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Theorizing Hip Hop Dance

“Dance is about saying something. If you ain’t got nothin to say, get off the dance floor.”

–La Vaughn Robinson, June 22, 2002
Plenary Session of the Society
of Dance History Scholars,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

At first, the hip hop dance idea was ridiculed and seen as just another dance form from black folks acting the fool. It was difficult to recognize hip hop dance as text because it was discounted. A strange phenomenon materialized: hip hop dance spread ’round the globe. As such it was embraced by popular cultures from The Netherlands to Australia. Big corporations utilized it for capital gain by associating it with product and service consumption. Why did commercialization of hip hop dance work? What meanings and messages are held within it? What does codification of hip hop dance look like?

These and other questions compelled exploration into how commoditization, codification, and global capitalism in the mainstream eliminated particular theories and histories intimately woven in the original texts of hip hop dance. One consideration was that separation of the dance from its theory and history via commoditization, codification, and the effects of global capitalism denied the urgency of African Americans’ outrage at their unending marginalization. This historical marginalization, it could be argued, is the social fabric the

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dance form emerged from, and to a large extent is what the dance speaks and writes about.

This chapter then, accomplishes several different tasks. First it reviews, for purposes of this book, relevant theoretical approaches to situate hip hop dance to ultimately answer some of these questions and necessarily raise others. Theoretical approaches include some of those used in dance theory, African American semiotics, and political economy. The reason for doing this is to build the base on which certain hip hop dances will be theorized, both in this chapter and in subsequent ones. As theory is defined by hip hop dance on the pages here, interpretations and meanings are offered. These meanings and interpretations are carried into the subsequent chapters as well. As stated before, but which will not be stated again, this is not to suggest that what is presented here is the absolute truth, the natural facts without any other interpretation. It is what this historian reads, given the experiences of this body.

Dance Theory

Dance is frequently interpreted as a momentary passing or fleeting expression that provides temporary relief from what ails you. Such a remedy when positioned this way cannot be predicted and happens only by chance. Sometimes this does happen, especially when the dancing takes place in a social setting. But those interpretations are not exclusive and exhaustive especially when we look at the text and social history embodied in hip hop as a black social dance. Writing and theorizing about hip hop dance as social history can keep hip hop dance tied to its texts, meanings and historical archives. That is the overriding purpose of this book.

Hip hop dance functions as a text and serves as public discourse not only for African Americans but for many other consumers and readers of this rich and powerful text. Hip hop as a black social dance offers texts that deliver tactical ways of being in the world as well as metaphors and theories about the world of the dancers collectively and individually. It is writing that travels not on paper but on bodies.

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This ideology is supported by work done by Susan Foster (1995). Foster pioneered choreographies of writing theory. She theorized that a body is a writing related to other bodies. In other words, no body moves or writes in isolation and dance is writing and writing is dance. Once moved, the body is never the same, and it leaves only marks and metaphors and meanings when it does move. These marks are equal to words. Foster assists readers of danced texts to answer a fundamental question: How can you find what writings a body has left? Her response to this is multifaceted.

First you have to say what bodies you are talking about. Black, white, or what have you, male or female. Then you have to define their routine activities, no matter how trivial or important, no matter what they may be. Next one must look at the collective politics pressing on the bodies. After completing the definition of the body and what it is doing, look at the assumptions others have for that body and the way the writing body says something different depending on circumstances and contexts. Now one can imagine a very black body, with lean limbs, wearing sneakers and sweats. Earrings, gold chains and if the body is male, a do-rag; if the body is female, braids with extensions. For each gender, the colors of the outfits signify. That body is read one way. Now if the only thing that changes between these two bodies is the color of the skin, from a very black shade to one of maybe the color of coffee with a lot of cream, the bodies signify something else. It could be that the wealthy reader sees nothing but black people entertaining them. Black people could see classism circulating throughout the African American sector of society. And the readings could be interpreted differently by the genders, in each of the groups just mentioned. But it is this that Foster is pointing to when she suggests that a body's definition and the context it finds it in writes texts for readers. Along with being read by a certain set of contextual meanings, the body reading and writing changes over time.

In regard to writing history, Foster continues, there are varied reasons for studying bodies from the past. This is accomplished through analysis of documents left behind for different reasons. The selection of documents in the writing of history is dependent on the body

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inhabited by the historian along with the interaction between the historian and the bodies she is writing about. The interpretation of bodies and their cultural production of meaning holds a significant key.

This goes to the notion of the cultural production of meaning, and history, and how these are interpreted. Again, relying on Foster's work, writing bodies have the same textual capabilities as the word, only accessible through understanding the interpretation of those cultural meanings. In other words, a white woman writing and studying hip hop dance history will have a different interpretation than a black woman, and each of those will in turn be different depending on their economic class, and whether they are gay or straight, for example. The same kinds of demarcations can be made for men who would write history and dance. Once these different aspects of the body are integrated, then we can have choreographed historical writing.

Taking a panoptic view of the areas of bodily writing and scholarly research from different fields, Foster concluded that choreographers, dance notation scholars, and anthropologists developed a categorical and anatomical analysis of the body, fueling the notion of dance as a natural phenomenon. She indicated that it was as late as the 1960s when Foucault and Barthes theoretical approaches emerged that the body became non-natural, a "relation between signifier and signified" (Foster 1995, 14). Between that period and her publication she argued that dance studies had not given the body agency either because the field neglected "choreographic intent" (Foster 1995, 15). Doing so, however, positions dance as a body writing and allows dance making to be a form of theorizing. She writes, "Where bodily endeavors assume the status of forms of articulation and representation, their movements acquire a status and function equal to the words that describe them" (Foster 1995, 9). This is one of the aspects of theorizing that forms a foundation for understanding messages and meanings in hip hop dance. The form is chronologically charged, loaded, weighted, interpretable, and deep with meaning and understanding of what being black involves, of what being a black man involves, and of what being a black woman involves.

My writing here on these pages as an African American dance his-

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torian and marketing professor necessarily means that I view the world as an African American woman and will record what I observe in a manner that reflects my positionality within the world. Furthermore, my writing here on these pages depends, as Foster says, on the protective covering given to me through corporeal meanings embedded in my physical practices derived from my identification with African American experiences. The same can be said of African American hip hop dance historians, whom we customarily recognize as dancers recording observations that are embedded in bodily corporeal meanings stemming from their experiences in America. The method of documentation is based on, and at the same time protected by, their positionality within the world. Going further, Foster makes statements that I must quote at length here, which stage the way body-history writing and research take place:

To choreograph history, then, is first to grant that history is made by bodies, and then to acknowledge that all those bodies, in moving and documenting their movements, in learning about past movement, continually conspire together and are conspired against.... These past and present bodies transit to a mutually constructed semiosis. Together they configure a tradition of codes and conventions of bodily signification that allows bodies to represent and communicate with other bodies. Together they put pen to page. Together they dance with words [Foster 1995, 10–11].

