

17 Framing gender, race, and hip-hop in *Boyz N the Hood*, *Do the Right Thing*, and *Slam*

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Gangsta rap's global appeal in the early 1990s was partly facilitated by its use in 'hood films, such as *Boyz N the Hood* (1992; hereafter referred to as *Boyz*). This is largely because such films employed gangsta rap on their soundtracks and because gangsta rappers, like Ice Cube, were cast,¹ thereby authenticating the film narratives and globalizing narrow representations of Black masculinity. The relationship between Hollywood film-makers and certain rappers was mutually beneficial because these artists' film and television careers were kick-started. This film genre, and its associated music, found both US and global audiences. This allows us to consider stereotypical representations of Black masculinity in US cinema and gangsta rap.² However, these narrow depictions have not gone uncontested, as the Wayans brother's parody, *Don't Be a Menace to South Central While Drinking Your Juice in the Hood*, as well as Sacha Baron Cohen's spoof of gangsta rap via his persona, Ali G, reveal. Spike Lee provides more serious critical engagements with the 'hood genre in *Clockers*, but *Do the Right Thing* (1989) – which precedes the ascendance of the 'hood genre – points to more lateral ways in which hip-hop could be used to represent marginal Black subjects' struggles. His work challenges racially problematic cinematic depictions by resisting mainstream, commercial film conventions. Likewise, Marc Levin's *Slam* (1998) casts hip-hop slam poet Saul Williams in the lead role and features his performances as a means, not to create stereotypical representations of Black men, but to explore the concept of redemption through taking personal responsibility for one's actions. This casting choice is apt because Williams is critical of gangsta rap, which, he says, "has strayed too far from the source."³ Ultimately, the different ways in which hip-hop is employed in the films under consideration here will reveal competing representations of Black masculinity in popular culture.

Singleton's *Boyz* sparked the wave of 'hood films by providing key insights into the lives of young Black males in South Central, Los Angeles. *Boyz* tells the story of Tre (Cuba Gooding Jr.) and his friendship with neighborhood friends Doughboy (Ice Cube) and Ricky (Morris Chestnut). Singleton focuses on the difficulties young African American men face in poor, gang-ridden neighborhoods. Films like *Boyz*:

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create an effect of realism by creating an overlap between the rite of passage into manhood and the narrative time of story . . . The beginning, middle and end of *Boyz N the Hood* constitute episodes that mark the young protagonist's incorporation into society.⁴

At the end of the first episode, Tre leaves his mother and friends behind to live with his father, the second episode ends with Doughboy being arrested and the final episodes end with Tre's departure for university after Ricky's and Doughboy's deaths.⁵ The key tension is set up with the film's lead-in text that frames the protagonist's dire context: "One out of every twenty-one Black American males will be murdered in their lifetime. Most will die at the hands of another Black male."⁶ The film's realism is authenticated by the use of hip-hop.⁷ Guerrero contends that *Boyz's* use of gangsta rap and gangsta rappers in the cast accounts for its success, and that it did well at the box office because it crossed over to white audiences.⁸ Black cinema's big challenge is that it operates at the margins. Blaxploitation films of the 1970s and the late 1990s 'hood movies were popular during a slump in the US film market, but even here Black film-makers were expected to make their films cheaply.⁹ They were in a precarious position; a film's budget is determined by its crossover power. If a production approaches this budgetary limit, it either does not get financed or its "black point of view, politics, or narrative gets co-opted" or altered to appeal to the sensibilities of wider, white audiences to ensure large profits.¹⁰

Ice Cube's role in *Boyz* aided its crossover appeal and commercial success.¹¹ In many respects, Ice Cube's character overshadows Cuba Gooding, Jr.'s Tre. Like Furious Styles (Laurence Fishburne), Doughboy provides key critical insights into the political economy that produced these ghettos. Toward the end of the film when he has avenged Ricky's murder, he reflects upon the racial and class disparities in mainstream news coverage of dramatic events in the world. He tells Tre that the morning news did not make any mention of his brother's death the night before and remarks, "Either they don't know, don't show, or don't care about what's going on in the hood. They had all this foreign shit. They didn't have shit on my brother, man."¹² From Doughboy's perspective, mainstream media are either ignorant or indifferent toward the struggles of poor African Americans.¹³ This is an ironic insight because, until this point, Doughboy offers little indication that he thinks about the broader context within which the 'hood's conflicts occur.¹⁴ Doughboy is most active in threatening exchanges with rival groups and he is ready to use his gun when Ricky is harassed. He also avenges Ricky's death without hesitation. The cycle of vengeful violence between gangs therefore seems endless. It is thus significant for Doughboy to offer a critical reflection that links his 'hood's violence to the broader economic and political context that produces the social ills in South Central.

