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# "Do it Yourself": Origins of Bay Area Hip-Hop

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“Do it Yourself”:  
Origins of Bay Area Hip-Hop

A senior thesis submitted to  
the History Faculty of Dominican University of California  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Bachelor of Arts in History

By  
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San Rafael, California  
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## Abstract

At the present, there is minimal scholarly research on the origin story of Bay Area hip-hop to compliment the various articles and books authored by hip-hop experts and artists. The consensus that emerges from the existing secondary literature is that hip-hop originated on the East Coast and later emerged on the West Coast with its own unique style. These accounts, while well documented, only include a few mainstream figures and styles related to the Los Angeles hip-hop scene. Looking past mainstream hip-hop, this study pieces together the origins of Bay Area hip-hop through both mainstream and underground key figures of the West Coast such as E-40, Too \$hort, and Keak Da Sneak, and how it shaped present day Bay Area hip-hop culture. The study will incorporate previously unused primary sources such as local magazines and interviews of Bay Area hip-hop DJs to create a more comprehensive understanding of Bay Area hip-hop's creation and development.

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## **Hip-Hop Timeline**

1. 1973- 1985: “True School” and Foundations
2. 1986-1989: New Era of Hip-Hop
3. 1990-1997: West Coast Outshines the East Coast
4. 1998-2006: Hyphy











## Introduction

*I'm from the Bay where we hyphy and go dumb  
From the soil where them rappers be getting their lingo from...  
Now, let me tell you about this hyphy movement we got going in the Bay*

*E-40*<sup>1</sup>

There is a lot going on in the San Francisco Bay Area, which includes nine counties in Northern California with a population of about 7.68 million people.<sup>2</sup> The Bay Area is rich with history and culture; most commonly represented for the discovery of gold in 1848, serving as a military hub during World War II, a focal point of the 1960s counterculture, a capital of high-tech companies, and a leader in LGBTQ rights. It is also home to seven professional sporting teams, twenty five state parks, and nine national parks. The Bay Area has additionally been instrumental in the development of several musical movements. Most notably, The Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin, and Jefferson Airplane during the 1960s with the 1967 Summer of Love. A few years later the pattern repeated with the influential thrash scene in late 1980s and 1990s, led by Metallica.<sup>3</sup> This same pattern occurred for hip-hop in the Bay Area.

It is commonly stated that the birthplace of hip-hop was in South Bronx, New York on August 11th 1973, at a block party thrown by DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell) for his sister's birthday. DJ Kool is indeed a crucial player in hip-hop, often considered called the "father of hip-hop," and inventing the music of hip-hop, with the now classic breakbeat.<sup>4</sup> It is important to understand that hip-hop is not exclusively music, but a culture revolving around four key

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<sup>1</sup> E-40. *My Ghetto Report Card*. BME/Warner Bros. 2006, CD.

<sup>2</sup> Kevin Starr. *California: A History*. New York: Modern Library, 2005. Print.

<sup>3</sup> Note: Thrash is a subgenre of heavy metal.

<sup>4</sup> Jeff Chang. *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*. New York : St. Martin's Press, 2005.

elements; music, lyrics, dance, and art.<sup>5</sup> In hip-hop culture there is the DJ (disk jockey), MC (master of ceremonies), breakdancing, and graffiti that create the culture. Hip-hop culture can be broken up into different geographical sections in the United States, the big three regions being the East Coast, West Coast, and “Dirty” South and a smaller fourth region, the Midwest. Each region has their own unique style and culture, and with large, local scenes representing the larger region. The East Coast encompasses a large region including New York and Philadelphia. East coast hip-hop is known for sample based tracks and lyrical raps. There is an endless amount of artist associated with the East Coast; some notable names include Rakim (William Michael Griffin Jr.), Big Daddy Kane (Antonio Hardy), Run-DMC (Joseph Simmons, Darryl McDaniels, and Jason Mizell), The Notorious B.I.G ( Christopher Wallace), Mobb Deep (Kejuan Muchita and Albert Johnson), and Grandmaster Flash (Joseph Saddler).<sup>6</sup> The next major region is known as the “Dirty South”, consisting of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas. The music styles were a reaction to the popular 1980s flow from the East Coast and consisted of crunk and trap, and heavy usage of slang. Mainstream hip-hop artists from the Dirty South include OutKast (Andre Benjamin and Antwan Patton), Ludacris (Christopher Brian Bridges), Lil Jon (Jonathan Smith), Three 6 Mafia (Paul Beauregard, Jordan Houston, and Lord Infamous) and Lil Wayne (Ricky Dunigan). The Midwest region differs from the three big regions because of the few consistent styles throughout the region’s major cities, rather the Midwest produces wide range of styles and in 1990s experienced a stint with extremely fast paced rapping. Even though the Midwest region varies,

