THE FIRST OVERSTANDING
REAL HIP HOP

PEACE AND MUCH LOVE. Know this. Like Hip Hop itself, the Gospel of Hiphop is to be lived; not just read. It is to be done; not just watched. It is to be expressed; not just studied and taught to others.

For when you ARE Hip Hop you FEEL Hip Hop. And it is through the feelings and the emotions (the heart) that Hip Hop’s inner secrets are revealed.

Studying Hip Hop, debating Hip Hop and writing about Hip Hop are like observing a fashionable suit in the window of a clothing store; while doing Hip Hop, being Hip Hop and living Hip Hop are like putting the suit on and walking around town. There is simply no comparison, and this is what we call “real Hip Hop.”

A real Hiphoppa believes (be and lives) Hip Hop. For it is wise for a real chef to believe in the reality of cooking, and a real doctor to believe in and live from the reality of medicine, and a real Christian to believe and live in Christ (as examples). Therefore, is it not equally wise for real Hiphoppas to believe and live in Hip Hop? On the other hand, why participate in something that you really do not fully “be” or “live” in?

“Real” relates to fixed or immovable things like land. When Hip Hop is real to you, when it is fixed and immovable from your being; YOU ARE PRACTICING REAL HIP HOP. When something is “real” it is considered to be genuine and/or authentic; it is what it proposes to be, it is not imaginary, it is actually existing and occurring to our physical senses. The term “real Hip Hop” relates to the fixed conditions and genuine nature of Hip Hop as it appears to our physical senses today.

Breakin, Emceein, Graffiti Art, Decjayin, Beat Boxin, Street Fashion, Street Language, Street Knowledge and Street Entrepreneurialism are all fixed conditions of Hip Hop. These elements are permanent and immovable from the existence of Hip Hop. These elements are “real Hip Hop”, and those who promote and preserve these elements promote and preserve “real Hip Hop.” When these elements are not present in one’s self-expression one is not doing or being “real Hip Hop.”

The true Hip Hop scholar/apprentice is studying to become Hip Hop; not to just observe Hip Hop. How can anyone claim any authentic scholarship on something that they themselves are not and equally cannot actually do? Where, then, is your authority to teach? Our perspective on Hip Hop and it’s culture is not an objective one. We love Hip Hop, we live Hiphop and we are not ashamed or afraid to say; we are Hiphop! We are “REAL HIP HOP!”

However, it should be clearly understood that even though we place great emphasis upon the mastery of one or more of Hip Hop’s real elements, I must confess here as well that it is really one’s love for and loyalty to Hip Hop that rests at the fundamental foundations of Hip Hop’s scholarship and citizenry. For there are those who have mastered Hip Hop’s real elements but have yet to truly love and care for Hip Hop itself and its future development.

For there are those who rap, break, deejay, piece, tag and beat box very well but still find it difficult to consider the real lives of those who are influenced by them artistically and culturally. Many have mastered Hip Hop’s artistic elements but only a few have mastered themselves. Many who have mastered Hip Hop’s artistic elements
still find it difficult to contribute even towards Hip Hop's artistic preservation.

However, other Hiphoppas have not mastered any of Hip Hop's artistic elements, but the passion and loyalty that they have brought to Hip Hop, their very contributions to the understanding of Hip Hop in many ways are more substantial than even the contributions of those who have mastered Hip Hop's artistic elements. For it is one's love for Hip Hop that truly makes one a Hip Hop scholar and citizen. And your love is proven within your commitment, your works and your sacrifices.

It is through your works (your words and actions) that your true love is revealed. It is through your sacrifices that your true nature is revealed. The nature (name) of your true Self is revealed within the creation and expression of your true Self which requires a real commitment toward the building of your true Self, not the role that you may model but your authentic Self.

This is what most of humanity has had taken away—our true nature which gives all people the ability to govern themselves. This is what we are missing—KNOWLEDGE OF OURSELVES! Without such knowledge we have no way of controlling and/or directing ourselves.

By not speaking our ancient native languages, by not eating our native foods, or dressing in our native clothing, or playing our native games, or hearing ancient stories that pertain to us and our circumstances, combined with no clear and definitive community leadership, or group plan or revolutionary scholarship, it is indeed very difficult to hold on to our ancient humanity—the awareness of our true names.

However, WE ARE GOD'S! And the absence of such self-knowledge is actually the trigger that sets the universe in motion toward self-knowledge. Mystery (not-ignorance) is indeed the greatest motivator toward knowledge. As it turns out, not totally knowing our ancestral past has created the possibility of starting a new and even brighter future. We can create and re-create ourselves right now!

Not knowing is what causes one to know. And so, the same force that built our civilizations 10,000 years ago (seeking, searching, discovering, not knowing) is the same force that has given life to Hip Hop today. This is one reason why the whole World understands our cultural language. We are the return of the original human spark that caused all great civilizations to exist.

This instrument establishes the existence and preservation of our Hip Hop community. Our Truth is self-evident; we must first believe that we exist and then we must perceive the powers of our own existence.

This instrument (The Gospel of Hip Hop) begins the creation of Hip Hop's (Hippie's) faith in itself and its powers. Our first Truth must be an awareness of our own reality as Hippie. We must first-believe that we exist if we are to develop ourselves into a strong Hip Hop community capable of raising our collective quality of life.

Only we can do this for ourselves, no one else is responsible for us and our spiritual/cultural development. We must align our collective thoughts and actions as Hiphoppas with what we know to be real for us in the material world. We must see the physical results of that which we claim to spiritually believe; otherwise we are living in denial and fantasy as others do.

Hip Hop is made up of real people and real events. We must explore the facts of OUR experiences as Hiphoppas in search of achieving the Truth about ourselves as Hiphoppas. We must finally mature to the faith of confirming our own spiritual reality as Hiphoppas.
This is what KRS really means to Hip Hop. I am the actual historical evidence that Hip Hop was conscious of itself in its early days, and I am not the only one of my time.

We practice real Hip Hop. We practice the immovable and fixed conditions of the Hip Hop spirit. Whether Hip Hop is accepted or not by those of the corporate mainstream is irrelevant. Real Hip hoppas come to Hip Hop with no other interests but to authentically manifest it. This is real Hip Hop.

I AM HIP HOP! And upon this evidence our culture is born! Hip Hop's culture now exists factually as a real divinely guided community because you and KRS exist as its first citizens. Our unity declares the reality of Hip Hop. And because we willing choose to fix ourselves to the spirit of Hip Hop and not move from it, it is a fact when we say, "THE REAL HIP HOP IS OVER HERE!" We make Hip Hop real by authentically being it. This is real Hip Hop and this gospel is presented by some real Hip hoppas.

I AM HIP HOP! And upon this faith (our belief in ourselves as Hip hoppas) we can achieve Truth. Through Hip Hop we have a paradigm by which to create ourselves and document our own body of Hip Hop knowledge and history. Our faith in ourselves as a community of conscious Hip hoppas is what we call Hip Hop's culture or Hip hop Kulture.

Unfortunately, people today have grown accustomed to equating Rap music and the images portrayed in mainstream Rap music videos with the whole of Hip Hop's culture and history, and this is why we say that such material is NOT "real" Hip Hop. It is NOT authentic to the original Hip Hop spirit or tradition, and does not represent what is actually occurring to our physical senses in the present. Most of the mainstream Rap videos of my time are imaginary tales of crime, sex and street adventure. They are good, they are entertaining, but they are not "real."

Real Hip Hop is real life, and it is from the experiences of our real lives that our songs and dances, our graphic arts and our language come from. This is why we teach that Hip Hop and Rap music are not the same things; that Rap is something we do, while Hip Hop is something we live, and the living of Hip Hop is "real" Hip Hop. Let us get more orientated by taking a look at the following terms closely.

Hiphop is the name of our creative force in the World. It is our lifestyle and collective consciousness.

Hip Hop is the name of our culture and artistic elements.

hip-hop is Rap music product and its mainstream activities.