Seen and understood this way, we can return agency and give credibility to African American hip hop dancing bodies — pull the rug right out from underneath ideologies that push hip hop dance as a mere commercial-popular-culture-young-people’s-profit maximizing thing.

Along with Foster’s theoretical approach to writing, it will be necessary to undermine essentializing black people and hip hop dance since it is not because black people are black that we dance, that we like dancing, or that we can.¹ A feminist analysis provided by Foster in a later work (1998) will be helpful in achieving this aim. Following Teresa de Lauretis’ (1990) theorization of essentializing, Foster set forth an expanded view of gender such that it extends beyond biological aspects.

According to Foster, the mental habit of essentializing involves ways of interpreting. It is what people do to simplify, avoid, live in

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denial and form procedures for purchasing goods and services. Only there it is referred to perhaps as a heuristic. When it mutates into essentials, so to speak, we say the Chinese people are good at so and so even if they have tight eyes, or the Germans are terrific at producing automobiles even if they have that history hanging over their heads from the Nazis, or the Americans do not produce but those black Americans sure can work (produce) and dance. Such habits of mind, or attitudes as they can be called, extend to gender, race, dance, and the ways in which theories are applied in the field of cultural studies. Foster deconstructed this stance as it relates to gender and used dance as her medium. To accomplish this, she established that a separation was needed to show how one has to think through relationships between, for example, performance and theory. She argued that dance is the performance (a skill), and choreography is the text (theory). By extension therefore, black people can both dance (a skill) and choreograph (write theory).

To make her point, Foster described a general creative process embarked upon by choreographers, and choreographers' assignments of responsibilities to bodies. The assignments both are gender- and ethno-dependent. Once choreography is written it is adapted and changed deliberately or not (improvisation is how one may think of this) by dancers who will perform it. Uppermost in the mind though is that the improvisations do not eliminate the choreographic intent. Over time, a choreographic score complete with improvisational performance becomes accessible to viewers. It is clear that anything but a natural phenomenon has occurred during this creative process, and this kind of process occurs with the black social dance called hip hop.

Foster then turned to break dancing, relying on Banes (1981) and Rose (1994) to support the argument that social change, relations between men and women, dance, and time are interwoven. (Banes' analysis of break dancing was descriptive, whereas Rose's is theoretical, separate treatments of the skill versus theory dichotomy.) In the break dancing scenario, black males choreographed historical texts reflecting political concerns while later, black women choreographed in support of the black males' agenda while simultaneously creating

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their own feminism. Foster concluded that choreography and systems of representation (theories), mixed with the skill to execute and improvise the dance, yielded the “cultural moment” wherein hip hop dance could be read. This, as it is understood and used in the context of hip hop dance, forms the nexus that erases the habit of essentializing. In other words, hip hop dance is not a naturally black thing but came to pass as a result of certain processes. Those processes included body writing about socioeconomics and politics, reading the reflections and projections of images of people on and off of each other, and documents of historical interactions.

Methods for reading dance have come not only from dance theories, but also from ethnography. Adrienne Kaeppler (1972) argued that dance ethnology was descriptive, second order, and meaningful only if the descriptive data were analyzed using ethnographic theory and method. Expanding the ways in which dance was studied in the field, she used an ethno-scientific approach so that the resulting description would be equal to learning to speak a language, giving “a reader the information necessary to operate as a member of the society” (Kaeppler 1972, 173). Simultaneously, one had to determine which movements, movements that in her view were likened to linguistics, were important to the members of society and which ones were not, whether they were *emic* or *etic*. In her view, “*emic*” equaled differences recognized in movements by a particular culture, whereas *etic* represented differences in movement that were considered culture-free. Kaeppler then moved into setting up a general method for learning and analyzing dances from producers of a particular dance tradition.

Using this point of view it could be argued that hip hop dance was first order, given in an *emic* framework. African Americans knew how to operate in a society that was fraught with double meanings and Significations but nevertheless could write documents with their bodies using a language that was accessible to those who spoke it. Interpretations provided daily ways of being, knowledge of what to do, and theories about the world. It could be argued, then, that hip hop dance *etic* emerged later yielding a dance that Others copied for entertainment value only. Then it re-emerged as an *emic* within societies under

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the pressure of capitalism and globalization, as an *emic* for articulating issues.

Historically, other assumptions were made about dance, in addition to the notion that dance is non-theoretical, and can only be described. That dance is feminine, freeing, intuitive, and non-verbal has anchored and bounded it away from theoretical models for centuries. Janet Wolff (1995) examined this; she insisted that dance required cultural analysis. Moreover, she brought to light, in her critique of feminist theory and dance, that dance as “freeing” had only been subject to women dancers. In this association, dance was seen as intuitive, natural, and non-verbal by virtue of its being separated from the male, which was considered verbal. Instead of seeing dance this way, she argued that dance could never be separated or occur outside of language because talking and dancing work and create together. When teaching, choreographing, or performing, Wolff noted that stories were being told with bodies, written program notes were often available for concert dances, and sometimes words were incorporated into the performance. “The experience of dance, by its performers or by its audiences, can never be an experience outside language” (Wolff 1995, 80). At the same time, Wolff believed as Foster suggested, that dance is mediated by culture and is a social practice. As an aside, I may add that men’s dance does not equate to freedom but rather something else. Wolff never really said what men’s dance is. In the hip hop dance world these separations did not occur however. Separation of the dance in its entirety did though as evidenced by the plethora of male rappers, violence, books, articles, and analysis of hip hop music (the masculine) and little on hip hop dance (the feminine).

At this point then a summary may be organizing. First we have hip hop dance as a creative text written in relation to the body’s placement on the planet, interpreted by readers. Hip hop dance is written about depending on the body doing the writing. Hip hop dance not being an essential function of black people, not being natural, not being feminine. The dance could be considered an *emic* expression useful as an *etic* and then reforming as an *emic* again. Because it gives a way to interpret, theorize, and tactically negotiate life, it is not to be

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understood as a writing that can cure ailments or be disregarded as a feminine unimportant endeavor. It is language, it is a system of Signification and has meaning. Now that this picture has been sketched and this foundation placed, it would be useful to consider some work that has been done in African and African American studies as it relates to hip hop dance.

