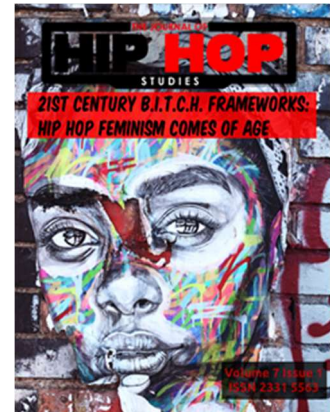

Foreword

Travis Harris

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Foreword

Travis Harris

Content warning: The first part of this Foreword mentions facts, but not details, about the murders of three Black people: Toyin Salau, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade.

“Toyin Salau was found dead,” Shanté Paradigm Smalls, Managing Editor of the *Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, told me on the morning of June 15, 2020, during one of our senior editorial meetings. When they first shared the news with me, I felt a plethora of emotions. Disbelief. Shock. Uncertainty. I desired to learn more details about the story and figure out why Oluwatoyin “Toyin” Salau, a 19-year-old young Black woman, was murdered. She went missing after protesting the police killing of Tony McDade, a trans man killed in Tallahassee, Florida on May 27, 2020. Further complicating this grief is the fact that Toyin was murdered, tortured, and assaulted by a Black man. Instead of supporting, following, and protecting Black women, Aaron Glee is charged with allegedly taking her life, after holding her captive and torturing her for days.

In addition to Toyin’s sexual assault and murder shaking me to the core, it compounded the shock about the killing of Breonna Taylor on March 13, which I first found out about in May. If I, a Black man, feel this way after these deaths, I can only imagine the depths of grief, rage, and confusion Black women, girls, and femmes feel and experience. It is within this context that the *Journal of Hip Hop Studies* is releasing this special issue on Hip Hop feminism entitled: “Twenty-First Century B.I.T.C.H. Frameworks: Hip Hop Feminism Comes of Age.” I am grateful this is the first 2020 issue *JHHS* is publishing.

In 2018, Halliday and Payne charted the plans for this special issue on Hip Hop feminism while interrogating the new direction and theories of Hip Hop feminism. While this scholarship has been growing, they recognized a specific need to further and deepen the conversations engaging Hip Hop feminism. There is a misconception by those who do not know the specific historiography of Hip Hop feminism that “Hip Hop feminism” is simply a mixture of feminism and Hip Hop, “Twenty-First Century B.I.T.C.H. Frameworks” nuances this definition, charts the course of the specific field of Hip Hop feminism, and provides a marking point for continuing this conversation. This special issue highlights the importance of all Black women and girls. Breonna and Toyin are well known because they are high-profile murder victims, but they are only the systemic tip of the iceberg of the many ways in which all Black women are dispossessed in this country and around the world. From sexual assault to being one of the highest-risk groups for pregnancy-related deaths to wage suppression and theft, Black women’s health, well-being, and lives are under attack from seemingly every side.

This special issue highlights the particular oppressions Black women who are Hip Hop feminists face and the ways in which they thrive. US society marginalizes Black women from the hood, who are not seen as respectable, who do not fit traditional gender norms, and who freely express their full identity. “Twenty-First Century B.I.T.C.H. Frameworks” not only celebrates Black women Hip Hop feminists but contends that the theoretical and methodological contributions shaped by them are used as a framework and epistemology in - and outside of the academy.

Aria S. Halliday and Ashley N. Payne lay out the framework of “Twenty-First Century B.I.T.C.H. Frameworks” in their introduction, “Savage and Savvy: Mapping Contemporary Hip Hop Feminism.” Additionally, M. Nicole Horsley contributes a “Hip Hop Feminism Starter Kit” that can be used in community centers or elsewhere by young Black girls, in high schools, or on college campuses. The mission of *JHHS* is to provide resources for Hip Hop and Black people to get free. While we #sayhername and proclaim justice for Black women, “Twenty-First Century B.I.T.C.H. Frameworks” reminds us that all Black women matter, from classy to bougie to ratchet to queer.

Acknowledgements

From Co-editors Aria S. Halliday and Ashley N. Payne

Stating names or recounting how you were murdered by men and circumstances that didn't acknowledge your love and pain, your passion, labor, and hurdles, your joy and sorrow, your great depths and complexity feels cheap in this moment. But, here, we acknowledge and celebrate the Black women and girls who continue to show up for us, those we love through familial and social bonds and those we do not know the names of, that have made us who we are. We call to those on this side of humanity and beyond, by name and by spirit. Thank you for making space for us, while trying to make space for you. To quote the intro of India Arie's *Acoustic Soul* (2001): to “all that came before, you opened up a door. Because of you, change gon come.”

From EIC

The publication of any special issue requires numerous contributions. I first would like to thank and acknowledge the work of the co-editors Ashley Payne and Aria Halliday. They did the thing. Without their scholarship, hard work and dedication, this special issue would not have even been possible. I recognize the inability to name everyone but thank you to the team of reviewers who reviewed essays and provided excellent feedback. Shout out to *JHHS'* Managing Editor, Shanté Paradigm Smalls. Their expertise, scholarly wisdom, and diligence greatly contributed to the publication of this special issue. Thank you to *JHHS'* lead copy editor Sabine Kim. Their attention to detail

is paramount to putting this special issue out. Thank you to those who assisted with copy editing, Alexander Edelstein and Patrice Miles. Everyone who contributed worked solely for the love of Hip Hop and good scholarship. I also would like to shout out all the authors who contributed to this special issue Camea Davis, M. Nicole Horsley, Diana Khong, Kyra March, Corey Miles and Isis Kenney.