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<sup>5</sup> "The 5 Elements of Hip Hop." Universal Zulu Nation. Accessed January 10, 2018. , The fifth element, knowledge, is recognized by Afrika Bambaataa, the Zulu Nation, and other artists.

<sup>6</sup> Nelson George. Hip Hop America. New York: Viking, 1998.

they have produced big names such as Tech N9ne (Aaron Dontez Yates), Eminem (Marshall Mathers), Kanye West, Lupe Fiasco (Wasalu Muhammad Jaco), and Chance the Rapper (Chancellor Johnathan Bennett).

The last geographical region is the West Coast; the biggest local scenes are Seattle, Washington, Los Angeles, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The West Coast emerged alongside the East Coast, with DJ crews of Wreckin' Cru (Andre Romelle Young, Antoine Carraby, and Michel'le Toussant) and Uncle Jamm's Army in Compton, California. In 1990, the Los Angeles hip-hop scene, dominated by gangsta rap arose from artists and groups such as NWA (Eric Wright, Kim Nazel, O'Shea Jackson, Andre Romelle Young, Antoine Carraby, Lorenzo Patterson), Snoop Dogg (Calvin Cordozar Broadus, Jr.), and Ice T (Tracy Lauren Marrow). The West Coast hip-hop mainstream scene was the Los Angeles area, with little to no notice of Bay Area artists until the 2000s. The Bay Area hip-hop scene mostly comes out of Oakland, Vallejo, and East Palo Alto, with key artists such as Too \$hort (Todd Anthony Shaw), E-40 (Earl Stevens), Digital Underground (Greg Jacobs, Jimi Dright, and Kenneth Waters), Keak Da Sneak (Charles Kente Williams), and the Hieroglyphics Crew (collective of artists). The Bay Area is known for leading the hyphy movement (party style), G-funk or gangsta funk, and conscious rap (political or form of social activism).

Before 2010, the majority of literature covering hip-hop history credits DJ Kool Herc block party as the origin of hip-hop and focuses on the subsequent New York City (mostly Bronx) artists. This narrative has ramifications for hip-hop artists, providing credibility to proclaiming Bronx style as "old school" hip-hop. Some research, such as autobiographies or biographies of hip-hop artists and groups shift the focus away from the Bronx, to focus more on

the key artists that influenced them.<sup>7</sup> Even these works, however state the founding fathers of Bronx hip-hop as DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash. Some scholarly articles focus more towards events and movements that helped shaped hip-hop culture, such as the Black Power Movement, South Africa's Apartheid and Watts Riots in Los Angeles.<sup>8</sup> These sources are primarily interviews from DJs, MCs, producers, and photographers, along with newspaper and magazine articles have bias toward local hip-hop artists, as they come from the perspective on the interviewee and current mainstream hip-hop. The research regarding the history of hip-hop from 1998-2017 does not exclude other hip-hop scenes and areas, but the strong bias towards Bronx hip-hop is present and impacts the history which gets told.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps authors felt pressure to create a narrative history of hip-hop with a single origin point, or clearly distinguish between old school and new school hip-hop, however, whatever motivations they many have, they have barely mentioned or completely excluded the origins of other regions. The vast majority of author's tend to either merely mention or completely exclude the origins of other regions. As Mickey Hess notes in his introduction of *Hip Hop in America: Regional Guide*, "the danger in overwriting the histories of other cities contributions is that if hip-hop historians agree that hip-hop in its purest form is 1973 Bronx hip-hop, then the hip-hop created in other areas comes to like a symptom of commercialism, rather than a part of hip-hops original culture, or a localized form of culture." The Bay Area is not a symptom of commercialism, but rather a crucial part of hip-hop culture and history, seen through their own development starting around the birth of hip-hop in 1973, continuing into the rise of New Era hip-hop, the creativity of local

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<sup>7</sup> Jay-Z. (2011) , Prodigy, and Checkoway, Laura. (2012)

<sup>8</sup> Michael Jeffries. (2011), Jeffrey Ogbonna Green Ogbar Lawrence, (2007), Marc Lamont Hill (2009). Jeffrey Louis Decker (1993). Russell Myrie (2009)

<sup>9</sup> Jeff Chang (2005), Nelson George (1998), Dalton Higgins (2009).

alternative styles in the 1990s, and creation of independent labels in the mid- 1990s to mid-2000s.

