

New York Folklore Society
2002-03 Documentary Heritage Program Project
Documenting Hip Hop

Collection creator:

Kathy Moses

Title:

Hip Hop recordings and promotional jacket

Dates:

1985- [ongoing]

Extent:

200 compact disc recordings (50 single length; 150 full length)
100 twelve inch vinyl single records
1 jacket

Organization and arrangement:

This collection is organized by format.

Biographical/historical note:

Kathy Moses is a counselor for the New York City Board of Education. She lives in Brooklyn, and is a member of the Hip Hop generation. She acquired the material in this collection from relatives who worked in the music industry, and provided her with trinkets from their jobs.

Scope and content:

This collection consists of a jacket featuring the logo of a record label, and audio recordings from 1985 to the present. More than half the recordings are radio versions made by record companies specifically for air play; they are edited to satisfy the 3-minute airtime limit, and have profanity deleted. Of particular interest are the following 12 inch vinyl recordings: "America is Dying Slowly," (1996, radio edit) the first Rap album to help fight AIDS, with artists including Wu-Tang Clan, Coolio, Goodie Mob, Pete Rock, The Lost Boyz, Mobb Deep, Eight Ball and MJG, Common and Sean Lett; "I Go to Work," (1989), by Kool Moe Dee, considered a collector's item; and "Killing Me Softly," (radio edit) a 1995 remake of the Roberta Flack classic by The Fugees, whose members are Lauryn Hill, Wyclef "Clef" Jean, and Prakazrel "Praz" Michel. Moses continues to add to the collection.

The jacket, which is black with a white Tommy Boy Records logo, was issued to members of the company's Street Team. The Tommy Boy Street Team's job was to "break" new music in clubs, on college campuses, in public housing

complexes, at block parties, or any other event or area with a high concentration of 18 to 25 year olds. Since young residents of many urban neighborhoods were very territorial, and would not welcome outsiders, Street Team members used these jackets like calling cards. Because of their affiliation with a record label that produced popular music, the Street Team members were welcomed and given credibility. Tommy Boy Records, founded in 1981 with the release of "Planet Rock," by Afrika Bambaataa and the Soul Sonic Force, has produced best-selling recordings by Club Nouveau, De La Soul, Digital Underground, Naughty By Nature, K7, Everlast, House of Pain, and Coolio, among others.

Finding aid note:

There is no finding aid for this material. Information on this collection was gathered during an interview with Kathy Moses by Chic Smith of Urban Think Tank in the Spring of 2003.

Location:

This material is held by Kathy Moses, Brooklyn, New York

Restrictions on Access:

Researchers interested in using this material should contact Urban Think Tank; P.O. Box 1476, New York, NY 10185; telephone 718-679-3739; fax 718-596-1228; Email, urbanthinktank@usa.net.

Indexing terms:

Personal names:

Common
Coolio
Sean Lett
Kool Moe Dee
Pete Rock

Corporate/organizational names:

Eight Ball and the MJG
Fugees
Goodie Mob
Mobb Deep
The Lost Boyz
Tommy Boy Records
Wu-Tang Clan

Subject terms:

African American youth – New York, N.Y.
Clothing and dress – Social aspects

Hip hop
Music marketing
Rap (music)
Sound recording industry

Geographical coverage:

New York, New York – Social life and customs

Form and genre/Form of material:

Compact discs
Phonograph records
Coats

Date of interview and survey: Spring 2003

Interview and survey by: Chic Smith

This summary written by: Nancy Johnson with information provided by Chic Smith