With this original cultural learning system we reveal the more real nature of Hip Hop beyond the average mainstream understanding of hip-hop. Here, we introduce a Hip Hop spiritual code of conduct capable of producing enhanced states of health, love, awareness and wealth for those engaged in the mastery of Hip Hop's real elements. This is the gospel, and this is what really works for Hip hoppas.

Here, Hip Hop's real elements can be pursued and developed in any way that one feels. However, "Hiphop" is a specific term that deals with the spiritual nature of Hip Hop. Study this paragraph and the above terms' carefully before going forward.

Remember, the Gospel of Hip Hop is the instructional book and the Gospel of Hiphop is a spiritually lived Hiphop life. This instrument is called the Gospel of Hip Hop because Hip Hop is commonly spelled as such amongst the Hip Hop populace today. However, we teach
Hip hop, Hip Hop and hip-hop so that our discoveries regarding the spiritual nature of Hip Hop do not contradict or hinder the free study of others seeking to uncover the nature of Hip Hop for themselves. We hold no monopoly on the interpretation of the nature of Hip Hop, spiritual or otherwise. Our understandings and approaches to Hip Hop are unique to our Hip hop preservation society.

These are our discoveries and notes and no one is obligated to believe or acknowledge that which we believe and acknowledge as the Truth for us. This Gospel is what we know successfully works for those practicing Hip Hop, and this is what we teach. We are called Hiphoppers and not Hip Hoppers or hip-hoppers because we actually practice Hip hop, which for us is the spiritual living of Hip Hop.

Our community is called Hip hop Kulture and not hip-hop culture. Although we do sometimes spell the name of our community as Hip Hop Kulture, it is Hip hop's culture that we are actually referring to. For a clearer, deeper understanding of what is being taught throughout this instrument you will have to train your eye to recognize the spellings and meanings of Hip hop, Hip Hop and hip-hop.

Our approach to Hip Hop is indeed unique in our time. We teach that Rap (rhythmic speech) is but one expression that comes out of the total Hip Hop experience. For us, Hip Hop is the combination of Breakin, Emceein, Graffiti Art, Deejayin, Beat Boxin, Street Fashion, Street Language, Street Knowledge and Street Entrepreneurialism. For us, Hip Hop is the amplification of human expression and awareness. At its core, Hip Hop is not just an art form; it is the pursuit of one's authentic being through the Arts.

For those who consider themselves true Hip Hop scholars, Hip Hop is defined as, The artistic response to oppression. A way of expression in dance, music, word/song. A culture that thrives on creativity and nostalgia. As a musical art form it is the stories of inner-city life, often with a message, spoken over beats of music. The culture includes Rap and any other venture spawned from the Hip Hop style and culture. (Alonzo Westbrook, Hip Hop: The Dictionary Of Hip Hop Terminology)

For those who live Hip hop, Hip Hop is not over there somewhere external of one's self—we ARE Hip Hop! Hip Hop itself is not a person, a place or a physical thing. You cannot actually go to Hip Hop, or wear Hip Hop, or eat Hip Hop. Hip Hop exists as a shared idea. You cannot drink a can of Hip Hop and suddenly know how to rap. You cannot put Hip Hop on as clothing, or read a book in order to understand Hip Hop. Hip Hop begins as an awareness, as an alternative behavior. Again, Hip Hop is a shared idea. Rapping, break dancing, graffiti art, beat-boxing and deejayin are all expressions of this collective urban idea commonly called Hip Hop.

Hip Hop is a new global urban understanding that communicates an alternative reality through art. Hip Hop is a new faculty in the collective consciousness of urban America. Hip Hop is understood psychically by those who participate in it. More than just a music genre, Hip Hop is an international agreement as to how ALL peoples may come together in peace on neutral ground. Hip Hop is indeed a psychic "True World Order."

We've discovered that Hip hop, Hip Hop, hip-hop and the Hip hoppa are all aspects of the same creative force; that one cannot fully function without the others because Hip hop, Hip Hop, hip-hop and the Hip hoppa are all really one event. This is why the Temple of Hip Hop teaches that TO PRESERVE HIP HOP WE MUST PRESERVE THE HIPHOPPA!

Preserving the specific artifacts and memorabilia of Rap music has its place and its importance, and
someone should be doing that work; such work is indeed a strength to the preservation of our culture. However, as a 'temple' we are more concerned with the essence, substance, force, being, cause and identity of Hip Hop as a creative force—“Hiphop.”

Hiphop is not a physical thing or things; it is a metaphysical principle, a shared urban idea; an alternative human behavior, a way to view the World, a collective consciousness. We must finally leave the finite room of hip-hop as Rap music entertainment, and enter the infinite realm of Hiphop as consciousness. We are far more than just the World's entertainment.

For us, Hip Hop is a mass 'event' that was captured on record, cassette; CD, video, DVD, clothing, etc. for the purpose of selling its elements to relieve poverty. It is Hiphop that inspires Hip Hop’s elements to exist, but it is only Hip Hop’s performed elements that appear in the physical World. Hiphop itself never enters the physical World. We imitate the inspiration of Hip Hop through its elements (Hip Hop) but again, Hip Hop (the collective consciousness) never enters the physical World; it remains a shared idea of OUR collective consciousness. Study this paragraph again carefully.

For serious apprentices of the Temple of Hip Hop, Hiphop is a perceptual ability that transforms subjects and objects in an effort to express the character of one’s inner being. Hiphop is the ability to make physical objects and social subjects perform according to your perception of them.

When we say “I AM Hiphop” the Hiphop idea then enters the physical World as Hip Hop which is then captured on CD, etc., and sold as hip-hop. By becoming Hiphop, by allowing the Hiphop idea to dominate our 'being', Hip Hop enters the physical World through our physical bodies and artistic expressions. This “expression” (and for some, their physical bodies) is then captured in some way and sold as hip-hop.

Before Hip Hop can even be recorded and/or documented, it must first be brought into the physical World through people who have voluntarily surrendered to its force and essence. Everything else is a recording, an imitation or a documentation of the real effects of the original Hip Hop creative force (Hiphop).

The preserving of such a perceptual ability has little to do with the preserving of its products; it has to do with understanding the ability itself; the essence that causes such products to exist. To preserve Hip Hop we must preserve Hip Hop’s perceptual abilities. We must preserve the actual living thinking Hiphoppa with a knowledge of Hip Hop beyond entertainment.

From our perspective, the preserving of Hip Hop has more to do with the preservation of its people than with the preserving of its products. It has to do with the preserving of certain customs, traditions, abilities and techniques unique to the Hip Hop experience. Such a style of cultural preservation is about preserving the essential causes that bring Hip Hop into physical existence. This is the essence of our Hip Hop preservation movement.

Traditionally, Hip Hop has been approached as an art form that consists of four core elements; b-boyin (break dancing), MC-ing (rap), aerosol art (graffiti writing) and DJ-ing (the cutting, mixing and scratching of recorded materials). These are called the “core four.” However, Hip Hop's “core four” elements also encompass specific and unique urban clothing styles, language styles, business and trade techniques as well as a collective body of knowledge derived from its internal experiences with itself and the World.
The experiences produced by Hip Hop's "core four" have created uniquely rich Hip Hop stories, Hip Hop legends and myths, original Hip Hop arts, popular Hip Hop music and thought-provoking Hip Hop poetry that critiques and interprets the World in which the Hip Hop community exists. At first glance, Hip Hop can be seen as simply an urban music genre inspired by the African American and Latino youths of the Bronx during the early 1970s. However, upon closer observation Hiphop becomes a way of life; a specific way of being and seeing the World; a unique view of the World and World events.

We are uniquely Hiphop because the repetition of such a unique being and seeing has created our specific Hiphop way of life. And the Hiphop way of life is what we call Hip Hop's culture or Hiphop Kulture. As culture, Hip Hop is the specific behaviors, traits, expressions, patterns and institutions of OUR unique collective consciousness. It (Hip Hop) is OUR intellectual and artistic activity as well as the works produced by it.