## 1973- 1985: “True School” and Foundations

The East Coast was the catalyst for hip-hop, after DJ Kool Herc invented the music of hip-hop, with the now classic breakbeat. Then DJ Starski Lovebug (Kevin Smith) officiate the new music genre name and Afrika Bambaataa tied the elements of hip-hop together through the Zulu Nation.<sup>10</sup> The 1980s started with multiple hits in the East Coast, with founding fathers of hip-hop, Kurtis Blow’s “The Breaks” on Soul Train, Afrika Bambaataa’s “Planet Rock”, and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five’s “The Message”.<sup>11</sup> The majority of hip-hop produced continued the use of sampling<sup>12</sup>, and there was a new style of rhythm developed through the innovation of the beatboxing. Rap conscious groups emerged with Public Enemy and Run DMC. The release of multiple hip-hop related documentaries and movies, such as “Wild Style”, “Breakin”, and “Style Wars” brought the culture to a national recognition. The 1984 hip-hop documentary, Wild Style was the first to tie all the hip-hop elements together on television. True School” or old school East Coast artists, such Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five and The Sugarhill Gang laid a path for West Coast artists to work with and off of. There was groups such as Wreckin’ Cru and Uncle Jamm’s Army in Compton, which went to local clubs to DJ and brought a style influenced by the electronic music. In the Bay Area, the hip-hop scene was

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<sup>10</sup> Note: Cowboy (Keith Wiggins) of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five is also associated with the genre name, along with The Sugarhill’s song “The Message”.

<sup>11</sup> Jeff Chang. Can’t Stop Won’t Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation. New York : St. Martin's Press, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Note: Sampling is the technique of using a part or parts of another song.

minimal but alive, with a popular local radio hit “Super Rat” (1981) by Motorcycle Mike (see Figure 1) and the beginning of now legend and key player to Bay Area hip-hop, Too \$hort with his album “Don’t Stop Rappin’ (1985) and Players (1985)”.<sup>13</sup> Too \$hort was born in South Central Los Angeles, and moved to Oakland during his high school years. “Don’t Stop Rappin’”, was the first of Too \$hort’s songs to feature his infamous ‘bitch’ throughout the song, later known as his “favorite word”.<sup>14</sup>

### 1986-1989: New Era of Hip-Hop

By the mid-1980s, the “true school” hip-hop smoothly transitioned into the Golden Era of hip-hop, with the shift from block party music in the boroughs to new styles reaching beyond than New York and New Jersey, such as conscious rap, gangsta rap, party-oriented beats, female crews, and experimental alternative rap. DJ Sway Calloway from Music Television (MTV), described the Golden Era as a time when “everything was still being discovered and everything was still innovative and new”. This era is best represented, with a variety of artists such as Big Daddy Kane, Eric B. & Rakim (Eric Barrier and William Michael Griffin, Jr.), Salt & Pepa (Cheryl James, Sandra Denton, and Latoya Pamela)<sup>15</sup>, A Tribe Called Quest, De La Soul (Kelvin Mercer, David Jude Jolicoeur, and Vincent Mason), and record label Boogie Down Productions from KRS-ONE (Lawrence Parker) and Scott la Rock (Scott Monroe Sterling). Hip-hop music made the mainstream and hit the charts with big hits such as “Long Live The Kane (1988)”,

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<sup>13</sup> Note: Multiple sources cite that the song name is Motorcycle Mike, and the artist is Super Rat, BillyJam. "Hip-Hop History Tuesdays: The Roots of Oakland Rap and The Birth of Bay Area Hip-Hop in the 1980s." Amoeblog. November 26, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Paul.arnold. "Too Short Says There Was An Industry-Wide Plot To Shut Down Conscious Hip Hop." HipHopDX. February 29, 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Note: Layota Hanson is replaced in 1987 by DJ Spinderella (Deirdra Roper).



