean Michel Basquiat and Crazy Legs.

DJing originated in the 1970s along with the other elements of hip-hop. It kicked off with mobile disk jockeys using two different prerecorded hits on two different turntables to mix the tunes of both songs. Grandmaster Flash, Kool Herc and Afrika Bambataa were known as the holy trinity of hip-hop and laid the groundwork for DJing. Afrika Bambataa created the Zulu Nation to reduce gang warfare and promote unity, love and fun. He threw his first party in 1976 and was heavily influenced by Kool Herc's style of music. The Zulu nation included artists from all the elements of hip-hop and greatly influenced artists around the world. Kool Herc immigrated from Jamaica to New York in 1967 and was influenced by the backyard parties of Jamaica. He incorporated lots of his culture into his music and was known for his 6-foot speakers known as the Herculoids.

His music encouraged people to attend hip-hop parties which were much more affordable than discos and still made people dance. There were many innovations in DJing but some of the most noticeable ones were Phasing, Back Spinning, Cutting and Breaking beats.

MCing is the most well-known element of hip-hop in the modern era but this was not always the case. DJs used to dominate the arena in the beginning but about a decade later, MCs started coming into the picture, each crew would have 3 or 4 MCs and the DJs soon started becoming a background more than the lead. Female artists such as MC Lyte and Roxanne Shanty influenced fashion too. Some pioneering crews were the Sugar Hill Gang, Salt N Pepa and the Run-D.M.C. The Sugar Hill gang was known for its hit single Rapper's Delight, which helped them surpass Grandmaster Flash and his MCs overnight. The crew members were Wonder Mike, Big Bank Hank, and Master Gee. Salt N Pepa consisted of 3 members, Cheryl James, Sandra Denton and Deidra Roper. They were the first platinum-selling female MCs. The crew was also awarded a Grammy in 1995. The Run-D.M.C was a crew that was credited for introducing new school rap. Their album called the Run D.M.C was the first to be featured on MTV.

B-boying aka break dancing incorporated moves from martial arts and gymnastics into its choreography. It was largely improvisational and was an alternative for gang violence that occurred in the Bronx but wasn't completely foolproof since many times, dance battles escalated into violence. It originally began as a game for kids where they would go head to head showing off their stunts and moves. Many believed it would be a fad but that would be replaced by the discos but it was quite the opposite. Many movies were also made featuring the world of breakdancing and B-boying and many mainstream artists such as Michael Jackson also adopted the style and added their personalities to it.

Graffiti is a style of art which usually involves marking a public space using colourful paintings and flashy writing, many times it is used as a form of thrill-seeking. The first form of this art style used scratching instead of colours. Some used graffiti to intimidate and threaten while others used it as a tool to gain popularity and get their names out. Some early graffiti artists were Cornbread, Bobby Kidd and Cool Earl. A big part of graffiti originated in Philadelphia and spread out to other places like the Bronx. Many took big risks to get the thrill of going against the law as Graffiti was illegal and came under vandalism. In the Bronx, the canvas for the art was usually trains and the first train that was written on was named the Freedom Train. Some parts of hip-hop were illegal but there were many other problems, there were many questions that arose with the authenticity and membership of hip-hop and many never had answers that were not based on stereotypes and bias. These questions were dismissed in the modern era but raised valid concerns and sentiments. Overall hip-hop is a complex culture that originated in the Bronx and is seen as a form of self-expression and a way to share personal experiences.

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