In the past, some argued that Hip Hop was not a culture. They made the mistake of comparing their knowledge of traditional cultures to Hip Hop's culture. But as the great Hip Hop professor Zizwe Mtsafu-Ukweli (Professor Z) has pointed out, Culture is the character of a living entity. That entity could be an organism or an entire generation functioning as an organism. Every culture has its linchpin aspects, or that which makes its membership pledge allegiance to it. Culture also provides a fence around the collective epic memory of the group which accepts this memory as its philosophy and history.

Professor Z continues, Our culture [Hip Hop] is strengthened through a heightened self-awareness and a heightened awareness of the surrounding environment. For every young culture, the relationship between it and its environment is dynamic and determinant. The culture seeks to absorb all it can from the environment yet must prevent itself from being totally absorbed by the environment. Total absorption by the environment means certain death for any culture. Part of any cultural identity is distinctiveness. This is why Hip Hop is so successful; as a young culture Hip Hop absorbs the music of Blues, Gospel, Rock, Soul and Jazz but is absorbed by none of them.

Over the years Hip Hop's absorption of older musical and artistic traditions helped to create a certain lifestyle and worldview unique to the total Hip Hop experience. This is what we now call Hip Hop's culture. Rap is something we do; Hip Hop is something we live. And the living of Hip Hop's culture has more to do with your sense of security, peace, self-development and well-being than it has to do with performing one or two of Hip Hop's artistic elements. Living Hiphop is far more involved than performing Hip Hop.

For if you do not live a productive Hiphop lifestyle you increase your difficulty in maintaining a lasting success in any of Hip Hop's traditional elements or artistic expressions. This is why Hip Hop is not regarded as simply a music genre here. For us, such an approach to Hip Hop is indeed dangerous to the practicing Hiphopps.

The music and dances of Hip Hop come from a collective urban view of the World that inspires such music and dance to exist. It is Hip Hop's worldview that inspires (or rather causes) its music, art and dance to exist. This is why so many of the hip-hop history books of my time are so culturally limited. They focus primarily upon the money-making effects of hip-hop and not upon what causes such effects to occur.

Music and art are very important elements that assist in the make up of hip-hop as a whole. However, it
is Hiphop itself (our collective consciousness) that brings into manifestation Rap music, Breakin and Aerosol Art as well as the other urban expressions that derive from our unique life experiences. Our unique life experiences and the performances that occur as a result of such unique life experiences are called "real Hip Hop."

For us, real Hip Hop is a transformative power that has its beginnings at the genesis of human awareness. Its elements are seen throughout human history and all over the world. And this is no accident. We did not arrive at our place in the world by luck. God is truly with us! And we must never forget to honor God in our writings and performances. Hip Hop is the return of the ancient ways, the healing ways, the natural ways—the way of God.

Whether on the cave walls of northern Africa 20,000 years ago, or as Egyptian hieroglyphics with its letters and characters describing ancient life some 10,000 years ago, or as the Mayan and Inca pyramid and temple hieroglyphs (Graffiti Art), or as the Griots and Djeli who performed for the royal courts of Ghana, Songhai (present-day Mali) some 2,000 years ago (emcees/deejays), or as the Capoeira martial artists of 16th-century Angola (breakers), or as the social organization of aboriginal Americans since the dawn of creation Hip Hop has always existed as a unique awareness that enhances one's ability to self-create. Hip Hop is a sight, an ancient behavior, today an alternative way to view the world.

**Hip Hop** is the correct pronunciation of **Hiphop.** As an acronym/affirmation, **H.I.P.H.O.P.** can be interpreted as Her Infinite Power Helping Oppressed People. Or, Having Inner Peace Helping Others Prosper. Or, Holy Integrated People Having Omni-present Power. Hip Hop means all of this.

Those who show little respect for Hip Hop spell Hip Hop as **hip-hop.** True Hiphoppas are advised to spell Hiphop as well as **Hip Hop** with a capital H as it is the name of our collective 'consciousness'; it is the 'force' that animates our way of life, our culture, our tribe, our nation. When Hiphop and/or Hip Hop are spelled as **hip-hop** it refers to Rap music product and its related activities. We'll go deeper into this later.

**Hip Hop** or **Hip Hop**—when misspelled as **hip-hop** means *(hip)* trendy, *(hop)* jump or dance. However, we are not just a trendy dance. We love and respect the art of dance, but dancing is not the only thing **Hip Hop** is about.

Those who approach Hip Hop like it is exclusively a trendy dance (or entertainment) are usually those who repeatedly speak and spell the term incorrectly and care little for Hip Hop as a community of real people.

To spell **Hip Hop** incorrectly as **hip-hop** is to deny our right to exist as a people. The use of the term **hip-hop** to describe real people reduces those people to products. However, **Hip** (spelled here with a capital H) from the ancient African **hipi** means to know or to be aware. It is a form of intelligence; a knowing.

On the other hand, **Hop** (spelled here with a capital H) from the Aboriginal American **hopi** (**Hopii**) means good and/or peddable. Together **hipi** and **hopi** (the original union of cultures in the Americas) can symbolize not only the unity of African and Native American civilizations, but can also symbolize peaceful awareness, good awareness or the awareness of peace or of goodness.

However, according to the English language, to be **hip** means to have knowledge of. Again, it is a form of intelligence. **Hop** is a form of movement. And together **hip** and **hop** when spelled correctly as **Hip Hop** means moving or jumping intelligence, even knowledgeable movement. Hip Hop—moving intelligence, active intelligence, intelligence
moving, conscious movement or intelligent movement!

The etymology of the term *Hip Hop* as it relates to the English language begins with the Old English term *hype*, meaning the joint formed by the upper thighbone and pelvis. Additionally, the term *hype-bones* appears around 1149 meaning *hip-bones*. This is the joint used the most in our breakin moves and most urban dance moves.

In addition to the term *hip* being interpreted as part of the skeletal structure of the human body (we *hop* out of the *hipe*), *hip* is also the seed pod of a rose bush (*hipe*, 1414) and is also interpreted as *to be informed* or *to be up to date* (1903).

Later (1952) the term *Hippie* was designated to a specific group of people (Hipsters) that were considered *hip*, meaning *keenly aware of what is new and in style*. In many ways, Hip Hop is a continuation of the *Hippe* movement of the 1960s. Being also politically aware, the *Hippie* preferred to *turn-on* to legal and illegal drugs, *tune-in* to peace and sexual promiscuity, and *drop-out* from conventional society, wearing unconventional clothing, sporting long and sometimes uncombed hair, preaching peace and universal love for all humankind.

*Hippies* were at the center of the Civil Rights, Gay and Lesbian Rights, Women's Rights, Free Love and Anti-War movements of the 1960s, and Hip Hop is a direct effect of this earlier freedom movement. However, we've now seen the errors of the *Hippie* movement and it is our responsibility today to go beyond such tragic events. Drug overdoses, murders and lawlessness simply DO NOT WORK toward our goals for freedom.

Spontaneity is good, but continuous spontaneity doesn't offer stability. We have seen now that when there is no permanence there is no reliability. The *Hippie* movement seems to have been killed by media hype and drug abuse; many other *Hippies* just burned out or became part of the same government and corporate structure they were fighting against. *Hip Hop* can learn a lot from this early protest movement.

*Hop*, on the other hand, appears in the English language as *happen* sometime before 1200, meaning to spring, or to move by springing (usually upon one foot). This term *happen* seems to come from the Old English *hoppian* (about 1000) meaning to spring or to dance. This term corresponds with the Old Icelandic *hoppa*, the modern Dutch *happen*, and the German *hopen*, all meaning to *hop* or to *spring*.

Like the term *hip*, the term *hop* is also associated with plant life. *Hop* is interpreted as a *vine having flower clusters* (1439). The *hop* plant was (and still is) used to flavor malt drinks like beer, something the Hip Hop community is very familiar with.

These are the English etymologies of the term *hip hop*, and we can see here within these definitions how even *hip* and *hop* come together to mean *hip—inform ed*, and *hop—springing or dancing*. Together the term *hip hop* (even when spelled in lower case h) can mean *an informed springing*, or *an up to date modern dance*, or *an informed movement up and*. A *hip* (updated) *hop* (movement) is an intelligent movement—a movement aware of itself.