“Paid in Full (1987)”, and “Straight Outta Compton” (1988). The 1980s harvested some regional conflict and hip-hop battles with Roxanne (Roxanne Shante) versus Brooklyn's group UTFO and the infamous Bridge Wars of Bronx and Queens. The feud began with Queens’ MC Shan (Shawn Moltke) and Marley Marl (Marlon Williams) from Juice Crew rapping about the origins of hip-hop stating in “The Bridge”:

"You love to hear the story, again and again, of how it all got started way back when  
The monument is right in your face  
Sit and listen for a while to the name of the place  
The Bridge,  
Queensbridge."

KRS-ONE from Bronx’s Boogie Down Productions rebutted with multiple tracks making jabs at each other such as:

“Manhattan keeps on makin’ it  
Brooklyn keeps on takin’ it  
Bronx keeps creatin’ it, and Queens keeps on fakin’ it.”

KRS-ONE and MC Shan were not the only individuals battling, the record labels in general had many responses and rebuttals amongst each other, but KRS-ONE and MC Shan feud lasted until 2007.<sup>16</sup> The Bridge War put the two record labels in the public attention and a standard for battles use of lyrical wordplay instead of street battles. At the end of the 1980s, hip-hop breaks through with a new televised show, “YO! MTV Raps”, and “Rap” becoming a new category at the 31st Annual Grammy Awards, won by DJ Jazzy Jeff (Jeffrey Allen Townes) and the Fresh Prince (Will Smith) for “Parent’s Just Don’t Understand”.<sup>17</sup>

The Bay Area did not get same level of attention as the Golden Era East Coast artists and the Los Angeles gangsta rap, few groups and artists rose above to achieve mainstream attention

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<sup>16</sup> Ali Shaheed Muhammad,, and Frannie Kelley. "Marley Marl On The Bridge Wars, LL Cool J And Discovering Sampling." NPR. September 12, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> "Hip-hop's History at the Grammys." DeseretNews.com. February 09, 2004. Accessed March 04, 2018.

and commercial profit, most notably, MC Hammer (Stanley Burrell) and Digital Underground. MC Hammer, born in Oakland, was able to break into the limelight and became a hit with his flashy dance movements and infamous Hammer pants. MC Hammer hit the Billboard, with multiple singles such as “U Can’t Touch This” (see Figure 2) and “2 Legit 2 Quit”. Digital Underground, formed in 1988, were heavily influenced by funk, sampling from multiple P-funk or Psychedelic-Parliament. In 1990 their single “Humpty Dance” reached #11 on the pop charts, and #1 on the Billboard Rap Singles chart<sup>18</sup>. The “Humpty Dance” blew up and Digital Underground began touring not only the United States, but internationally. Digital Underground (see Figure 4) consisted of four main artists, Shock G (Gregory Jacobs), Chopmaster J (Jimi C. Dright, Jr.), Money-B (Ron Brooks) and DJ Fuze (David Elliot), but on tour the group brought “hype men” as background performers; most notably, Tupac Shakur. Tupac Shakur, born in East Harlem, New York, moved to Marin City during his high school years, and made his debut for Digital Underground in their 1991 single “Same Song”.<sup>19</sup>Tupac Shakur’s solo work came with help from Digital Underground, releasing his own singles with features by Shock G and Money-B, such as “Get Around”, which reached #11 on Billboards.<sup>20</sup> In a Rolling Stone interview, Shock G states that Tupac “was on TNT Records [with Digital Underground] for four years. He was with Death Row for nine months. ... He did five tours with us, including Japan.”<sup>21</sup> But MC Hammer and Digital Underground are just two names in the Bay Area hip-hop, compared to the majority of talented Bay Area artists, who were overlooked, but well-known

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<sup>18</sup> Note: The Billboards are rankings are based on physical and digital sales, air time on radio, and online streaming.

<sup>19</sup> Ben Westhoff. *Original Gangstas: Tupac Shakur, Dr. Dre, Eazy-E, Ice Cube, and the Birth of West Coast Rap*. New York: Hachette Books, 2017.