Hip Hop Dance and African American Language

June Jordan wrote about ways black people communicate (1988). In one of her essays in *On Call*, she described the differences between Black English and Standard White (American) English, and went so far as to show the rules of the language, verb system, tenses and so forth, and how these are different than that of Standard White English. Moreover, Jordan gave the reader background explaining the lengths that black people have gone to distance themselves from the notion of the wrongness of Black English, and how that language has not been given legitimacy in written form. As such, she indicated that Black English could be viewed as an “endangered species, as a perishing, irreplaceable system of community intelligence, or we should expect its extinction, and along with that, the extinguishing of much that constitutes our own proud, and singular identity” (1988, 123). This is contrary to the ways in which Black English has been used in mainstream media and advertising placements, the ways in which certain phrases have been adapted into what we know as American English such that it is “becoming more Black, or less White, despite the expected homogenizing effects of television, and other mass media” (Jordan 1988, 124).

And unlike Standard American English writing and speaking, there are three aspects to Black English that set it apart from the usual ways in which we think about language structure. Black English, written or spoken, is linked, as Jordan relates, to an existential phenomenon.² It is not a “death of the author” approach as suggested by Foucault and Barthes.³ Rather, Black English is comprised of “life, voice, and clarity” which takes place in the present tense. Indeed, she points out

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this clear distinction between Standard American English and Black English:

Our [Black] language evolves from a culture that abhors all abstraction, or anything tending to obscure or delete the fact of the human being who is here and now/the truth of the person who is speaking or listening.... Every sentence assumes the living and active participation of at least two human beings, the speaker and the listener [Jordan 1988, 129].

Black English as Jordan spoke of is what I define as US Ebonics (Ebonics from now on) for purposes of this book. Ebonics mainly functions as an oral communication method, structured and varied, but constantly evolving in its intricacies.

I concur and extend Jordan's interpretation of Black English as a way of understanding hip hop dance as another means of non-written communication. The dance represents the desire to "say something real to somebody real" (Jordan 1988, 129). At issue here is the notion that hip hop dance speaks not in a language that would be recognizable as white, but rather in a language that is inherently black, one that exists, one that developed parallel to, and in opposition to, an existing domination to give the speaker presence and life rather than absence and death. It would be a supposition therefore that other dances also speak in a particular language for particular reasons.

Tricia Rose pushed this ideology further in *Black Noise* (1994). Rose's work primarily focused on a history of rap music as it was situated within a broader context of hip hop culture, which she defines as comprising lyrics, dance, and graffiti coming into being during the late 1970s.⁴ Note that within the structure of hip hop, each of their aspects represents what we could consider the male and female roles of communication, i.e., male writing and speaking, and female movement. However, it would do well to suggest that these taxonomies are useful only in helping us to categorize aspects of hip hop. All of them are methods of communicating which use Signification and Signifying and until subjected to media and commercialization, defied the taxonomic structure.

Gates' (1988) work, as mentioned in the Preface, is far and away the most substantially applicable explanation of the complexity involved

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in communicating through Ebonics that underlies hip hop — dance, lyrics, and writing. The fact of the matter is that African Americans appropriated and continue to appropriate for their own use, for the distraction of non-fluent readers and the informing of the fluent ones, a completely new system of communicating. The new system is as distorted as a hall of mirrors, Gates says, in trying to comprehend the ways in which “identical signifiers” and homonyms form the basis of simultaneous trickery and knowingness (Gates 1988, 45). Moreover and significantly, “The relationship that black ‘Signification’ bears to the English ‘signification’ is, paradoxically, a relation of difference inscribed within a relation of identity” which, together with Signifying creates “a noisy disturbance in silence” (Gates 1988, 45). In other words, this becomes yet another method used in acquiring a systematic communication mechanism functioning outside the boundaries of domination: We got our own thang we got yours and you ain’t got ours.

Like Jordan by implication (1988) and Gates overtly (1988), Rose (1994) suggested that the principles underlying hip hop provided a “blueprint for social resistance and affirmation” (Rose 1994, 39). Employing a critical theorist approach par excellence, she surmised that the lyrics arose and gave way to social rupture, lyrics which themselves are written in Ebonics. So it is with the dance. That is to say, the language of hip hop dance layers, embellishes, resists (Rose 1994, 39), but further it comments, teaches, warns, and transforms messages and meanings into readable commentaries. Such commentaries can be social ruptures, but they can also be historical, theoretical, strategic, and tactical texts. Much like a mathematical proof, the texts can build upon themselves, arriving at the answer if you will, only after conducting a series of required steps which have to be performed before the answer has meaning.

Thomas De Frantz’s *The Black Beat Made Visible: Hip Hop Dance and Body Power* (2004) supports the notions that hip hop dance speaks, and has dual communication modes that are comprised of powerful building blocks resulting in “corporeal orature” (De Frantz 2004, 67). Moreover, he believed that the corporeal orature resides within the African American domain: if you are outside of it something is lost in

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translation. Therefore De Frantz is saying, as is the mathematical formula done correctly, that not only do black people have the ability to create outside the existing channels using a methodological approach, but also that their creative methods yield power to act, an answer to something, a theory, a proof.⁵

Knowing these theoretical foundations for hip hop dance, what then can be said about projecting the dance onto the screen? What happens to it when it is taken from the empowering structure that it is to an image in advertising? While this topic will be covered extensively in the chapter on hip hop dance and commercialization, it is useful to discuss what goes on from the point of view of what can be called theoretical undermining — that is when the dance is used outside the contexts within which it was created.

Hip Hop Dance and Social Identity

Allowing the dance to signify and theorize at the level of the individual raises the issue of what type of social, or more macro, texts exist when certain phrases are connected with others and particularly over time. We know from the above paragraphs that the work done by this dance form is done with the expectation of presence. Does it also then allow for documentation as a primary text, a selected volume of history or historicizing?

Jane C. Desmond took this to task in her essay “Embodying Difference” found in *Meaning in Motion* (1997). She raised a number of interesting points, some of which will be useful in the analysis of hip hop dance texts. First she indicated that by studying dance texts, increased understanding of social identity, along with its negotiation, geographic and historical contexts can be achieved. Next she addressed the ways in which dance texts shift meanings when the text migrates from one group to another. Specifically, movement styles are “an important mode of distinction between social groups and it is usually actively learned or passively absorbed in the home and community ... a primary text ... that signals group affiliation and group differences” (1997, 31) that make sense only in context with other people.