Doughboy's behavior reinforces Singleton's message at the beginning of the film when young Tre and his friends view a crime scene, where posters of former US president Ronald Reagan are visible. Paul Gormley contends that the "focus on Reagan posters, the acousmatic sounds of gunfire, and the bloody crime scene all signal the themes of inner-city and political protest against Reaganite government policies that also lie at the heart of the film."¹⁵ Michelle Alexander argues that de-industrialization and globalization created the economic collapse of Black working-class communities in the 1980s.¹⁶ This can be attributed to Reagan's policies that found favor with citizens after a presidential campaign appealed to white, conservative interests:

In his campaign for the presidency, Reagan mastered the "excision of the language of race from conservative public discourse" and thus built on the success of earlier conservatives who developed a strategy of exploiting racial hostility or resentment for political gain without making explicit reference to race. Condemning "welfare queens" and "criminal predators," he rode into office with the strong support of disaffected whites – poor and working-class whites who felt betrayed by the Democratic Party's embrace of the civil rights agenda.¹⁷

The Reagan era's approach to de-industrialization and the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs was thus radicalized.¹⁸ Instead of addressing the causes of the economic collapse of ghettos, an unsympathetic, racialized discourse was used to demonize poor Black communities. Reagan's war on drugs should be read in relation to his economic policies.¹⁹ Dominant media representations of this war on drugs "typically featured black 'crack whores,' and 'gangbangers,' reinforcing already prevalent racial stereotypes of black women as irresponsible, selfish and 'welfare queens,' and black men as 'predators' – part of an inferior and criminal subculture."²⁰ Entman and Rojecki contend, "Racial representation on television actually does not appear to match crime statistics, with local news overrepresenting Black perpetrators, underrepresenting Black victims, and overrepresenting White victims [sic]."²¹ This reinforces Doughboy's interpretation of news media. Furious Styles's lecture to Tre and Ricky and the residents of Compton about gentrification resonates with Alexander's research:

[W]hy is it that there is a gun shop on almost every corner in this community? Tell you why. For the same reason that there's a liquor store on almost every corner in the black community. Why? They want us to kill ourselves. You go out to Beverly Hills, you don't see that shit. But they want us to kill ourselves. Yeah, the best way you can destroy a people, you take away their ability to reproduce themselves. Who is it that dyin' out here on these streets every night? Y'all. Young brothers like yourselves. You doin' exactly what they want you to do.²²

Furious suggests that young Black men in his community have internalized the violence that has been acted out upon them by neo-liberal economic policies in a context where class inequalities are racialized. Many of the disparities that were addressed by Civil Rights activists in the earlier generation were continued in the 1980s. *Boyz* thus affords Doughboy and Styles the most meaningful opportunities to address political concerns and helps to authenticate the director's realist project.

However, Ice Cube plays the most significant role here. Michael Eric Dyson contends that

Singleton's shrewd casting of rapper Ice Cube as a central character allows him to seize symbolic capital from a real-life rap icon, while tailoring the violent excesses of Ice Cube's rap persona into a jarring visual reminder of the cost paid by black males for survival in American society.²³

Ice Cube's "How to Survive in South Central" features prominently on the film's soundtrack. The song imparts advice on how to survive in South Central in the form of three rules. The first rule is to be found in Ice Cube's first verse:

Rule number one: get yourself a gun
A nine in your ass'll be fine
Keep it in your glove compartment
cause jackers, yo, they love to start shit
Now if you're white, you can trust the police
but if you're black they ain't nothin' but beasts
Watch out for the kill
Don't make a false move and keep your hands on the steering wheel²⁴