<sup>20</sup>“Billboard.” Google Books.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher R. Weingarten. “I Get Around: The Oral History of 2Pac's Digital Underground Years.” *Rolling Stone*. April 06, 2017.

locally. During this era, the Bay Area hip-hop scene had a rise of party orientated music, mobb sound, and combination of conscious and gangsta rap with Hugh EMC (Hugh E. Gregory), Too \$hort, 415 rap group and The Click with E-40 (see Figure 5). A San Francisco native from Filmore, Hugh EMC, stayed mainly in the underground San Francisco hip-hop scene, known for his collaboration with DJ Rock in “Its the Game” (1998) and his local popular solo release of “H-Nigga’s Grove” or “Keep a Bitch Broke” (1989).<sup>22</sup> Hugh EMC’s albums consisted of a combination of mobb sound and gangsta rap.

In 1986 to 1989, Too \$hort continued to release albums on his independent label The Dangerous Crew<sup>23</sup>, with Raw, Uncut & X Rated(1986), Born to Mack (1987), Life is... Too Short (1989). Representing the Bay Area in their 1989 album, 415, consisted of Richie Rich (Richard Serrell), D-Loc, DJ Daryl (Daryl Anderson), and JED, crafted 41Fivin, which received major local radio time, along with sold well around the Bay Area. Richie Rich was born in Oakland, California and successful created a solo album, but later signed with Def Jam Records (New York). Hailing from Vallejo, The Click, a family oriented hip-hop group, consisted of E-40, his cousin B-Legit (Brandt Jones), his brother D-Shot (Danell Stevens), and his sister Suga-T (Tanina Stevens).<sup>24</sup> Before the formation of The Click, E-40 worked hard to achieve fame, he sold tapes from his trunk and walked all over his neighbor hood passing out mixtapes. With The Click, E-40 released three studio albums under his own independent local record label, Sick Wid It and beginings his career as a key player in the Bay Area hip-hop game.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Anthony Kwame Harrison. Hip Hop Underground: The Integrity and Ethics of Racial Identification. (2009), C-Mac. "Hugh EMC." The Ultimate Bay Area Rap Collection.

<sup>23</sup> Note: The Dangerous Crew record label was also known as Short Records before present day, Up All Nite Records.

<sup>24</sup> Nastia Voynovskaya. "The East Bay Hip-Hop Scene Will No Longer Be Ignored." East Bay Express. Accessed March 07, 2018.

<sup>25</sup> BillyJam. "Hip-Hop History Tuesdays: Rare 1992 E-40 & The Click Interview." Amoeblog. February 3, 2015.

## 1990-1997: West Coast Outshines the East Coast

By the 1990s, hip-hop was embedded in the United States culture and was a new multi-million dollar industry. Hip-hop artists were becoming stars; influencing movies, television shows, commercials, and fashion. Hip-hop had spread like wildfire from coast to coast, and a mainstream shift from East Coast artists to West Coast began with the success of gangsta rap. The hip-hop group, Niggaz Wit Attitude (NWA) (see Figure 3) popularized gangsta rap, their music was fueled by political upheaval with the continuing crack epidemic, gang violence, and police distrust and brutality. The West Coast was profiting from the Los Angeles scene with gangsta rap and the continuing infamous East Coast-West Coast rivalry, fueled by two competing labels: East Coast's Bad Boy Records and West Coast's Death Row Records.<sup>26</sup> The East Coast-West Coast rivalry differed from other hip-hop regional conflicts, such as the Bridge Wars because it was fueled by anger and violent lyrics. In the diss track<sup>27</sup> entitled "Fuck Compton," from Bronx artist Tim Dog (Timonthy Blair), vents his anger towards the West Coast's rise to fame, mainly directed at NWA. The rivalry continued with diss tracks between Notorious B.I.G and Tupac Shakur, fueled by The Source Awards of 1995, and later ended with the unsolved murders of both artists.<sup>28</sup> In the Bay Area, the lack of mainstream coverage and hip-hop record labels, forced the artists into an independent hustle to make music. DJ Davey D, co-founder of Bay Area Hip Hop Coalition, describes the West Coast hip-hop scene as "L.A. is gangsters, the Bay is hustlers."<sup>29</sup> The independent labels allowed the Bay Area artists to be

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<sup>26</sup> Mickey Hess. *Hip hop in America: a regional guide*. Santa Barbara, California : Greenwood Press, 2010.

