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Media Analysis and Journalistic Applications

How Media and Journalistic approaches have impacted classroom, the voices of the students.

Media has been a part of our lives now for a better part of over a century or more. From newspapers, radio, tv, film, music. All of these have impacted our lives since their creation and have influenced our society for better or worse for educational or not so educational purposes. Media in all of its aspects have been around for many years and that has translated to every part of our society. We see a film and we quickly talk about its whether it was good or bad but we analyze it. This goes for everyone from children to teenagers to adults. Teenagers in high school watch a new show or listen to a new song from their favorite artist and the next day they quickly talk about it with their friends the next in school. In this day and age, a “trend” might start regarding anything teens see on tv. Not only tv but we live in the age of social media which has overtaken our lives. Every social media site now lives on our phones and just like that we can quickly access anything we need from news to music to literally anything. This has either been a bad thing or a good thing depending on what the information being received is being used for. It all depends on how that information is being deciphered. But there it is also Educational Media and this takes us back to the late 60’s early 70’s a time of change in our country leaving the 60s behind and entering the 70’s and a small tv show by the name of Sesame Street.

Educational Media:

Sesame Street premiered back in 1969 and this show was meant for little kids ages 2-5 or older but the show was meant to help them with simple tasks like letters, words, numbers. According to Patti M. Valkenburg and Jessica Taylor Piotrowski: *Media and Education* “At this

time revolutionary, Sesame Street was developed to help prepare preschool children (2-5) for elementary school, particularly children for low-income and minority backgrounds.” (176) We know that media has now beginning to play an important role in everyday households, which in the 60’s the television set was starting to boom and million tuned in to their tv’s. Children at that young age, still spent most of their time inside their house and they either did their homework or did other activities not relating media just yet. Yet, this would eventually change and with the rise of tv and more and more content everyone started to pay attention. As I mentioned before the clear example was Sesame Street that targeted that young audience and parents saw that it was a good show and that it was educational. This was on a road to becoming such a cultural icon of the tv business and to everyday life for young kids. Yet kids will not stay kids forever and they will grow. They will become teens and years will have passed and new media will be put there to watch, to hear and it will shape their minds. The thing was and still is that any type of media became very easy to be accessible and if that media was not age appropriate for teens it was held even more important by all teens to gain access to and take in whatever it was, they were watching or listening. Parental controls were still not fully introduced in much of media and many teens started to get their hands in all that was deemed explicit. Here lies how this would play an important role in the lives of those teens growing up. Educational media was taking place in these years many programs for kids were starting to come up on tv stations. Their target was young kids to their pre-teen’s years. They wanted them to be more at home and try to learn from all these shows that were popping up in the years to come. Yet the years to come as I mentioned brought many other types of media that became easy access and this was going to be a challenge for parents and teachers. We enter the 80’s and Hip-Hop is blowing up big among urban cities

and the target audience were now teens. Many did not understand hip hop in the beginning and they feared that the message was not going to be a good one.

Hip-Hop and Teens, The Urban outlook:

Hip Hop started in New York City in the Bronx to be exact. Here a new type of music that involved a D.J., break dancing and graffiti started to grow exponentially through the country and it was taking form and shape. This is a black art form meaning this belongs to African American people. This has been said many times by the pioneers of this genre. Hip-Hop started to expand and my different people of many different backgrounds started to listen and they themselves became the artists we know to this day. From a Latino background in the rap group “Cypress Hill” to a white rapper in Detroit called “Eminem.” So, yes, the art was expanding to different cultures and everyone loved the music. Thurman Bridges of Morgan State University says in his paper, *“Towards a Pedagogy of Hip-Hop in Urban Teacher Education,”* “Hip-Hop has been both demonized and commodified in the field of education and in a broader U.S. society. It has been characterized as hyper-masculine, overly sexual, and criminal and, as such, antithetical to the positive, personnel, and academic growth and development of the urban youth.” (Pp. 325) The impact that this music was having on the youth was growing at tremendous rate. Here the worry was that what Bridges is saying, that there was violence, crime, sex in this music, in the lyrics. Yet what many failed to understand at the time and still to this day was that the music that these rappers were singing, rapping was their own life. All of these rappers that have emerged made it because what they were rapping about was things, they had gone through from young age to their teens to adults. From being their own stories or themselves being bystanders and seeing what was going on in their community. They were telling first hand stories, and yes sure there was explicit language, and vivid details in their lyrics but this was just