To be *hip* means to be *up to date, relevant, in the know*. Therefore to *hip* something or to make something *hip* is to modernize it. To *hip a hop* is to *modernize an upward movement*.

However, it is interesting to point out the correlation of these two terms as they apply to plant life. Both *hip* and *hop* refer to plant life. One (*hip*) refers to the *seed pod of a rose bush*. And the other (*hop*) refers to a *vine having flower clusters*. The relation between *seed* and then *vine* within the symbolic interpretations of *hip* and then *hop* cannot be ignored.
In terms of spiritual symbolism, we focus upon how hip comes before hop like seed comes before vine. Spiritually, it appears that hip hop is the seed of a new vine (the new people/the new way). However, when you add the etymology of culture to these interpretations, even more symbolism is revealed.

The term culture (1439) from the Latin cultura (cul-too-nar), meaning tending, care and cultivation, seems to come from cult-, the past participle stem of the Latin colere, meaning to till, cultivate, tend to and inhabit.

Cult (1616) originally meant worship or homage; not to worship or to pay homage. Cult comes from the Latin cultus (cul-toos), meaning cultivation, care, attention, worship. We can see here that the term worship was originally associated with the cultivating, caring for, and attending to, of something or someone. Attuned Hiphoppas are advised to worship GOD in this way; to care for GOD.

For as we belong to GOD, GOD equally belongs to us. GOD is to be worshipped (meaning cultivated and cared for), not just acknowledged in thanks. For when we hear that they fell down and worshipped him/her we must understand that in ancient times to worship a person or GOD meant that they took care of that person or GOD. Know this, GOD IS TO BE CARED FOR AND CULTIVATED! Not just thanked. Let us continue with the word culture.

The suffix ure in culture forms abstract nouns of action or the means or result of action. To ure is to -ing, -ed, or -s; like the act of fail-ing = fail-ure or failure, the condition of being pleas-ed = pleas-ure or pleasure, something or someone that legislate-s = legislat-ure or legislature.

Therefore, by adding the ure to cult we get culture or culture, originally meaning the act of cult-ing or cultivating, caring, attending to, worshipping. Looking at the etymology of hip and hop and culture together we can interpret such a phrase as meaning; the cultivation, care, attention and worship of the seed (plan/vision) of the new vine (people/way).

Another interpretation of hip hop culture could read; the cultivation, care, attention and worship of the intelligent movement. The term hip hop culture seems to imply the cultivation of, and care for, the upward springing of intelligence.

There seems to be a symbolic connection to farming when it comes to the etymology of the words hip, hop and culture as defined within the English language. Symbolically, we seem to be growing an ancient intelligence with an ancient meaning and purpose.

This is important to meditate upon because ancient humans watched animal behavior to understand and develop human behavior, and they observed flowers and plants (their colors, shapes and functions) to discover what was possible in Nature and within themselves. Nature taught early humans through the symbolisms produced by Nature’s activity.

The activity of fire taught us about the nature of our emotions. The activity of water taught us about character. The activity of air and wind taught us about the nature of spirit and the invisible. The activity of the life-giving Earth, the very ground itself, farming taught us how to survive and revealed to us the nature and cycles of the universe and the effects of its celestial bodies (stars, the sun, the moon, etc) upon life on Earth. Truly, Nature itself is our teacher and provider.

However, plants are the first of our direct teachers; the ingestion of certain medicinal plants showed us all kinds of sciences and revealed to us the mysteries of the Earth and of the universe itself. Indeed, the first knowledge was delivered through play and the ingestion of certain plant-
types which then revealed the symbolism of Nature itself. Symbolism and metaphor are indeed important elements in the building of human understanding and awareness. As poet Robert Frost suggested, If you are not properly educated in metaphor you are not safe to be loose in the World.

We (Hiphoppas) are the genetic return of an ancient people. For it is known by all true seekers of Truth that Nature produces knowledge through symbolism, comparison and metaphor. It appears that we (Hiphoppas) are responsible for the gathering of symbolic information on this planet and then teaching it to others through art for guidance and the relief of human suffering. By oppressing Hiphoppas you stagnate, the gathering and distribution of symbolic knowledge and thus stagnate the progress of human understanding.

Finally within the etymology of hip hop we come to the Hiphoppa or hip hoppa. Looking at the Old Icelandic term hoppa (meaning to spring upward) it becomes obvious that the way in which the Temple of Hiphop describes and spells Hiphoppa is influenced by the two terms hip and hoppa.

The term hip, meaning keenly aware of what is new and in style, and hoppa, meaning to spring upward or to hop, reveals the hip-hoppa (Hiphoppa) as the actual intelligence that is springing forward. The hip-hoppa can also be said to be a modernized life-dancer keenly aware of what is new and in style; a conscious mover, or one who moves with awareness.

And know this. What we have done in our early days as Hiphoppas, how we have defined ourselves and how we have expressed ourselves in the material World, was done spontaneously (spiritually). We were calling ourselves Hiphoppas and hip hoppers long before the refinements, definitions and interpretations of this gospel. It is truly amazing to discover our real natures and characters as Hiphoppas (even the term hip hoppa) already existing within the very structure of the English language itself as us. Meditate upon this fact.

If we were a community of doctors, or lawyers, or architects, or even politicians, then the idea that hip hop can be defined as a trendy dance or as an intelligent movement would not apply to us; it would not mean much. But the very fact that these terms hip and hop and culture and even hip-hoppa which we spontaneously gave to ourselves in childhood play within a so-called slang dialect intuitively corresponding to the etymology of these words and terms only proves once again the depth into which the Hip Hop mind can go if left to its own development.

In the 1970s we did not define ourselves in this way. We did not have this knowledge. However, the fact that we can accurately identify ourselves and our specific artistic expressions (like dance for example) within ancient English, Latin, African, German, Dutch and French languages, and that the etymology of these words and terms matches accurately with our modern self-expression (even though we've never formally studied these words and terms to know them) says something about our divine role as Hiphoppas.

We are truly the return of an ancient people, with ancient skills rooted in the earliest experiences of human consciousness. All that we need to know is OURSELVES! We simply need to be left alone to contemplate the depths of our own consciousness. We truly have something important and forgotten to teach and remind the World. All we have to do is BELIEVE IN OURSELVES!

As Hiphoppas we operate in a spiritual reality when we handle and manipulate Hip Hop. The fact that we created ourselves points to our divinity. The fact that we spontaneously and randomly choose names and characters for ourselves that can be matched with a
history and knowledge that we have not studied proves that we (as a community) are not just singing, rapping and dancing. There seems to be more to Hip Hop than our ability to sing and dance—we are connected to something divine and timeless.

The fact that we created Hip Hop first and then the explanation as to how our creation came about later proves that we are working with spiritual energy, awareness and law. The opposite is the way of the World; that is to plan and explain your plan of action before you act or create.

Spiritual Law works differently; the creation is created first, and the explanation as to how it was created comes later. And usually when natural and spiritual events are later explained they align with the mathematics and harmony of Nature and the universe itself. However, this is usually discovered years later by future generations equipped with better instruments and a broader knowledge.

This is why the Great Pyramids of Egypt are so mathematically in alignment with the Earth and the universe. Those ancient builders were simply not oppressed people. They were truly their natural selves with no restrictions. They simply did not know what they couldn’t do; and so they did it all! Through play, art and experimentation, great things are accomplished unconsciously and with little or no effort at all. We will explore this theme more later. For now, let’s get back to Hip Hop and the English language.

It is also a common linguistic rule of the English language that the titles or names of all cultures, nations, civilizations, ethnicities, etc. be spelled ‘beginning with a capital (uppercase) letter. Hip Hop is our culture, therefore it must be always spelled with the same grammatical respect one would give any other culture in the English language.

In addition, the term Hip Hop can be interpreted as a proper noun, as a specific thing. Unless the term Hip Hop is being displayed in an art presentation or if translated into another language or culture where the grammatical rules of the English language do not apply, it (Hip Hop) should be spelled beginning with a capital H – Hiphop or Hip Hop.