Ice Cube's readiness to embrace gun violence reveals that his aggression is not directed toward the police, but toward "jackers" – in other words, fellow community members. Even though the police are not to be trusted, it would be better for you to be obedient by keeping your hands on the steering wheel. Survival in the 'hood therefore relies on compliance when the police pull you over and a readiness to shoot "jackers" – Black-on-Black violence is therefore acceptable, thereby inadvertently confirming Furious's argument about internalized violence in the 'hood. This internalization is gendered, as rule number two suggests: "Rule number two: don't trust nobody / especially a bitch with a hooker's body / cause it ain't nuttin but a trap / And females'll get you jacked and kidnapped."²⁵ The misogynist appellation "bitch" is oft repeated by Doughboy in *Boyz*. Ice Cube's advice reduces the Black female body to a set of essentialist and negative character traits, much like racist and sexist discourse on single mothers and "crack whores" demonize Black women. Here, Ice Cube suggests that Black women,

whom he equates with sex workers by virtue of their appearance, use their sexuality to harm Black men. bell hooks argues that the “sexist, misogynist, patriarchal ways of thinking and behaving that are glorified in gangsta rap are a reflection of the prevailing values in our society, values created and sustained by white supremacist capitalist patriarchy.”²⁶ The song’s values are thus similar to those of the broader hegemonic, misogynist milieu. This may explain why Ice Cube’s casting assured the film’s crossover. Discussing gangsta rap’s contradictions, Michael Quinn asks, “Should Gangsta Rap be valorized for bringing African American rage into the spotlight after the Reagan era or criticized for its glorification of violence and misogyny?”²⁷ He contends that it should both be lauded and reproached.

Singleton’s desire to authenticate his realist representation of the ’hood speaks to the burden of representation placed upon Black artists. Eithne Quinn explains, “Because black Americans, of all racially subordinated groups, have achieved the most in the cultural sphere while at the same time being the most relentlessly typecast in dominant image repertoires, discourses about representational responsibility have accrued an arresting importance.”²⁸ Lee and Singleton have taken on this burden to clear space from which to tell stories from a Black perspective. In *Do the Right Thing* (1989), a precursor to the ’hood genre, Lee employs Public Enemy’s Black Nationalist rap song “Fight the Power” to frame his narrative about the marginalized existence of African Americans in Bed-Stuy. The song’s counter-hegemonic politics are clear:

Elvis was a hero to most
 But he never meant shit to me, you see
 Straight up racist that sucker was
 Simple and plain
 Motherfuck him and John Wayne
 Cause I’m Black and I’m proud
 I’m ready and hyped plus I’m amped
 Most of my heroes don’t appear on no stamps
 Sample a look back you look and find
 Nothing but rednecks for 400 years if you check²⁹

Key signifiers of American nationalism, rocker Elvis Presley and movie cowboy John Wayne, are referenced to critique the racist nature of that nationalism. The cowboy genre is singled out as a symbol of four hundred years of colonialism in which indigenous people, often presented in Westerns as “injins”/“Indians,” were systematically exterminated.³⁰ Likewise, Presley is mentioned to draw attention to arguments about cultural appropriation in rock’s crossover to mainstream US audiences.³¹ The “proud American century,” often signified by Elvis and John Wayne, is blighted by

allegations of institutionalized racism, to which Chuck D alludes when he says most of his heroes don't appear on stamps. The song is a sonic interruption in the lives of characters,³² like Sal (Danny Aiello), who memorialized famous Italian American actors, singers, and sports celebrities on his pizzeria's Wall of Fame, to the annoyance of Buggin' Out (Giancarlo Esposito) who wants Black public figures on Sal's wall. The song's noise is literal and political. It demonstrates Dick Hebdige's discussion of noise in subculture: "Subcultures represent 'noise' . . . interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and phenomena to their representation in the media."³³ Public Enemy interrupts hegemonic representations of American patriotism by drawing attention to the fact that, historically, dominant representations of American identity and achievements are racially exclusive. Their interruption in the sequence that leads from real events to its representation in the media draws our attention to the ways in which the media construct our worldview. "Fight the Power" helps to drive the plot to its explosive climax when Radio Raheem is killed by cops. His death results in a riot and Sal's pizzeria is burned down. This raises questions about police brutality and Bed-Stuy residents' anger at not having a sense of ownership of the very neighborhood where they reside.