<sup>27</sup> Note: Diss track is used to bring discredit or disrespect another artist.

<sup>28</sup> Note: Tupac accused The Notorious B.I.G of being involved in his 1994 robbery and shooting, which lead to the The Notorious B.I.G's track, "Who Shot Ya", which many hip-hop critics and fans believe was used to tease Tupac.

<sup>29</sup> "Issue 53 (RZA / Jesse Boykins III)." *Wax Poetics*. July 24, 2015. Accessed January 23, 2018.

creative and collaborate amongst each other. In a 2013 interview with National Public Radio (NPR), DJ Sway states that:

The record labels weren't signing a lot of Bay Area artists in the late '80s," he says which was a good thing." "Instead of our music being overseen by an A&R guy that worked for a record company that knew nothing about the region, a lot of artists had the freedom to make their own music.<sup>30</sup>

In response hip-hop artists and groups such as Mac Dre (Andre Louis Hicks) (see Figure 7) simply created their own music labels, similar to Too \$hort and E-40, and focused on signing local artists. Born in Vallejo, Mac Dre began his career in high school, where he pushed cassettes to the local radio stations.<sup>31</sup> Mac Dre created his first record label in 1992, Romp Productions, which his music references the Vallejo robbery gang consisting of J-Diggs (Jamal Diggs), Kilo Curt (Simon Curtis), Dre from the Bay, Coolio-Da'Unda'Dogg (Troy Deon Reddick), entitled "Romper Room Gang" and their illegal activities.<sup>32</sup> Mac Dre was sentence in 1992 for conspiracy due to multiple lyrics related to illegal activies with Romper Room Gang.<sup>33</sup>

Along with the push of independent labels, the Bay Area developed an alternative hip-hop and continue to produce concsious rap. With artist such as Soul of Mischief, a their release of 93' Til Infinity, which is associated as a tribute to vary of hip-hop music being produced, and Oakland native, Ice Cube's cousin, Del Funky Homosapien (Teren Delvon Jones)

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<sup>30</sup> Shereen Marisol Meraji. "The Many Sounds Of 1993 Bay Area Rap." NPR. March 28, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Associated Press. "Car Stunts Move past 'hyphy' Origins." East Bay Times. August 17, 2016. Accessed February 20, 2018.

<sup>32</sup> Infinite Wiz. "Happy Birthday Mac Dre! Tribute To The Founder Of "Thizz Music"." The Source. July 05, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Shereen Marisol Meraji. "The Many Sounds Of 1993 Bay Area Rap." NPR. March 28, 2013. Accessed March 27, 2018, Matthias Gafni. "Feds Bust Suspected Ecstasy Drug Ring Centered around Bay Area Rap Label Founded by Mac Dre." The Mercury News. August 13, 2016.

<sup>34</sup> commercially successful “Mistadobalina” (1991). There was also the formation of Oakland based, hip-hop collective founded by Del the Funky Homosapien, which consisted of Casual, Pep Love, Domino, Dj Toure, and Souls of Mischief, the Hieroglyphics Crew (see Figure 6). The Hieroglyphics Crew would later released their first album, 3rd Eye Vision (1998). <sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> IBID.

<sup>35</sup> Carlos Olin Montalvo. "Q&A: Then & Now with Hip Hop Collective Hieroglyphics." SF Station – San Francisco's City Guide. June 26, 2016.

## 1998-2006: Hyphy

The late 1990s, brought the continual success and popularity of hip-hop culture, influencing movies, television shows, commercials, and fashion. The “Dirty” South developed a thriving crunk and trap sound through artists such as Lil Wayne with *500 Degreez* (2002) and *Tha Carter* (2004) , and Lil Jon with *Put Yo Hood up* (2001) and *Crunk Juice* (2004). The Midwest emerged with multiple artists, most notably Eminem, Kanye West, and Lupe Fiasco. In 2005, the sales of hip-hop music declined about 44% and suffered in getting on the Billboard Charts, but the Bay Area was still flourishing locally from independent labels, the rise of hyphy, and collaborations with other local artists .<sup>36</sup>