Those using the English language to describe Hip Hop while misspelling Hiphop and/or Hip Hop as hip-hop are not only grammatically incorrect, they also undermine the importance of what Hip Hop really is to Hiphopphas. They participate in Hip Hop’s enslavement by reducing our culture and way of life to a music genre and product to be bought and sold.

Again, Hiphop is the name of our collective consciousness. Hip Hop is not a product to be bought and sold (see Hip Hop Declaration of Peace; Principle Seven). It is the inalienable right of all Hiphopphas. Hiphop (Hip Hop) is OUR name!

Hip Hop, spelled here with two uppercase H’s is also called the phonetic spelling of Hiphop. It is also the traditional and general spelling of Hip Hop.

This spelling is politically correct. Again, it means moving or active intelligence. When used to describe us as a people Hip Hop can mean the awareness of peace. True Hip Hop scholars are advised to use this spelling (Hip Hop) when educating the public on how to correctly pronounce Hiphop. Writers who have spelled Hip Hop in lower case (hip-hop, hip hop) before the publishing of the Gospel of Hip Hop are excused from criticism and/or retaliation. However, now that the Gospel of Hip Hop is published, writers are advised to approach Hip Hop as the nation that it is with the importance that it deserves.

Hip Hop spelled in this way is also used in titles, introductions, invitations and artwork or when Hiphop is being explained in a general or historic sense. Failure to comply with this style undermines Hip Hop’s effort to
develop, unify and strengthen itself. Those who continue to spell Hip Hop in lower case (hip hop) when describing Hip Hop place themselves outside of our community and cannot be called true scholars of the Hip Hop arts and sciences. Let’s take a look at these terms again.

- **Hiphop** = our unique Spirit, our unique collective consciousness, the creative force behind Hip Hop’s elements. Hiphop is the name of our lifestyle and collective consciousness.

- **Hip Hop** = the creation and development of Breakin, Emceein, Graffiti Art, Deejayin, Beat Boxin, Street Fashion, Street Language, Street Knowledge, and Street Entrepreneurialism. It is what we call ourselves, and our activity in the World. Hip Hop is the name of our culture.

- **hip-hop** = Rap music product and those things and events associated with Rap music entertainment—hip-hop is a music genre.

**Hiphop Kulture** is the name of our unique community of consciousness. Hiphop is the name of our collective consciousness and Hiphop’s culture is the manifested character, patterns, beliefs and arts of our collective consciousness as Hiphoppas. We are a very real community of specialized people.

Those that live the principles of our culture are called Hiphoppas and not Hip Hoppers because to live Hip Hop is to think Hiphop. A Hiphoppa is the manifestation of Hiphop. Technically, a Hiphoppa is Hiphop and performs or presents Hip Hop, which is then sold as hip-hop.

Or, you can say Hiphop (spirit) creates the Hiphoppa (mind), which creates Hip Hop (body), which creates hip-hop (product). Hiphop is born of GOD; the Great Spirit, the Great Event. It is the light of our World.

**Hip Hop** is born of cultural syncretism, meaning the blending of different cultures to create a new culture. It is the combination and unity of several independent cultures, creating a new heterogeneous culture. And finally, **hip-hop** is born of corporate business interests—it exists when the effects of Hiphop and Hip Hop become tradeable material products.

As a title, true Hiphoppas spell the full name of our culture with a K signifying our cultural uniqueness and right to define ourselves—**Hiphop Kulture**. Hiphop Kulture can also be spelled as **Hip Hop Kulture** in certain specific writings, artwork and/or advertisements.

Even beyond the right to define ourselves, **Hiphop Kulture** is the creation of our Hip Hop atmosphere, our Hip Hop environment, our Hip Hop climate, our Hip Hop reality. The principles of our **Hiphop Kulture** are the paradigm that we create ourselves with and interpret the World through.

As a City-State, **Hiphop Kulture** is the place where Hiphoppas can achieve their true life purposes in peace with no hostile **beefs** between Hiphoppas and with no interference from anyone unless such a purpose interferes with other Hiphoppas seeking the fulfillment of their life purposes. Our Hip Hop city is where there is no economic high class that manipulates and/or forces an economic low class to work for it, where no person is above another person, where the public education of our children helps them to know and fulfill their potentials of their natural talents, where the life purpose of all men and women is nurtured and fully respected.

**Hiphop Kulture** (the City-State) is a place where the **elements** of Hiphop can be further developed and
mastered by Hiphoppas in peace leading to our lasting prosperity. As opposed to a president, a king or a warrior, Hiphop Kulture as a nation is guided by its *teachas* who lead by productive examples.

Hiphop Kulture is an international tribe of peace and prosperity whose unique World view expresses certain arts and opinions that unite people around some simple yet common principles shared all over the Earth regardless of racial, cultural, financial or religious background.

Our culture is all about peace, love, unity and safely having fun. Here, Hip Hop is the common ground that all peoples can meet upon. Hip Hop itself is the World's common spirit—the True World Order.

In our culture it is the accumulation of knowledge that reigns supreme, not the accumulation of money, property, weapons, tools, food or clothing; these are the effects of knowledge. And as useful as these things are, they are still not valued above wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Our civilization is based upon advanced human interaction, not advanced human accumulation or even annihilation.

Again, our community is all about peace, love, unity and safely having fun. This vision is what is common to most of the peoples of the Earth, and this is why Hip Hop appeals to most of the Earth’s people; we speak a universal language.

We seek the deeper meanings of Hip Hop beyond entertainment and we are inspired by our discoveries; symbolically as well as literally. For example, Hip Hop can be seen as $\text{H}_2\text{I}, \text{P}_2\text{H}_2\text{O}_1\text{P}_2$ or Hydrogen, Iodine, Phosphorus, Hydrogen, Oxygen, Phosphorus. Such chemical elements create a variety of useful substances, some of which are indeed life-sustaining.

Symbolically, H-I-P-H-O-P is chemically made up of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen atom which produces water—a necessary element for the creation and sustenance of life in its physical form.

Iodine not only kills unwanted bacteria, but hydrogen, iodine and phosphorus (H-I-P) are, essential minerals used to restore vitality to the physical body. Hydrogen, oxygen and phosphorus (H-O-P) are three of the nine macronutrients essential for plant growth (again the reference to plant life).

Hydrogen, oxygen and phosphorus (H-O-P), properly combined, produce phosphoric acid—which is commonly used to make soil-enriching fertilizer. In essence, H-I-P-H-O-P (in its chemical interpretation) is a life-giving, life-sustaining, life-enhancing compound—one that we already have within us. And this interpretation (symbolically) is what our culture represents to the World.

Even further, looking at “H” as an individual symbol, and not just as a letter, sheds more light upon the deeper symbolic meanings of Hip Hop and its existence in the World. In many metaphysical circles “H” symbolizes twin pillars, justice, mercy, “the Gate to Heaven” and the ladder. “H” as a symbol is made from the union of two “I”s. “H” itself is a symbol for unity and togetherness—two “I”s coming together. “H” is truly a symbol for the preservation of our community.

Hip Hop can also represent the breath or the act of breathing. Hip = inhale, Hop = exhale. With every breath, attuned Hiphoppas confirm their Hip Hop existences. We are not just breathing, we are inhaling and exhaling our collective Hip Hop consciousness. With every breath we are confirming the existence of our Hip Hop Kulture and community.

Therefore, Hip Hop Kulture (the name of our community), when misspelled where *Kulture* does not begin
with a $K$ but instead is spelled as *culture* with 'a c (hip-hop culture), refers to the condition of Hip Hop's development as music. It does not relate to the mature community of responsible and unified Hipoppers, the Hip Hop City-State or the Hip Hop nation.

To become a citizen of Hip hop Kulture one must be willing to adopt and defend the *Hip Hop Declaration of Peace* and begin the study and mastery of one or more of Hip Hop's nine elements.

To be a Hip Hop citizen one must simply be loyal to the preservation of Hip Hop's principles, elements and lifestyle above all else. One must be willing to direct the productive effects of Hip Hop's principles, elements and lifestyle back toward the advancement of Hip hop Kulture above all else. However, the most important factor in Hip Hop's citizenry is Hip Hop's own internal unity and collective maturity.