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Recognition of movement as a primary social text can be had by those who can write it and read it. By this framework Desmond's analysis indicated that there is an *emic* and *etic* classification system, in that some dances are appropriate and necessary if danced by certain individuals while at the same time the awareness of who is not dancing which dance is germane (1997, 32). The ability to notice these sets of distinction further allows reading of class and economic status. These readings then constitute attitudes that are used in assessing bodies. And more, by being able to trace these historical attitudes of assessment, we can see changes in social fabrics of one group reading dance to another.

Following upon this argument, hip hop dance needs to be understood and elevated to primary contextual social text. It further needs analysis as a migratory text that moved from one social group, if you will, to another under *emic* and *etic* circumstances. Going from black to white; having black mean one thing at one time, and having it mean something else at a later time. Having hip hop dance traced back to the African Diaspora and Middle Passage to slavery, through all the trials and tribulations of freedom, segregation, affirmative action, and globalization. The reader may recall that for long periods of time, which time can include the present moment, some groups saw it as a travesty to be black. Few wanted to drink water after a black person or get into a pool if a black person had been in it before them. You know the issues that are being referenced here and there is no need for a complete restatement of them. However, those beliefs were not limited to groups in the United States, but rather circulated throughout the world in other areas where slave trades and colonization took place. Then being black became, during the 1970s, something else. It was still a tragedy to be black but it was affirmed. More will be said about the economics of this period of time which was extremely instrumental in developing hip hop dance. For now though, with the circulation of *etic* hip hop dance images through global media, what does it mean now to be black? How does this *etic* form a new *emic*, or does it?

Referring again to Desmond, she suggested that dance texts mutate but retain traces of their origin even while being "refashioned" for new and different purposes (1997, 37). That point being made, a main pur-

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pose that is now beneficial to contemplate and consider is that hip hop dance texts as *emic* facilitated creation of and circulated in many imagined communities, such communities as described by Benedict Anderson (1983). Anderson's work traced the ways in which people developed mental connections and affiliations with one another in disparate geographies comprising real or non-real (imaginary) nations. Keep in mind that the concepts of nation and nationalism are constructions that have meaning only within the realm of cultural artifact in that these have to exist as an agreement between members of a society. Moreover, these concepts and constructions are invented and endure for particular purposes.

Further, Anderson demonstrated that these mental connections have been formed, and broken, and reformed at the pleasure of the dominant during different political and economic regimes, at different points in time. The mental connections to polities are and were facilitated, and in fact formulated, by language, religion, and capitalism along with all of the underlying cultural and social controls embedded in each of these institutions. At its core, imagined communities involve a Marxist point of view concerning the segmentation of people into two main world-classes *vis a vis* relations to production, that is, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (Anderson 1983, 4).

The imagined community has several different underlying principles that must be kept in mind, but only a few of them will be addressed here.⁶ "It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1983, 6, italics original). And while imagined, the nation or community comprises millions, even billions of people, infiltrating it with finiteness rather than a construction that is boundless. Comprised of people who work hard and capitalists who extract the surplus value of the labor "it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is a fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as will-

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ingly to die for such limited imaginings” (Anderson, 1983, 7, italics original). And it is time bound, so that each person within the imagined community has a sense of urgency, a relational commitment to doing something while others are, or an understanding that others have done something, have endured something. Anderson suggested that one can think of this simultaneous consumption as it was done with newspapers, which he suggested was a fictional depiction of what was actually taking place in a geographic location.

For purposes of hip hop dance texts, the nation of dancers in the global imagined community has expanded resulting from increased segmentation and segregation as capital seeks its highest returns. However, the real community of black people has had direct experience with the effects of capital flows and as such know how to do something, have endured dealing with it. Now though the communication device that had been used to theorize and teach has been appropriated showing not the pain of the past but the fictional happiness of the present. This image is circulated to show that hard work eventually pays off. Now black people they got game, got bank, and got it goin’ on, even though at one time they was slaves, but don’t go there. What better image of consumption and success to project? Now the imagined community of people who are next to homeless (this includes marginalized whites, laborers in corporate America, and so on, in the hip hop dance nation) but pretend that they are not, comprises the worldwide consumption machine contributing to the world-class dichotomy which is a truly American phenomenon, a fiction that promises prosperity with hard work linked to hip hop dance. Consumption is a cool thing, and without our direct knowing, is the only way the world continues to turn — profits. Those profits are not had without a level of state intervention so that the flow of capital seeks the highest profit, coming from the touch of that shipment, with that product, with those peoples, married in this fashion, administered by those governments, during that time (Anderson 1983, 63, 115). Hip hop dance has now become the unofficial language of the state to coerce profit making. Indeed, as Scott remarked hip hop dance “has been claimed as American culture’s true indigenous dance expression, but not officially....

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The pressure of global capital on the local site of creation and performance renders the act of creation into the repetition of production” (Scott 2001, 107, 127). And some would have us believe that the unofficial language is a natural occurrence among peoples within an imagined community, oppressed and simultaneously ready to die for new kitchen appliances, automobiles, and fashion furniture paid for with no interest or payments for twelve months?⁷

Not only do imagined communities inform the text. Hip hop dance speaks to a global nation of real laborers of multiple ethnicities, trying to imagine their lives worth living under capitalist economics. What better image to use than hip hop dance texts as *etic*? Emmanuel Wallerstein’s *Geopolitics and Geocultures* (1992) and his earlier *The Capitalist World-Economy* (1979) critically examine the fate of laborers, states and polities, economic systems, and corporations using a historical Marxist interpretation. Each page of his work is thick with information; it feels like a treatise that was channeled from some higher power regarding the state of capitalism that we have to look forward to, and it is impossible to reproduce it here. Let it suffice then for it to be said of his work that what was being drawn in his first book was the explanation of the capitalist world economy as part of a process of humanity moving from point A to point B as a global society, point B being that place in which it is realized that the process of capital accumulation has been harmful. Nevertheless, the world market has to be explored in order to arrive at point B—whatever that may be, but assuredly it is better than capitalism. In the second publication Wallerstein suggested that even though all aspects of the ways in which capital has been extracted runs against an individual’s sense of self preservation it remains part of this process and this is the reason people do it. The process of going from this point to that future point involves the production and manufacture of cultural structure at the world level (1992, 169). That cultural structure affords the working body an imagined community engaged in economically controlling devices at the individual level, such as the African Diaspora and slavery, sexism, and unequal wealth distribution (1992, 169). Focusing on the function of racism as such a device, Wallerstein supposed that we