Like Lee, Public Enemy bear the burden of representation in their critique of racial inequality in the US, as witnessed by Chuck D's claim that they are with the Black community's CNN.³⁴ Bakari Kitwana contends that the commercial success of 'hood films reveals the "failure of Black intellectuals to make sense of the critical changes in African American life."³⁵ The Civil Rights movement's gains were rolled back in Black working-class communities. Gangsta rap addresses this failure. In light of the failure of the Civil Rights era to substantially improve the lives of the Black working class, gangsta rappers rejected the burden of representation. Quinn argues that gangsta rappers were aware of this burden of representation, at the very least via media and community critiques of their misogynist lyrics and embrace of violent and nihilist values:

First, they mobilized the authenticity discourse (representation as depiction) to an unprecedented degree, in order to give expressive shape to materially grounded conditions, experiences, and desires and at the same time to fuel and feed the vast appetite for "black ghetto realness" in the popular-culture marketplace. Second, they reneged on the contract to act as delegates, self-consciously repudiating uplifting images of black life in a gesture of rebellion and dissent.³⁶

They rejected the burden of representing images of blackness that countered hegemony, but then they also capitalized on notions of authenticity to meet commercial interest in narrow, fetishized understandings of Black

masculinity and life in the 'hood. Gangsta rappers therefore became complicit in the contradictory scenario of the 1990s as described by Patricia Hill Collins:

The actual ghettoization of poor and working-class African Americans may render them virtually invisible within suburban malls, on soccer fields, and in good public schools, yet mass media created a seemingly authentic Black American culture that glamorized poverty, drugs, violence, and hypersexuality.³⁷

Likewise, Greg Tate writes that the

African American presence in this country has produced a fearsome, seductive, and circumspect body of myths about Black intellectual capacity, athletic ability, sexual appetite, work ethic, family values, and propensity for violence and drug addiction.³⁸

Thanks to Hollywood marketing, the narrow representation of Black subjectivity as presented in gangsta rap did more than cross over to white film audiences in the USA; it went global. If global audiences had not been exposed to socially conscious hip-hop by the early 1990s (such as Public Enemy, Afrika Bambaataa, Queen Latifah, or KRS-One), “hood movies” use of gangsta rap certainly introduced them to gangsta rappers like Ice Cube, Ice-T, and MC Eiht – thereby assuring their commercial success as rappers and movie stars. The big contradiction in gangsta rap’s commercial uptake is that its “wealth has not been able to transform . . . the social reality of substandard housing, medical care, and education that affects over half of all African American children and accounts for as many as one out of three . . . African American males being under the control of the criminal justice system.”³⁹ The use of gangsta rappers and their music in 'hood films, such as *Boyz*, is therefore ironic. This genre’s claim to authenticity helps 'hood film-makers to authenticate their narratives. It also helps the film to cross over to wider audiences, thereby securing bigger profits. This is a good return on investment for Hollywood studios, which invested relatively little money in this genre. Gangsta rappers’ rejection of the burden of representation effectively absolves them from having to engage with debates about social responsibility or accountability to the communities they claim to represent. In effect, this contradicts Singleton’s intention to speak for marginal communities. As my discussion of Spike Lee’s use of hip-hop in *Do the Right Thing* suggests, Lee’s use of conscious hip-hop does not undermine his intentions.

Saul Williams’s poetry in Marc Levin’s *Slam* serves a similar function to “Fight the Power” in *Do the Right Thing*. *Slam* does not fall strictly in the 'hood genre, but speaks to key themes addressed in this genre. It also

employs hip-hop to critique Black masculinity. Williams plays small-time drug dealer Ray Joshua, who faces a charge of drug possession after his drug supplier is shot. In the scenes before his arrest, we often see Ray at work on his poetry. His poetry saves him from having to choose between two rival prison gangs. In a tense prison yard scene, we see Ray attempting to find a safe spot. Just as a rival gang member walks swiftly up to him, presumably to assault him, Ray breaks out into a performance that speaks to the contradictions of Black-on-Black violence and the internalization of racist interpellation:

Stealing us was the smartest thing they ever did
 Too bad they don't teach the truth to their kids
 Our influence on them is the reflection they see when they look into their
 minstrel mirror
 and talk about *their* culture
 Their existence is that of a schizophrenic vulture
 They are bound to live an infinite, consecutive, executive life sentence
 So what are you bound to live, nigger?
 So while you out there serving time
 I'll be in synch with the sun
 While you run with the moon
 Life of the womb reflected by guns
 Worship of moons, I am the sun
 And we are public enemies number one
 One, one-one, one
 One, one-one, one⁴⁰