As WE all have learned now, our increased freedom, peace, prosperity and defense are all linked to OUR own level of unity. Those of us who continue to ignore the importance of unity above all else are the very people holding us back. HIP HOP MUST REMAIN UNITED—otherwise, with our own hands we defeat ourselves and we should stop complaining about the actions of those who are unified against our interests.

We (the international Hip Hop community) are not criminals! We do not support crime and lawlessness even from our own countries and governments! For if we are to truly enjoy higher states of freedom, peace and prosperity, we must conduct ourselves in manners that surpass the current state of World affairs.

Where there is injustice, we MUST remain just! Where there is corruption, we MUST remain honest! And where there is disunity, WE MUST REMAIN UNIFIED!

The Truth is: our freedom, peace and prosperity are based solely upon how we decide to govern ourselves.

We can talk, talk, talk, complain, complain, protest and rally all day about the injustices of oppressive government agencies, the police and insensitive corporate business practices, but if WE are unwilling or incapable of governing ourselves then the natural result of such an inability is oppression and cops getting away with murder. The point is unity! As our parents chanted during the rise of the Civil Rights movement, THE PEOPLE UNITED CAN NEVER BE DEFEATED!

We believe that every human being has a duty and a right to govern themselves, and the way in which one governs one's self begins the structure as to how whole communities govern themselves. Before we can even think about the governing of our Hip Hop nation, we must first consider the governing of our own homes, our own businesses, our own lives.

The decision to ignore this duty or seek to prevent Hipoppers (and others) from exercising this duty is oppression. Whether self-imposed or induced in some way by outside forces, those who deny us (and others) the right to govern ourselves and live as we believe is best for our development are our oppressors and history shows that the universe itself will remove such oppression from ITS path toward increased order and independence.

Know this. Restriction of thought, action, expression and/or speech is oppression even if one does it to oneself. On the other hand, freedom of thought, action, expression and speech is self-governance even if one is ignorant of the effects of one's own thoughts, actions, expressions and speech. Either way, it is your own self-expressed thoughts, actions and words that shape and directly affect the circumstances of your physical life.
Sometimes to leave the ignorant to themselves is to equally oppress them as if you kept them in chains and in prison. Allowing the ignorant to remain ignorant actually destroys the ignorant and the community the ignorant rely upon.

Our work, therefore, is to lift Hip Hop out of ignorance and onward toward increased knowledge. Our work is to inspire the Hip Hop community to be a community through a unified understanding of its own existence beyond entertainment. Our work is about building and maintaining a sustainable Hip Hop culture and protecting our people from themselves first, and then from the non-productive forces that tempt us to our own demise. In short, we are cultivating an authentic Hip Hop citizenry.

Here, loyalty implies a strict adherence to the principles of our culture; this is the center of unity for any group or community. For when one consciously and deliberately breaks the principles of one's community, one is engaged in the act of destroying one's community and even one's self.

We can now see that a community's defeat and collapse is almost always brought on by the disunity, disrespect, and disobedience of its own people. It is always a snitch or a betrayer of the cause that hands victory over to the enemy. It is always one's disloyalty to the principles of the group and to its leadership that destroys the group from within and hands victory over to that group's enemies. This fact simply cannot be avoided.

Infighting is another cause for the destruction of any group. OUR COMMUNITY CANNOT AND MUST NOT BETRAY ITSELF IN THIS WAY! Betrayal is not always the act of giving up the secrets and/or plans of the group. Giving away or selling the group's resources for one's own gain is another cause for group destruction from outside forces. However, infighting (or fighting amongst ourselves) is the number-one cause of any group's defeat.

UNITY IS THE KEY! Not only must we never sell our elements and expressions to interests that go against our own existence, we must equally not wage war with ourselves. We must find the strength and the courage within ourselves to resolve our conflicts peacefully and without violence. This is what it means to be loyal to Hip Hop.

Loyalty to Hip Hop also means the protection of our own artistic and cultural elements; this is the beginning of independence and self-governance for Hipchopps. We are financed by our cultural, éléments, these are our intellectual properties. If we are to become and remain politically and socially strong we cannot continue to give our intellectual property (our elements) away to those who care little for our continued development and well-being as a people.

Know this. A Hip Hop element is one of Hip Hop's cultural expressions. It is a material good. It is our intellectual property. It is our capital. It is an act, art or idea that further expresses Hip Hop's culture and consciousness. It is a skill that reflects the character of the Hipchop conscious and enhances the Health, Love, Awareness and Wealth of the truly committed Hipchopps.

An element is usually created when the Hiphop sight (awareness/perception) is applied to a subject or object (material or immaterial).

Presently Hiphop's elements are: Breakin, Emceen, Graffiti Art, Deejayin, Beat Boxin, Street Fashion, Street Language, Street Knowledge, and Street Entrepreneurial. These elements are symbolized throughout this instrument as B.E.G.D.B.F.L.K.E.

Hiphop's or Hip Hop's elements are the sources of Hiphop Kulture's political power. They are also the sources of a Hiphoppa's livelihood. They are how the
Hiphoppa provides for and protects her Self and her family. True Hiphoppas are specialized in at least one or more of Hiphop’s nine elements.

By itself one Hip Hop element is not the totality of Hip Hop’s culture. It is a representation or an introduction to the culture itself. To fully comprehend Hip Hop’s elements artistically one must gain an understanding of Hip Hop culturally, even legally.

In the United States, human beings are thought to have certain inalienable rights; rights that are natural to the existence of a human’s being. In his book, *Cases and Materials on the Law of Real Property*, law professor Ray Andrews Brown writes, *Man, by virtue of his very existence, is endowed with certain natural desires and claims. Among the most common and apparent of these are the freedom of his body from injury or restraint; the exercise of his faculties in order that he may obtain the material things essential to his life and comfort; and the possession and enjoyment of these physical things of the world which he has brought under his control.*

Professor Brown mentions the above as part of an explanation as to “Man’s” natural right to property and how the state or community in which “Man” may live can override such a right for the good of all. Mr. Brown writes, *Organized society also has its own de facto interests, the most important of which is the preservation of peace and order, which can come in direct conflict with “Man’s” natural rights to exist and be happy.*

However, in return for giving up one’s natural rights and freedoms, *The state recognises, protects, controls and adjusts individual and social claims and interests.* The state, although determined to preserve peace and order, still recognizes (or should recognize) the rights of the individual.

As professor Brown points out, *When an individual claim or interest receives recognition and protection from the state, it achieves the status of what is technically known as a ‘legal right.’ Thus a landowner under normal circumstances has the right, which will be vindicated by the state, to exclude others from entrance to his premises. The correlative to this right is the ‘duty’ which others have to observe this right.*

I bring this up because when it comes to Hip Hop it seems that the United States is not yet recognizing or protecting our right to our own property. It seems that the United States does not recognize our real existence as Hip Hop and thus cannot protect our interests under law. And what does this mean legally?

First it means that if we are unprotected by law and the state’s obligation to protect our interests as Hiphoppas practicing Hiphop is nonexistent, then corporate bodies of all sorts can invade our culture and freely take from our culture whatever they choose because not only have we not put up a legal fence around our own intellectual property (B.E.G.D.B.F.I.L.K.E.), but we also have not invoked our inherent rights to our own property.

It is not that corporate entities exploited our artistic elements for the good of their own interests; it is more that because we were ignorant of our rights to property, others with knowledge took advantage of our ignorance. Through unfair contracts and even blatant theft they made OUR property THEIR property and the states in which we lived did not protect us, or our interests as a group. However, we were and still are expected to pay the taxes and abide by the laws of a nation that didn’t and still doesn’t protect us, or our property.

But what is property? Property in its common sense is thought of as something owned, a possession of some sort. Hip Hop’s elements are indeed our property in a common sense, they are the tangible physical results to our intangible cultural reality. However, in a strict legal sense,
property as explained by Mr. Brown denotes not the physical things themselves but the rights that the individual concerned has in them.