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have now moved from one of the capitalist world economy's control mechanisms to a new one: race consciousness. Race consciousness (you know: a politically correct and sometimes not really believed national view that the way in which the dominant class treated those people was wrong) grew out of racism and in so doing linked some sort of positive nationalism with a trope that had previously been negative. Now by inference, race consciousness has infiltrated hip hop dance texts, facilitating the imagined communities, furthering both consumption and exploitation on the one hand and profit maximization on the other. Adopt hip hop dance as the universal dance language and you too can overcome. It is a response, a textual response, to and a theorization of certain social issues. These include, but are not limited to, institutionalized global capitalism, racism, and race consciousness. Ellen Graff described a similar local phenomenon in *Stepping Left* (1997). Writing about dance texts in the 1930s and 1940s during a particularly turbulent social and economic period, she believed people were "driven by a kind of moral fervor to respond to the complex social and political issues surrounding them" (Graff 1997, 3). There was and is a moral fervor to the pitch and pace of profit taking around the globe, at the juncture of creation and circulation of hip hop dance. Of course, it is not to suggest that people will dance to fix what ails them. However, believe that some black people have qualifications to talk to working bodies and help them with the theorization process. How that gets manipulated is up to the capitalist world economic engine.

At the same time, hip hop dance as text facilitates profit production via multiculturalism through corporatism. In terms of multiculturalism, the reference is made to the deliberate production of a sense of community designed by the corporation to foster reaping of profits from working bodies. Multiculturalism as presented and used here is not an ephemeral natural melding of a fantasy of "we are the world" and living in paradise because we all get along. No, it is not that. It is the dissemination of images to imagined communities that serve to keep the working classes working and the wealthy class wealthy. Producing multiculturalism with the purpose of commodification is concerned with corporate interests, not individual interests. Anything that

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can be usurped will be used to achieve this end, including “cultural difference separated out from the material conflicts” of the community in which they arose (Lowe 1997, 87). Hip hop dance is used for those same reasons, that is, in the production of multiculturalism for ends pursued by profit seekers.

And it may be useful to think about what a global corporation is, and while raising questions ask exactly what is corporatism? Corporations can be multinational, national, or global depending on the ways in which products or services are produced, and the ways in which the product or service is marketed. A national corporation sees itself as being bound with the geographic borders of the nation in which it resides, and uses only a set of domestic marketing strategies. Notice that a national company can be American but be located elsewhere. A multinational corporation sees itself as using multiple marketing strategies to fit different geographies around the globe, where as a global company markets its products and services as if it has only one market.⁸ Corporatism, according to Merriam Webster “is the organization of a society into industrial and professional corporations serving as organs of political representation and exercising some control over persons and activities within their jurisdiction” (www.m-w.com). Note that the corporation itself is seen, in this and other legal definitions, as an organism, an entity of its own body, soul, mind, and spirit, but no one person is responsible for it.

But these definitions and approaches to the corporation, while themselves slippery and complex enough, exclude other aspects of globalization necessary to situate the ways in which hip hop dance functions within it. Consider what Fredric Jameson (1998) theorized about globalization. He believed that “globalization is a communicational concept, which alternately masks and transmits cultural or economic meanings” (Jameson 1998, 55). These meanings can have positive or negative connotations, depending on how they are read and interpreted. On the one hand it can mean the celebration of difference while on the other it cataclysmically forces “rapid assimilation of hitherto autonomous markets [to support] forced integration of countries all over the globe into precisely that new global division of labor ... a pic-

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ture of standardization on an unparalleled new scale ... integration into a system from which 'delinking' is unthinkable and inconceivable" (1998, 57). With this combined celebration and forced standardization we have a colonization that is unprecedented. People watch it on TV, produce it for Wal-Mart.

I posit that this hip hop dance as an *emic* text is written and embodied through hip hop dance *etic* that is separated from its citational contexts by transnational and multinational corporations' assertion and sale of the thrill of multiculturalism to oppressed ethnic groups. Unreferenced and plagiarized, and aside from the negative images of blacks paraded across television and movie screens, commoditized hip hop dance texts say to people of different cultures, via consumption seduction, they should remain contented and get along with each other.⁹ But the fact of the matter is the capitalists want consuming submissive labor so that their profits remain stable or better yet increase, and this cannot happen if laborers do not get along.

Transnational and multinational corporations advocate multiculturalism and simultaneously press for a global culture of consumerism and materialism. Three types of dances (which will be explained in a moment), waack, break dancing and rap dance texts — originally social commentary texts about life as African Americans and a communicative theoretical text between African Americans — are now detached from their references and appropriated into mass media, furthering a separation of profit maximizers and global laborers. The separation is achieved by directing the gaze of laborers through the media, so we focus on consumption rather than social, economic and political equality. The effect of directed gazing prevents sustained and real change in the economic and racial situations ethnic groups find themselves in. In a subsequent chapter some statistics are provided that explain what the directed gaze distracts us from.

For now though, let it suffice to say that the fact of the matter is that uncontextualized hip hop dance text sells anything it is associated with, even an imagined community. It is really common to find television commercials using hip hop dance to sell products and services. As a researcher that studies consumer behavior, I have watched and

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analyzed many commercials that use hip hop dance in its allure, product positioning, and consumption promise based on the commercial's intended target markets. A few are offered here.

It would be instrumental to show photo stills of commercials and popular films depicting the *etic* of hip hop dance. Unfortunately, using photo stills, that is, gaining proper and legal permission, is difficult. In contacting the corporations and asking permission to use such stills, much resistance arose. For the most part, the corporations will not agree to the use of their photographs if they do not agree with the analysis of the photograph or the context in which it is placed in a publication. Film producers will not agree to a complementary use; most often they ask for thousands of dollars for a few reproductions. With regard to the corporate policy this is due to the fact that any popular or massive knowledge of the manipulation will undermine the whole construction and invalidate the *etic* of the text. In regard to the film makers, what we have is the same end result, but formulated only as a monetary barrier. Therefore, within this book, summaries of selected commercials and film scenes have to suffice. The reader may check online to find these ads or view short clips of the films by using a search engine and entering a few appropriate key words.