The performance – similar to Williams's "Penny for a Thought"⁴¹ – criticizes the cycle of violence in which Black male characters in this film, *Boyz* and rap songs about "beefs" and territorial disputes, are locked. While Ray's poetry reflects that he possesses critical insights into institutionalized racism that has legitimated cultural appropriation in the form of blackface minstrelsy⁴² and the interpellation of Black men as "public enemy number one" (cf. Public Enemy) during the Reagan era, he has yet to realize that the liberation for which he yearns can only take place if he accepts responsibility for his actions. Poetry teacher Lauren Bell (Sonja Sohn) witnesses Ray's performance and helps him to make this realization, as seen in her confrontation with Ray after he visits her when he gets bail. Lauren points out that this burden he is facing is not unique and that she, too, has had to make tough choices in the face of hardship (for example, the loss of her brother and her own humiliating addiction to drugs). Lauren's role is singular because, unlike many 'hood films, it is a female character who plays a key role in guiding the protagonist to redemption. As Dyson reveals, *Boyz* was criticized for suggesting that it is only fathers who can save young

men from self-destruction in the 'hood, as seen in Furious's active role in steering Tre away from the violent demise of his friends, Doughboy and Ricky.⁴³ *Slam* therefore employs a different kind of race and gender politics that seems less interested in crossing over by using gangsta rap, gangsta rappers, or formulaic rites of passage narratives. Instead, it explores notions of individual responsibility while also creating meaningful space for women to drive the plot.

This chapter's explorations of the ways in which hip-hop is employed in *Boyz, Do the Right Thing*, and *Slam* reveal competing representations of Black masculinity in popular culture. While Singleton uses gangsta rap to authenticate representations of life in the 'hood, gangsta rap's conservative gender and race politics confirm patriarchal values, thereby contradicting his intentions. The absence of positive representations of women in Ice Cube's lyrics underscores the impression that his work is not authentic, but is merely presenting a set of patriarchal, misogynist values that confirm the status quo just as it, contradictorily, aims to challenge the mainstream. On the other hand, Lee's use of Black Nationalist rappers Public Enemy in *Do the Right Thing* takes on the burden of representation to pose largely unresolved questions about race and belonging in the film. Public Enemy does not contradict Lee's overall agenda. However, Lee has been criticized for sidelining female characters, specifically Mookie's sister, Jade (Joie Lee).⁴⁴ Mookie unceremoniously ejects her from the plot when he pushes her out of Sal's pizzeria after he decides that Sal really wants to "hide the salami" when he is being kind to her.⁴⁵ An opportunity is lost for this character to drive the plot meaningfully here and in a scene between herself and Buggin' Out. When he asks her if she is down with his call to boycott Sal, she says that she is "down for something positive."⁴⁶ But then the plot takes off without her and other female characters, such as Mother Sister (Ruby Dee) and Tina (Rosie Perez). The gender politics in *Boyz* and *Do the Right Thing* remind us that "racism is fundamentally a feminist issue because it is so interconnected with sexist oppression."⁴⁷ bell hooks argues that in "the West, the philosophical foundations of racist and sexist ideology are similar."⁴⁸ Attempts to address racial politics without acknowledging patriarchy, and its conservative conception of gender roles, are bound to fail. Thus *Slam* offers a more nuanced representation of its protagonist's struggle. As with Lee, Levin's use of hip-hop does not contradict the film's agenda. Instead, it creates room for Sonja Sohn's and Saul Williams's characters to offer more nuanced performances of gendered interaction and to use hip-hop to critique the narrow ways in which Black masculinity has been framed. Ultimately, the different ways in which these films employ socially conscious hip-hop and gangsta rap reveal that hip-hop is not easily boxed in. While certain forms of hip-hop have been co-opted commercially, it is

clear that not all hip-hop artists have abandoned its use for social critique and reflection.