In a strict legal sense, land is not 'property,' but the subject of property. The term 'property,' although in common parlance frequently applied to a tract of land or a chattel, in its legal signification means only the rights of the owner in relation to it.

This is important for true Hip Hop scholars to know because when seeking to preserve our culture (Hip Hop) we must also know the legal route of such preservation as it relates to real property. You cannot fully preserve something that you do not actually own. But as we can see ownership in a legal sense has less to do with what is actually possessed as it has more to do with one’s right to property; one’s ability to use what is said to be owned. Use is the real side of property.

Professor Brown continues, If property in land consists in certain essential rights, and a physical interference with the land substantially subverts one or more of those rights, such interference takes the owner’s property.

The right of indefinite use (or of using indefinitely) is an essential quality or attribute of absolute property, without which absolute property can have no legal existence. Use is the real side of property. If the right of indefinite user is an essential element of absolute property or complete ownership, whatever physical interference annuls this right takes property.

It is not so much that our physical property has been taken from us, it is more the fact that our ability or inability to use, control, direct, alter, etc. our own Hip Hop elements for our own good has been interfered with, even stifled by greedy corporate interests and our own ignorance, and such an act is the taking or giving away of our property.

Our indefinite use of Hip Hop’s artistic and intellectual elements still remains our property today. It is us as a specialized group in the World that must invoke and lawfully demand our rights to property as it pertains to Hip Hop and its cultural elements and products.

Property itself is an intangible thing. It is the right that a person has to make use of and enjoy a tangible thing, and not the tangible thing itself. If we stop to think, we will discover also that ‘property’ is not one single protected interest or claim to a thing but the totality of a number of different though related interests: the interests of possessing, of using, of altering, of conveying, etc., the thing in question.

Hip Hop is an intangible thing that produces tangible things, and our inability to possess, use, alter, etc., our own Hip Hop tangibles is the beginning of our lost of property. We simply have got to stop giving away in ignorance our resources and rights to real property. This we must seriously begin to overstated.

Moving along now, we come to this frequently used term in our culture: overstating. Here, overstating is a state of awareness developed primarily from having a firsthand experience with learned subjects and objects. It is different from understanding, which is a comprehension of learned subjects and objects gained primarily from having been taught.

Someone who understands has a comprehension of taught information (acquired knowledge). Such is the objective approach to Hip Hop and Hip Hop.

Someone who overstated actually experiences the information that has been taught and comprehended (acquired wisdom). Such is the subjective approach to Hip Hop and Hip Hop.

Know this. Along with being loved, and being needed, most people just want to be understood. For the more you understand life, the easier your life shall be. Above
all learning we must truly seek understanding, and if we are blessed—*understanding*.

For life is to be *under* and over -stood, not just lived. But to truly lend your mind to the understanding of something other than yourself requires a certain appreciation for what is about to be studied. Therefore, let us seek to understand before we seek to form opinions and views on things we know little about. Let us also be unified in our *understanding* of ourselves as *Hiphoppas*.

What does this mean? It means that we must continuously seek the Truth and the true nature of our authentic being as *Hiphoppas*. This is what shall ensure our success. Relying upon Rap music's incomplete history is NOT how we are going to truly understand the divinity of our Hip Hop nature.

Hip Hop's true history is NOT the history of Rap music entertainment. Rap music's entertainment history can be included in Hip Hop's history, but to interpret Hip Hop's cultural history through mainstream Rap music entertainment is a mistake.

Most people today approach Hip Hop as a music genre because that's how Rap music is promoted. Icons such as Kool DJ Herc are referred to as "rap pioneers" even though they (he) are Hip Hop's "cultural architects," even spiritual leaders. In my observations, this perception of people like Kool DJ Herc (the recognized Father of Hip Hop) stagnates our collective development today as a Hip Hop community. We simply do not value one another and it is this devaluing of each other that keeps us in a valueless state.

Approaching Kool Herc (the Father) historically as simply a DJ is like approaching Jesus (the Christ) historically as simply a carpenter. Not only does such a perception limit the potential of the community influenced by such a perception, but such a view of Hip Hop is simply inaccurate historically. Kool DJ Herc is far more than a DJ, and Hip Hop is far more than a music genre!

Arriving in the United States from Jamaica sometime around 1967, Kool DJ Herc (an abbreviation for Hercules) was known for having the biggest and the loudest sound system in the Bronx, which attracted many street kids, young poets, graffiti writers, DJs and especially b-boys.

Kool DJ Herc would attract huge crowds to the playgrounds and parks of the West Bronx playing the instrumental *breaks* of songs by recording artists such as James Brown as well as the Amazing Bongo Band. In fact, James Brown's popular recordings would become Kool DJ Herc's main records to play.

And while many DJs in the Bronx, like El Marko, Mandingo, DJ Maboya, Elvis 007 and others, were also playing James Brown recordings, Kool DJ Herc was considered a street DJ because he would play his music on a huge sound system outside in the playgrounds and parks of the Bronx regularly for free! These events were called *jams*.

One place where we were able to hear Kool DJ Herc *jam* was at the 1520 Sedgwick Avenue community center in the Bronx. This community center, which was part of the housing tenement where Kool Herc lived, was connected to a playground park where Herc was known to "deejay"on his huge sound system. This is one of the main places where Hip Hop as an art-form is said to have started sometime around 1972-1973.

The apartment building directly on the other side of the playground park was 1600 Sedgwick Avenue and this is where I lived from about 1972-1974. During these times (1970s) the whole political and social structure of
the United States was changing. During this time major recording artists, actors, athletes and academicians were all openly protesting and speaking out against war and social injustice. Revolution was in the air.

174 Being influenced by the living conditions and national events of the day (unemployment, drug addiction, the Vietnam War, police misconduct, poverty, racism, civil rights, etc), the population at both 1520 as well as 1600 Sedgwick Avenue were very much politically and socially active. This community was NOT just singing and dancing; we were also praying and protesting.

175 In his time, Kool Herc was not just a DJ; he was also a popular activist in his community; a believer in GOD. He was conscious and talented and was known as a community leader. Kool Herc’s street credibility was solid; he was down by law.

176 The actual idea of a jam was to set up a time and a space where the true intentions of our hearts and minds could be manifested through our various forms of street recreation, and Kool Herc was the guy that brought everyone together through his deejayin.

177 Jams were not only outdoor party spaces and places (Cedar Park, 123 Park, the 161 street Yankee Stadium Park, Stevenson High School park, all in the Bronx), jahs were also a creative escape. It was a time to step outside of the confinement of mainstream life and create ourselves, to dress up in the clothes ("gear") that amplified what we thought of ourselves, to talk, walk and live according to our perception of ourselves without compromise.

178 A jam was a time to either show-off your own unique talents or watch the unique talents of others. A jam wasn’t just about a crowd of people listening to a DJ (or, years later, to an MC), a jam was a community event—a social gathering. It was a time and space where the young neighborhood school kids as well as the young outcasts, the outlaws and young revolutionaries would all come together to exchange ideas, street products, plans, gossip and of course talents.

179 To understand the true birth of Hip Hop, one must understand what the 1970s was really like. One must also remember that those who attended Kool Herc’s jams were not exclusively b-boys, DJs and/or graffiti writers; many were the activists, intellectuals and revolutionaries of their time.

180 B-boyin, Aerosol art, Deejayin and Emcein were not the only things going on in the public parks of the 1970s and Kool DJ Herc was not the only DJ of his time in those areas. However, Kool DJ Herc and his sister Cindy (Pep) were also activists in their community and their free service to their community is what caused Hip Hop to exist.

181 As I mentioned earlier, I too was present at the birth of Hip Hop in 1973 and I remember being more concerned with the mystical life and with the development of myself spiritually than with being a fresh MC; yet I too was attracted to the jams and all that the jams represented. I too was Hip Hop! So, what is Hip Hop’s true history? Gang culture? I don’t remember Hip Hop’s birth like this.

182 The point here is that when Kool Herc began playing music in the community center of 1520 Sedgwick Avenue and its neighboring parks, attracting and gathering together b-boys, graffiti writers, kung fu martial artists; poets, MCs and other DJs, he also attracted gang members as well as young philosophers from a wide variety of spiritual views and traditions, and I am only one survivor from this era.