For example, JC Penney used hip hop dance choreography with children during back-to-school advertising periods in August and September. The girls in the ads were doing hip hop dances like The Runnin Man, standing like they were hip hop dance gangsters, holding the hip hop dance attitude. Quaker Oats Cereal used hip hop dance to push its product by showing a black family eating oatmeal on a large turntable dancing The Runnin Man to a scratched beat. Dog food producers for Kibbles and Bits designed commercials utilizing computer graphics to show a dog doing a hip hop dance, The Cabbage Patch, because of the dog's happiness with the flavor and substance of the food. Jell-O Pudding used hip hop dance, this time The Snake, placed on a dancing cow and a little boy to talk about the wiggle of the pudding and how cool it is to eat it, internalize it. Pepto-Bismol used several of the dances placed on many bodies to convince you that hip hop dance is the solution to your digestive problems. And this is only a short

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list of the sites of *etic* representations of hip hop dance, fueling consumption, taken out of context.

In this section it was shown that hip hop dance started as a primary text, and functioned as an *emic* when written and read within historical social contexts. Because of that it functioned as a source of identification. Importantly, discussion of the *emic* and *etic* texts as underlying constructions of imagined community was brought forth. While the dance may have been taken for use in pushing products, it could also be argued that the messages and meanings in the dance form allowed the growing world class of laborers, under a most clandestine and pathetic colonialism, to understand their predicament, following on the knowledge produced by the historical texts written by African Americans. Hip hop dance has become the official language by which products and services gets produced, and simultaneously, consumption is made to appear natural. The entire process produces a mesmerized individual.

Hip Hop Dance as Text—Three in Search of Meaning

Katrina Hazzard-Donald does an excellent job of listing, categorizing and documenting hip hop dance. In *Droppin' Science: Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture* (1996), she provided a brief history of hip hop music and dance. Her essay entitled "Dance in Hip Hop Culture" gave readers a great deal of information. It included hip hop's historical influences from slavery, its African ancestry, and American social and economic influences on African Americans reflected by and in hip hop dance. In that work, she traced three phases of hip hop dance connected to this rich background and history. She labeled these phases as waack, break dancing, and rap dance.

Waack, the earliest form of hip hop dance developed in 1972. Within the waack phase, Hazzard-Donald referenced dances like Locking, The Robot and The Spank, as well as moves like splits, spins and freezes. Many of these texts were written by male dancers. Splits, spins, and freezes provided punctuation in many cases, to phrases written that contained Locking, The Robot, and The Spank. Waack provides, in my view, a theorem that was used like a building block,

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having been built upon, to bring hip hop dance to its next phase, break dancing.

Break dancing itself was competitive but most often performed by African American men. Break dancing has been likened to a physical form of playing-the-dozens in African American communities, where Signification and Signifyin are taken to a most elevated and intellectual level. Simply stated, in the danced text, the men competed with each other through dance moves that outperformed challengers in the physical conversation, which is similar to what they do in the verbal dozens, where men compete with each other in making verbal commentary. Women played the dozens as well and participated in writing the texts associated with break dancing.

Participants in the verbal form of the game have to be quick witted in order to be successful. Break dancing too involves a quickwit of sorts — but on a physical level. The dance utilizes acrobatics, head spins, backspins, and Moon Walking, which are not moves for the stiff, slow witted or slow bodied. These two phases of hip hop dance, waack and break dancing, were performed on public stages with no proscenium, such as in parks or on street corners, and were popular from 1972 through 1974. It did not take long for break dancing to draw popular attention. Hazzard-Donald places break dancing's appearance in the mass media in April 1981, which she pointed out marked the beginning of the decline of the dance's competitiveness. Stated differently, it marked the movement from one group to another, the shift from *emic* to *etic* and also marked hip hop dance's rise in commoditization and codification.

Rap dance, which is where the main focus of this work will center, grew out of waack and break dancing, combines house dance (dance done in clubs and at house parties) in its performance. The advent of rap dance is where the supposedly predominantly male performance characteristic of waack and break dance shifted to include women. There is no doubt however, from this researcher's experience, that both dance texts included women, but the male writers were the ones gaining the attention. The dances were not couples dances but they were danced by both genders. In any event, as with break dance and waack,

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Hazard-Donald related, rap dance was not considered a couples dance. Rather, rap dance included The Roger Rabbit, house dancing, and The Runnin Man, all of which have been demonstrated in professionally choreographed performances. Indeed, choreographed rap dance occurs in the *etic* of the mass media's handiwork, as for example in a recent TV commercial I saw that depicted a white man doing The Runnin Man to sell computer business solutions. In order to expand its scope there are two other dances that I add to this list of rap dances identified by Hazard-Donald. They are The Cabbage Patch and The Snake (1980's version). Of course, there are hundreds of rap dances, too many to catalog for this particular volume of work. For ease of writing, I will from now on refer to hip hop dance as a collective text, and specify only the three categories within the text, i.e., breaking, waack, and rap dance, when it will add clarity to the interpretive meanings.

The economic and political state of affairs in this country affects African Americans. Poverty, unemployment, and crime are reported daily and moreover are measured by the US Department of Labor. The main media attention generally focuses on the negative. Many popular culture images portray stereotypes wherein black rappers, gangsters, athletes, and entertainers are read by certain groups as dangerous or comedic. Black women are read as whores or big mamas. Both groups read as a threat of some kind, with a connection to oppression and free labor lingering in the memory. At the same time, little if any positive mainstream media attention is paid to accomplished black professionals. These observations are not new to the reader, without a doubt. What is new is the possibility that hip hop dance provides a documentary and commentary vehicle for messages and voices that are not conveyed, not considered important in the main communication devices employed by American society. Couple this non-conveyance with poverty, historically high unemployment (Mos Def, *Mathematics*, 1999), police brutality, and intra- and interracial sexism. Match these events further with the colonial history of African Americans that reinforces racism and recent decreases in affirmative action initiatives. Accomplishing all of this and other historical events too numer-

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ous to list here then achieves the development of the *emic* of hip hop dance.

The dance, along with its documentary and commentary functions, contextualizes this social history. It links backward through time at least to the Middle Passage and the African Diaspora. That reference in time is a critical one since large masses of African people were moved from their continent to others, and generally without their favorable consent, which immediately brought to bear an imagined community. Africans knew they were a part of but apart from Africa, knew that people they were related to or not had been similarly dispersed. The imagined community developed under the economic and political system, using Signified and Signifyin dance as one of its communication and writing devices. It would be beneficial at this juncture to discuss several dances related to this history, and show their linkages to today's messages. They are The Snake, The Cabbage Patch, and The Runnin Man.

