

Study explores how political rap music can influence black feminist attitudes

February 6 2019, by Anna Varela

Exposure to political rap music can affect listeners' attitudes about women and black feminism, a new study by a Georgia State University political scientist has found.

"We found that those exposed to political rap music were more likely to agree with statements such as ['black women](#) have suffered from both sexism within the black movement and racism within the women's movement' and 'black women should share equally in the political leadership of the black community,'" said Lakeyta M. Bonnette-Bailey, associate professor of political science and lead author of the study.

Those who listened to non-political 'party rap' songs such as "In Da Club" by 50 Cent, were the least likely to agree with statements showing affinity for black feminist ideas.

The researchers defined political rap "as music that provides political information by detailing political strategies, injustices and grievances, and most important, containing a political reference, such as directly or implicitly referencing a political leader, office/institution, activity or opposition." Non-political rap was defined as mainstream rap music that focused on partying and celebration with no explicit political message.

"This research is important to political science because it furthers our knowledge about public opinion and political attitudes," Bonnette-Bailey said. "The lens of hip-hop feminism to gauge black feminist attitudes of rap listeners is an exciting and new perspective for understanding the

political views of young African Americans."

Bonnette-Bailey and co-author Nadia E. Brown, associate professor of political science and African American studies at Purdue University, are part of a new generation of black feminists raised on hip-hop who are confronting and challenging the sexism, misogyny and chauvinism that have long been a part of the culture.

According to the authors, "Hip-hop feminists embrace rap music as a culturally relevant and generationally specific art form that elicits [social justice](#), consciousness raising, and political and social activism" and the contradictions of being both feminists and hip-hop fans. Hip-hop feminism advances conversations about the portrayal of black womanhood, coalition building, black gender relations and black women's empowerment through rap music. This perspective is distinctly different from the early academic writings on women and hip-hop that focused almost exclusively on male domination and misogyny, they wrote.

In the study, 175 college-age black men and women attending a historically black college were randomly assigned to listen to political rap songs, non-political rap songs, rhythm and blues, or pop [music](#)—or to read an article about technological advances. The participants then completed a survey designed to measure black feminist attitudes. Because of the randomized method used, the researchers were able to compare the responses of those who listened to political rap with the baseline control group and with those who listened to non-political rap.

The article, "Do the Ladies Run This Mutha? The Relationship between Political Rap and Black Feminist Attitudes," was published in the journal *New Political Science*.

More information: Lakeyta M. Bonnette-Bailey et al. Do the Ladies

Run This Mutha? The Relationship between Political Rap and Black Feminist Attitudes, *New Political Science* (2019). [DOI: 10.1080/07393148.2018.1558034](#)

Provided by Georgia State University

Citation: Study explores how political rap music can influence black feminist attitudes (2019, February 6) retrieved 16 July 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-02-explores-political-rap-music-black.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.