183 In truth, many young men and women of the early 1970s were very spiritual and philosophically-minded. Early Hip Hop was surrounded by a variety of World philosophies; many of which we adopted for ourselves.
As an example, the 1973 film *Enter The Dragon* starring Bruce Lee was a huge success in the 1970s and inspired millions of urban kids all across the United States to begin practicing kung fu.

The spirit and fighting skills of Bruce Lee (and Jim Kelly) were a major influence upon the values and principles Hip hop still hold sacred today. It wasn’t so much that Bruce Lee was explicitly teaching ancient Chinese philosophies in his films; it was more his attitude toward life and living that captured our hearts.

Bruce Lee was not just a Chinese martial artist or an actor, he was sensitive to the times in which he lived and his films always tried to convey some sort of message aimed at self-control, self-mastery and social justice. WE LOVED BRUCE LEE! He symbolized what early Hip Hop aspired to be.

Although censored at the time, *Enter The Dragon* (Bruce Lee’s version) opened up with a conversation between Bruce Lee and his spiritual teacher. His teacher begins the film saying, *I see your talents have gone beyond the mere physical level. Your skills are now at the point of spiritual insight. I have several questions.*

*What is the highest technique you hope to achieve?* Bruce answers, *To have no technique.* The teacher continues, *Very good. What are your thoughts when facing an opponent?* Bruce replies, *There is no opponent.* The teacher asks, *And why is that?* Bruce answers, *Because the word I does not exist.* The teacher then says *So, continue.*

Bruce Lee explains; *A good fight should be like a small play, but played seriously. A good martial artist does not become tense, but ready; not thinking, yet not dreaming. Ready for whatever may come. When the opponent expands, I contract. When he contracts, I expand. And when there is an opportunity, I do not hit, IT hits all by ITself.*

The teacher replies, *Now you must remember; the enemy has only images and illusions behind which he hides his true motives. Destroy the image and you will break the enemy. The IT that you refer to is a powerful weapon easily misused by the martial artist who deserves his loss.*

Further into the conversation the teacher asks Bruce, *Tell me now the Shaolin commandment number 13.* Bruce replies, *A martial artist has to take responsibility for himself and accept the consequences of his own doing.*

This attitude is basic to Hip Hop. However, one month before *Enter The Dragon* was released, Bruce Lee mysteriously died and this whole dialog was cut from the film. I often wonder what the World would be like if so many great minds like Bruce Lee were not sabotaged and/or murdered. Minds like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, John Lennoxt, Gandhi, and again Bruce Lee to name a few.

I am from that group of young people that were inspired by these minds. We went to the jams and philosophied in a cipher (a circle) with others of like mind about the state of the Black man and woman in America. My group did not grab the mic, or break, or DJ at first; we were more concerned with hidden Truths and attaining freedom from injustice by any means necessary. Kool Herc’s jams attracted us also.

Some of us grew up Baptist, or Catholic, or Jehovah’s Witness. Others of us grew up Muslim; even others of us grew up Rastafari, and Jewish, and as Hebrew Israelites, and as Five Percenters. I grew up in all of these spiritual traditions. I can remember feeling all kinds of spiritual traditions at the places where Kool DJ Herc played and later where Afrika Bambataa and Jazzy Jay played.

Even later where Red Alert, Chucky Chillous, DJ Breakout and Brucie B. played, Christians were there,
Rastafarians, Five Percenters, Freemasons were there, Muslims were there; Hindus and Buddhists were there, even Witches, Satanists and Atheists were in attendance. It was a "jam!" It was open and anyone who wanted to be there was there.

At these early jams I remember everyone being in harmony with one another through the music, the clothing and our unique styles of communication (hand shakes, head nods, street games and street news, etc.). Even when we argued philosophically we were always able to work things out in the end without violent confrontations, because in the end we knew that we were all united in the idea of freedom from oppression. And yes, our debates did get heated! But this is why we created Hip Hop to begin with.

Hip Hop was created as a neutral zone, an alternative form of recreation, an escape from street-violence, corruption and boredom. This is a major part of Hip Hop's history that seems to always be left out of Hip Hop's historical presentations.

The very subjects and activities that rappers rap about today are exactly what Hip Hop was created to avoid and overcome. The point here is that knowledge and understanding were also at the birth of Hip Hop right along with b-boysing, MC-ing, graffiti writing and DJ-ing. However, the desperaße quest to exploit Hip Hop's artistic elements for profit (in Hip Hop's later years) buried the principles and life skills that accompanied Hip Hop's early artistic elements.

Early Hiphoppers united around Kool DJ Herc's sound system because it was the biggest and the loudest of the time. However, even with talent the actual character of Kool DJ Herc himself was one of leadership and social activism. He and his sister Cindy actually cared about the young kids in their neighborhood and this is what caused Hip Hop to exist. In fact, this was the general attitude of even the gangs at the time.

Kool Herc wasn't just playing music in the park; he was trying to keep young kids like me out of trouble by playing his music in the park for free. Kool Herc would play the songs of James Brown which represented the Black Power movement and most people's feelings at the time of struggling against oppression.

James Brown with Alfred James Ellis would publish the song "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud" which was a huge success in 1968. As youths, we sang along with James Brown as he shouted, SAY IT LOUD! And we would all say, I'M BLACK AND I'M PROUD!

James Brown would tell us, I worked on jobs with my feet and my hands, and all the work I did was for the other man! And now we demand our chance to do things for ourselves, we tired of beating our heads against the wall and working for someone else! This advice would follow me all of my life—this is Hip Hop!

For youngsters like me growing up in New York, the good life was all about independence from the rigid order of the World's work-force, and non-attachment to the ways, the people and the things of the mainstream. Like many of my time I just wanted to be at peace and happy. I just wanted to chill.

The group of youngsters I grew up with were not really interested in making careers out of their MC-ing and DJ-ing abilities. These were our pastime recreations; we simply wanted freedom from the oppression that we witnessed our parents and grandparents experiencing. This inspired many of us (the original MCs, b-boys/b-girls and Djs) to enroll in college and become professionals later in life.
For others of us (the artists), Hip Hop became our new identity. It became our interpretation of the World. At very young ages we confirmed to our skeptical parents that we were going to make a life for ourselves practicing the artistic elements of Hip Hop. And even though many of us would have to leave home at early ages in order to pursue our goals as MCs, dancers and DJs, our group (influenced by the events of the Civil Rights movement) still saw Hip Hop as the continued struggle for true freedom, justice and equality.

For our group, as we got older we began to turn our Hip Hop view of the World (our sight) toward the subjects of philosophy, history, religion and politics. Beyond music and dance, Hip Hop was the life that we began to live. So the question became, how would we live the Hip Hop life? Beyond rapping, how should the rapper's life be lived?

This is how I, and many others, have always approached Hip Hop. For us, Hip Hop is NOT just art and entertainment. For us, Hip Hop is a metaphysical principle that ensures one's health, love, awareness and wealth through the arts, and the Gospel of Hip Hop is the documentation and instruction of such a view.

For us, Hip Hop is GOD's response to OUR suffering, it is the answered prayer of our grandparents and ancestors, it is the PROMISED LAND, it is the idea that unites us. Such an idea teaches us to cooperate with one another, to help one another and support one another.

For we have now learned that life is all about cooperation. That the power which causes several portions of a plant or even a human (for example) to come together to help one another is called "life," or produces "life." We have now learned that life intensifies with the increase of helpfulness and cooperation. The intensity of life is also the intensity of helpfulness, unity and cooperation. The ceasing of these powers causes deterioration, therefore the ceasing of help is called "corruption."

We (Hip Hop) have a unique opportunity to join the World's peace process and establish the sovereignty our parents envisioned without violence and/or war. But first we must cooperate with one another, and this is why the Gospel of Hip Hop physically exists and why the Temple of Hip Hop culturally exists. Let us get to work on the realization of this vision. Let us cooperate with one another. For us, THIS IS REAL HIP HOP! There it is.