The Snake shows the *emic* reader of the dance how to avoid adversity and how to appear undisturbed by it. It also instructs the reader regarding survival methods when being ambushed from all angles. When writing The Snake, the body remains essentially still, but the head and neck and upper torso engage in movement. Holding the arms out to the sides, slightly bent and at about ribcage level, the head leads the neck and shoulders to one side, returns to center, and then repeats the action to the other side. It would be as if you were told that you must remain in a given physical space, standing up. Then you are told that physical objects will be flying at, launched at, your face and shoulders. And finally, the instructions indicate that you may avoid the objects being sent your way and remain alive only by moving your body from the waist up.

Some objects are non-physical, namely adversity. We usually recognize these as statistics, some of which are described in *Street Soldier* by Joseph Marshall, Jr., and Lonnie Wheeler (1996). Marshall and Wheeler found that more young African American men are murdered each year in the US than were killed by lynching in all the years of American history. In the 1980s, drug abuse among African American

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children rose 150 percent. Arrests for heroin and cocaine abuse increased ten times faster for African American children than for whites. More than half of African American children live with no father, three times as many as white children. Forty-six percent of African American children live in poverty. Every eleven minutes an African American child is arrested for some violent crime, based on a stereotype. Every eleven minutes a black girl has her second, her *second*, baby. Every 69 seconds a black baby is born when the father is absent. Seventy-five percent of African American men between 25 and 34 years old who dropped out of high school are either in jail, on probation or on parole. We make up 12.4 percent of all the people in the US but comprise more than 50 percent of the prison population.

These statistics are disturbing to say the least. However hip hop dance began as a commentary on these statistics, layered upon other historical facts. Therefore another intangible object can be identified as the state of affairs facing America and the relations between whites and blacks. We have seen different attempts at erasure of the historical evidences of slavery and a blaming mechanism with respect to Africans and their arrival on this continent, a formulation of African Americans as “a people without a history” (Wolf 1997). The Snake textualizes and theorizes both the tangible and intangible, giving a way to write history, both individual and collective. Seen this way, it is quite easy to ask the following qualified rhetorical question: In the *etic* version, The Snake as shown in the Jell-O Pudding commercial, all of these meanings have been stripped away. What does eating pudding that wiggles around have to do with any of these primary textual issues?

This is a great point of departure for the next text to be read: The Cabbage Patch. It denotes happiness at attaining something long sought after, either by legitimate or illegitimate means. For example Martin Lawrence does The Cabbage Patch in the movie *Nothin' to Lose* (Touchstone 2000) after he and the protagonist successfully stole money as part of an overall revengeful plot. Another reading of celebration after attainment is shown when the animated dog on the Kibbles and Bits commercial does The Cabbage Patch after eating a satisfying bowl of dog food. Moreover, The Cabbage Patch is often danced in associa-

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tion with scoring in sports games and among people who win sweepstakes. Importantly, writing *The Cabbage Patch* was initially about how black people could get over, historically succeeding politically, economically, socially. Linking it with consumption in the media made sense because the dance writes celebratory messages, giving support for finding ways to succeed despite an unsupportable environment, or impossible odds.

The Cabbage Patch is done by moving your upper body around in a circle. You lean back and push your arms away from you as if stirring a large pot of dough with a long wooden and heavy spoon. Every time your hands come close to your body, you push them back toward the other edge of the pot. The feet are firmly planted in parallel position, knees slightly bent, and with no readable facial affect. Some of *The Cabbage Patch* writers continue with the circular motions until their knees are in a squatting position. This dance, like *The Snake*, was normally performed at social events at someone's home.

Aside from a celebratory writing, another of the historical texts written by this dance is solidarity in or political support for African American community, a community that has been stolen and stolen from. Face the facts: mass community efforts have been undermined, from the Underground Railroad to the Million Man March; leaders have been manipulated to turn on each other and outright killed; affirmative action laws repealed; and often times hope itself was stolen. Additionally social dignity and individual self-respect have been significantly tampered with, creating a dysfunction within families and within the social fabric of American society. The desire is to find a way out of these senseless and often contrived circles, simultaneously looking for meaning and answers. Many of the statistics mentioned above, while true, need to be juxtaposed to the successes, and details of positive statistics are given in a subsequent chapter. Suffice it to say for now that we need to hear about how many blacks are doing well in their careers, those that have remained happily married, and those that have been leaders in changing history in positive, albeit small, ways. Therefore a message in *The Cabbage Patch* text has to be read thusly: You are stealing from us. We know it. We make it look like we are going

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around in circles, but in reality we Signifyin. We are slowly but surely, and quietly, getting over. The Cabbage Patch *etic* forms in its first definition mainly. Celebrate consuming something. Black people know how, so now you can too. You have earned it. By the same token, this *etic* masks the degree of the stolen surplus value taken from the working class.

The final dance for consideration in this section of the book describing rap dance is The Runnin Man. This is the only text in this category that involves movement of the arms, legs, and feet. The torso is exceptionally quiet. The dance is performed with clenched fists, a manner of running in place but with the feet sliding on the floor, reminiscent of a Michael Jackson Moon Walk. The head does not move. The arms pump up and down like you are reaching with both hands to close a stiff window that keeps springing up. The affect shows strained expression. Performing this dance one wears tennis shoes and a loose-fitting sweat-suit or workout clothes. It is done in choreographed sequences more often than for example, within social dance venues of homes and night clubs because the dance requires a considerable amount of space be given to the dancer.

What this dance signifies is running in place — working for centuries — and anger: muscle memory of anger in the body from past experiences and remembrance of them on the cellular level. This memory results in clenched fists and strained expression. Running in place makes you feel like you are doing something, but in reality one generates a lot of sweat and increases the heart rate, but one never moves, never progresses. Nothing appears to be changing outside the body, not the scene, not the circumstance. Feet are connecting with the past, being bodily mindful of it. The hands reaching forward with clenched fists expect more of the same in the future.