The Bay Area hip-hop hyphy movement started earlier in 1990s, but the unfortunate death of Mac Dre and commercial success of E-40, brought the movement in the limelight of hip-hop. In 1999, there was the formation of Thizz<sup>37</sup> Entertainment, a new record label from Mac Dre, Mac Mall (Jamal Rocker), and City Hall Records of San Rafael. With Thizz Entertainment, Mac Dre released multiple studio albums such as *Mac Dre’s The Name* (2001), *Thizelle Washington* (2002), and *Ronald Dregan: Dreganomics* (2004).<sup>38</sup> Under Mac Dre’s label, Keak de Sneak, from Oakland, is known as the leader of the hyphy movement.<sup>39</sup> He officially coined the phrase hyphy, earlier in 1994 and stating, “ the word "hyphy" came about 'cause I used to eat a lot of candy. I was thinking hyper, like when a kid eat a lot of candy and they can’t be still and they

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<sup>36</sup> Kelefa Sanneh. "The Shrinking Market Is Changing the Face of Hip-Hop." *The New York Times*. December 30, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Note:Thizz is slang for ecstasy

<sup>38</sup> Matthias Gafni. "Feds Bust Suspected Ecstasy Drug Ring Centered around Bay Area Rap Label Founded by Mac Dre." *The Mercury News*. August 13, 2016.

<sup>39</sup> Steven J. Horowitz. "An Oral History of Hyphy." *Complex*. September 20, 2016. Accessed February 20, 2018.

just runnin' around." In 1994, Mac Dre's tragic murder in Kansas pushed the hyphy movement, he became a larger than life symbol, seen everywhere from shirts to tattoos.<sup>40</sup> Keak de Sneak release multiple hyphy anthems such as "White T-shirt, Blue Jeans, and Nikes"(2003) and "Super Hyphy" (2005). The Bay Area's hyphy movement was put on the mainstream and the charts with E-40's Tell Me When To Go (2006) featuring Keak Da Sneak, it peaked at No. 8 on the Billboard Hot Rap Songs.<sup>41</sup> E-40's lyrics highlight the Bay Area's culture and popularized a handful of slang used in the Bay Area, with lines such as: "ghostride the whip", "put your stunna shades on", "shake them dreads", "thizz face", "go stupid", and "go dumb". Even though E-40's Tell Me When To Go brought hyphy to the mainstream, the Bay Area's time in the limelight was not long, but the hyphy movement continues to thrive locally. Many Bay Area hip-hop legends, E-40, Keak Da Sneak, MISTAH F.A.B collaborate or feature on new upcoming artists, such as hip-hop group HBK GANG( P-LO, Kehlani, Kool John IAMSU), SOB X RBE, and Nef Pharaoh.

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<sup>40</sup> Demian Bulwa.. "VALLEJO / Rapper Mac Dre Slain in Kansas City / This Time Rumors of His Death Are True -- He Was Killed in a Freeway Shooting." SFGate. January 19, 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Nathan Slavik. "Tell Me When to Go: The Hyphy Movement's Legacy 10 Years Later." DJBooth. March 15, 2016. Accessed February 09, 2018.



## Conclusion

During the birth of hip-hop, the West Coast emergences alongside the East Coast with a handful of artists were very helpful to the later success in 1990s, especially the Los Angeles gangsta rap scene. This emergence allowed for hip-hop culture through the four elements to flourish in the West Coast, including the small local artists of the Bay Area, which is not seen in “Dirty South” and Midwest until the late 1990s and early 2000s. This eventually shifted away from “true school” and Bronx’s hip-hop solely defining the genre. The New Era of hip-hop led by Rahim’s stylistic word play, helped Bay Area artists to be locally successful in their own style. This new era of hip-hop allowed non- “true school” styles to be more than commercial profit of the culture. In the 1990s, the complete takeover of Los Angeles gangsta rap in mainstream hip-hop, furthered the creativity of alternative styles in the Bay Area. This pushed Bay Area artists into an independent hustle to become “big.” Then, with the end of the East Coast and West Coast rivalry, hip-hop is seen as a national genre with “Dirty” South, popularity of crunk and trap and Midwest rising artists.

Though the Bay Area was not in the forefront of national hip-hop from the creation in 1973, the hard work of local artists and unique styles led to commercial success for a handful of artists and most importantly created the unique Bay Area culture and sound of alternative, conscious, and hyphy sub hip-hop.

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