Notes

- 1 Ed Guerrero, *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Murray Forman, *The 'Hood Comes First: Race, Space, and Place in Rap and Hip-Hop* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002).
- 2 For a detailed examination of gangsta rap, gender, and race stereotypes and US cultural imperialism, see Adam Haupt, *Stealing Empire: P2P, Intellectual Property and Hip-Hop Subversion* (HSRC Press: Cape Town, 2008).
- 3 Saul Williams, *Amethyst Rock Star* (American Recording Company, 2001).
- 4 Manthia Diawara, "Black American Cinema: The New Realism," in Manthia Diawara (ed.), *Black American Cinema* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), p. 20.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Boyz N the Hood*, dir. John Singleton (Columbia, 1992).
- 7 Diawara, "Black American Cinema."
- 8 Guerrero, *Framing Blackness*.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *Boyz N the Hood*.
- 13 Entman and Rojecki contend that local news depicts US life as "pervaded by violence and danger" and that this approach "heightens Whites' tendency to link these threats to Blacks." They suggest that, instead of an absence of coverage of violence in the 'hood, sensationalized news coverage is racially skewed against African Americans. Thus, instead of an absence of coverage, as Doughboy suggests, sensationalism confirms white prejudices. However, one could argue that Doughboy's view is correct in that journalists do not provide Black working-class perspectives or deeper investigation into the causes of social ills. It is in this sense that they don't "know" or "show" or "care." See Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 78.
- 14 For a detailed exploration of African Americans' race and class struggles in Los Angeles, see Josh Sides, *LA City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2003); Raphael J. Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton University Press, 1993).
- 15 Paul Gormley, *The New Brutality Film: Race and Affect in Contemporary Hollywood Cinema* (Bristol and Portland: Intellect, 2005), p. 83.
- 16 See Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age Colorblindness* (London and New York: The New Press, 2010), pp. 49–50.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 47. James Johnson, Walter Farrell and Melvin Oliver contend that Republicans were in power for twenty-one years before the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion (or "riots" as portrayed by the media). Republicans "waged a massive assault on War on Poverty Programs, dismantling some and severely curtailing support for others," resulting in the highest poverty rate in twenty-five years. The authors argue that structural changes in the LA economy were key causes of the 1992 rebellion. Residents of South Central were hit hard by "massive deindustrialization or the loss of manufacturing jobs." See James H. Johnson, Jr., Walter C. Farrell, Jr., and Melvin L. Oliver, "Seeds of the Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 17/1 (1993): 115–117.
- 18 Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, pp. 49–50.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 21 Entman and Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, p. 81.
- 22 *Boyz N the Hood*.
- 23 Michael Eric Dyson, "Between Apocalypse and Redemption: John Singleton's *Boyz N the Hood*," *Cultural Critique* 21 (1992): 124.
- 24 Ice Cube in *Boyz N the Hood*.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 bell hooks, *Outlaw: Culture: Resisting Representations* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), p. 116.
- 27 Michael Quinn, "'Never Shoulda Been Let out the Penitentiary': Gangsta Rap and the Struggle over Racial Identity," *Cultural Critique* 34 (1996): 87.
- 28 Eithne Quinn, "Black British Cultural Studies and the Rap on Gangsta," *Black Music Research Journal* 20/2 (2000): 198.
- 29 Public Enemy in *Do the Right Thing*, dir. Spike Lee (Universal, 1989).
- 30 Andrea Smith, "Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide," *Journal of Religion & Abuse* 1/2 (1999): 31–52.

- 31 Kevin J. Greene, "Copyright, Culture, and Black Music: A Legacy of Unequal Protection," *Hastings Communication and Entertainment Law Journal* 21 (1999); Reebee Garofalo, *Rockin' Out: Popular Music in the USA* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 1997).
- 32 Victoria E. Johnson, "Polyphony and Cultural Expression: Interpreting Musical Traditions in *Do the Right Thing*," *Film Quarterly* 47/2 (1993–94): 18–29.
- 33 Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London and New York: Routledge, 1979), p. 91.
- 34 Marvin J. Gladney, "The Black Arts Movement and Hip-Hop," *African American Review* 29/2 (1995).
- 35 Bakari Kitwana, *The Hip-Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis in African-American Culture* (New York: Basic Civitas, 2002), p. 139.
- 36 Eithne Quinn, "Black British Cultural Studies and the Rap on Gangsta," *Black Music Research Journal* 20/2 (2000): 202.
- 37 Patricia Hill Collins, *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), pp. 3–4.
- 38 Greg Tate, "Nigs R Us or How Blackfolk Became Fetish Objects," in Greg Tate (ed.), *Everything but the Burden: What White People are Taking from Black Culture* (New York: Broadway Books, 2003), p. 4.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 12.
- 40 Williams in *Slam*, dir. Marc Levin (Offline Entertainment Group, 1997).
- 41 See Williams, *Amethyst Rock Star*; Haupt, *Stealing Empire*.
- 42 Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
- 43 Dyson, "Between Apocalypse and Redemption."
- 44 Wahneema Lubiano, "'But Compared to What?' Reading Realism, Representation, and Essentialism in *School Daze*, *Do the Right Thing*, and Spike Lee Discourse," in Marcellus Blount and George P. Cunningham (eds.), *Representing Black Men* (New York and London: Routledge, 1996).
- 45 *Do the Right Thing*.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 bell hooks, *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), p. 52.
- 48 *Ibid.*