This textual reading makes it very well positioned for linking it to consumption of consumer goods. Consumer spending, individuals and households, comprises the majority of profit for corporations, and provides more than half of the gross domestic and national products for this country. Advertisements and marketing campaigns are used to target specific consumers in specific categories. Consumption spend-

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ing typically comes from people who work. In this context I define those who work as those who would be homeless after missing three paychecks, or those who do not have significant liquid savings to hold them over in downturned economic times, for at least one year. Homelessness in this definition includes living with someone when one's name is not on the lease, mortgage or other legal document showing financial responsibility for the given dwelling. As such this categorization of worker includes people who are considered middle class. Consumers are bombarded with media advertisements encouraging them to buy, with messages that indicate they are deficient if they do not. Deficiencies can easily be overcome by consuming with credit cards, being charged usury levels of interest.

This consumer culture has been exported around the globe resulting in an imagined community of laborers often in debt, those who have been lulled into the belief that hard work will enable better consumption, and escape from the toil of being a laborer. It is such a myth of Sisyphus metaphor, except Sisyphus knows his lot and accepts it. Those doing The Runnin Man neither know nor accept their lot. They run in ignorance. Many of these laborers work for subsistence in sweatshop conditions, when producing Nike tennis shoes or providing textile products out of China, or for examples, providing white collar outsourcing of legal services, call centers, and software development in India (George and Jones 2005). Of course we have seen examples of success stories, and this possibility cannot be ruled out.

Transformed into an *emic* text, laborers around the world do The Runnin Man because running in place is necessary in an increasingly global consumer culture. The metaphor is a strong one for capitalist consumption, theorized and documented by African Americans familiar with the process. In so doing writers were able to transmit this information to others both within their community and without. Moreover, the metaphor is perfect for driving consumption advertising messages.

The theory here is that African Americans write about their experiences in bodily form. Hip hop dance texts provide ways to learn more about the social history, the theories, and metaphors, the experiences of

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a group of people, strategies and tactics for dealing with life. At the same the text's language and message is quoted and used to seduce laborers into achieving capitalist ends. Understood textually, hip hop dance theorizes about consumerism, capitalist seduction, and the global exploitation of labor. In so doing, others are given mechanisms they can use to comprehend and adapt to events, and methods to deal with them. This is no different from using written texts to teach, make points, formulate theories, and persuade. When evaluated from this vantage point, hip hop dance texts are meaningful, rich, and worthy of documentation.

Viscous as this section has been, it has attempted to achieve certain ends. First it gave a history of hip hop dance and built upon it to theorize three texts. It has shown how there are double meanings found in the texts, and how the texts change when moved from African American writings and interpretations to another. In the case of *The Runnin Man*, the text went from *emic* to *etic* to *emic* again, in support of the transportation of meaning theory suggested by Desmond, as discussed in the previous section. Rhetorical questions were raised when the texts were transmuted into pure *etic*, asking how they related to the historical and social contexts embedded in the text as written on African American dancers. Three texts were documented and some of their meanings and messages were theorized.

Tying It Together

The chapter opened with a discussion of a body that writes and gave a method for understanding what is being written. Especially we have to pay attention to choreographic intent and the creative processes involved in documents used for study. Texts need both skill and theory to be understood well, and moreover, when texts are given within a social context, they can be seen within an *emic* framework, going to the core of the issue of identity, forming a primary social text. Here the readers recognize differences and nuances within the language. When translated by other groups, understanding of this difference is watered down, if not altogether lost, unless the readers are capable of taking on the same or similar social histories and economic realities.

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Like different kinds of texts provided in print, hip hop dance is spoken in Ebonics. This is so because of the existential present moment that the texts theorize. This is not to say that the texts are ephemeral, but rather to say that they are not authorless, and require participation by members of the society. The language is constantly evolving, constantly developing new Significations and Signifyin. Nothing gets understood however, unless someone is there to read it and so we have the imagined community. That community has been expanding rapidly around the world and includes many different kinds of laborers who work within the capitalist world economy and basically have no choice in the matter. Hip hop dance taken out of context has been matched with product placements and consumption. *Emic* texts such as *The Runnin Man*, *The Snake* and *The Cabbage Patch*, as theorized in this chapter, really have nothing to do with consumption. *Etic* texts have everything to do with it.

Notes

1. There has been much discussion on the topic of essentializing and anti-essentializing and the problems associated with these extremes (see Gilroy 1993, for example). I do not want to enter into this debate, only drive home my position with regard to hip hop dance.
2. Existentialism in Ebonics would be considered “Funk” as suggested by Cornel West and discussed in De Frantz (2004). As my own metaphysical interpretation of this, Funk connects movement with text and places the loci in the here and now, keeping authors and writers in communication with at least one other person.
3. See the note in the Preface to this book, and also refer to Roland Barthes and Stephen Heath, trans., *Image Music Text*, Hill and Wang, 1977; Michel Foucault “What is an author?” *Partisan Review*, 4, 603–613, 1975, for a full discussion of the ideology of the death of an author.
4. This structure of rap, dance, and graffiti reflects what Thomas DeFrantz points out in his essay *The Black Beat Made Visible* (2004). He suggests, following Pearl Primus’ work, that within the African and African American tradition, we have a tricotomy: orality, dancer, drum. These same structures are present in hip hop.
5. The reader is invited to look into the essay by Katrina Hazzard-Gordon *Dancing Under the Lash: Sociocultural Disruption, Continuity and Synthesis* (1998) for a discussion of the power slaves achieved for themselves in dancing. At issue in this citation for purposes of the work at hand is to show that availing power has been used this way in black America for centuries, and that it is intertextually connected to what we are seeing in hip hop dance.
6. Please read Anderson’s text if you have an interest. He covers historical communities, racism, mapping and a number of issues that help one understand the reach of capitalism and the aspects the system uses to achieve its ends. It is really fascinating but the depth of it is beyond my scope here.

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7. Here I am reminded of *Sweetness and Power* by Sidney Mintz (1985). In that work Mintz showed the ways in which sugar became associated with the success of the working classes, and how the working classes had many problems associated with buying into relating consumption of sugar and sugar products. Some of those problems included poor health, but more importantly the problem of large scale disillusionment due to the fact that consumption of sugar did not make a poor person wealthy. The production of it did.

8. See Eric N. Berkowitz, *et al.*, *Marketing*, 7th edition, Irwin/McGraw Hill: Boston, 2003, for a full discussion on marketing, corporations, and globalization.

9. Timothy Havens has produced an outstanding article (2002) on the ways in which television programming using blacks is distributed. There he covers decisions that are made in the US by individuals who perceive the value of black situation comedies, how budgets for production of programs are small relative to comparable white programming, and how cultural difference influences what is aired internationally. Specifically Havens addresses the ways in which race and language are commodified globally for profit. His research covered markets in a wide variety of first, second, and third world countries.