the way it was and it had to be rough and honest. This was the connection that was made through the country and then worldwide, because many of the stories being told here someone else in another city was most likely going through the same thing. The 80's hip-hop was still young and becoming to the monster one day it would become. When the 90's hit and hip-hop did become more violent in all aspects of the genre, from its lyrics to actual life when both "Tupac Shakur" and "Christopher Wallace aka The Notorious B.I.G." both were murdered. To this day both murders still unresolved. Here we saw that hip hop had taken a life of its own and that anyone could diss anyone and elevate the violence. We also saw a rise of words being used by many teens in school and how they mimic their favorite rappers. We hear something cool that someone says and it can quickly become a slang word for something else entirely. I bring this back to English language because now many rappers are using words that no one had ever heard before at least younger people and other types of slang words. So, this is now becoming a more educational approach. One would say that listening to rap did help out in the English education especially if the language is not your first language. "Hip-hop pedagogy has grown in the past ten years, as scholars and educators have researched and experimented with the use of hip hop music and culture to improve student's empowerment, cultural responsiveness, and skills of literary analysis and critical literacy (Petchauer 952). *"Hip-Hop Literature: The Politics, Poetics, and Power of Hip-Hop in The English Classroom,"* by, Lauren Leigh Kelly. When you hear something new a new word and you don't know it but it was cleverly used in a rhyme you quickly can back to it and look it up and understand it. It is intriguing to find out what was said and what it means? This would continue for many years in the world of hip-hop. These new words or wordplay would become important in everyday life of the youth and those growing up

and wanting themselves to become rappers and even years later it would be taught in the most prestigious universities in the country.

Hip-Hop made it ivy league:

Hip-Hop makes it ivy league. From Harvard to Princeton to Stanford and many more have now classes on hip-hop and its impact on the culture. From starting in the Bronx to being taught in the most prestigious schools this is what hip-hop has achieved in the last 50 years. Many scholars now go back to rappers like “Nas”, “Jay-Z” and study their lyrics and try to explain for the common people who sometimes a rhyme may fly over their head what was exactly they were saying. Jay-Z has a song called “99 Problems” where in one of his verses he tells us how a cop stops him and hackles him and tell him to open his trunk which would seem like a violation of his rights. Jay-Z feels like the cop needs a warrant for the cop to search his trunk. This has been studied by a lawyer Caleb Mason from the Saint Louis University School of Law. Caleb wrote a 20-page essay on this verse that Jay-Z wrote detailing the police stop. Caleb also goes in on the slang words Jay-Z uses that many might not know what he means for example, “hammer” equivalent to a gun, or “raw” which would be drugs and a “jake” which would be a cop. This is the slang words that for many years made the way into society for many teens growing up, living in urban areas where crime was predominate and music, hip-hop was a getaway for them. This just goes to show how much it evolved with time and that those critics had it all wrong, yes there are explicit lyrics that kids should not listen to and parents need to be more aware of that, but there is much more here to unravel than just that. It has the potential to be learned from, examined. There’s that feeling that many good things can be learned from if deeply studied. Now in 2023 it has been a fact that many can study it and be well aware of what the story being told is about. From the early days to now it seems like something can be defined

if people could simply just submerge themselves and give it a chance for those who already don't.

Hip-Hop Wins! The End:

Hip-Hop is alive and well to this day, it has just turned 50. From being born in the South Bronx in NYC to being heard all over the world. From teens listening to it to becoming it. Urban areas, deeply affected communities ridden with crime simply had this music and this was the way out and many did, not all but many did. From the 70's to the 80's 90's 2000's to now it has evolved in different stages and we all can go back to different decades and debate on the best one or debate on best to ever rhymed a rap. Education was deeply involved in this because in the end this is poetry, this is the English language and this made us learned with every song we've ever listened too. We all were decrypting what that word meant or what that line meant. We would pick up a dictionary to look at that word we didn't know and that slang word that meant something else. As I mentioned classes are now taught on these rappers and their rhymes, songs. They are taught by the highest elevation of universities because they have figured out that there is much more than just cursing and that something is being said in their songs that needs a deeper examination. Education is now a wing of this art form because we can all learn so much if we really tried to delve deeper in it. From the early days of T.V. and educating young kids to how it evolved in the upcoming years with movies and shows to music. Specifically Hip-Hop so much has evolved and now it has an educational purpose that many might still argue that it doesn't, but it sure does.

Lesson Plan:

Deciphering a Hip-Hop song wanting the students to figure out what a word means or a line how they interpret the song. Take notes.

Steps:

- **Let the student listen to a song**
- **Let them hear it 2 times, take notes**
- **Take notes on any words or lines that jump up to them**

Objective:

The objective is for students to listen to a song a couple of times. I would want them to first listen to the song without doing anything just listening. For the second time they will have something to write and let them take notes on anything. Any word, line anything that pops out to them. Then come back as a class and everyone share their thoughts, no wrong answers just share on how they feel about it.

Conclusion:

For the students to understand that this type of English could be different. The song can say something a double entendre for example and the student might think one thing when in reality is another different meaning. For the students to understand that a line or a whole verse can be so vivid written that such a vivid story is being told in a cinematic way. And if any has any questions as to what certain things mean. No wrong answers just for everyone to share their thoughts.

Citations:

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