

UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, Department of Ethnomusicology

UCLA Summer Session “A”

(June 26 – August 4, 2017)

ETHNMUS M119/AFAMER M107 (GE Course)*

“Cultural History of Rap”

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am-12:50pm, 1439 Schoenberg Music Bldg

Instructor: **Ray Briggs**

Course Description: Introduction to development of rap music and hip-hop culture, with emphasis on musical and verbal qualities, philosophical and political ideologies, gender representation, and influences on cinema and popular culture. Pass/No Pass or letter grading.

Course Objectives: This course seeks to provide students with a general overview of the development of rap as the musical component of hip-hop culture, from its roots in the African bardic tradition to its manifestations in African American expressive/oral culture. Through information dispensed via lecture presentations, course readings, guided listening activities and video footage, specific objectives include: (1) locating the art-form as a part of the African, African American and Afro-Caribbean musical continua; (2) identifying stylistic trends and important artists and individuals who have contributed significantly to the genre; (3) critically assessing the extramusical forces which shape the music and analyzing the meaning of rap within the social and political context of hip-hop and American popular culture; and (4) exploring the musicological & technological features of rap, including the idiosyncratic differences which exist among the various regional styles.

Required Texts: *Rap Music and Street Consciousness* by Cheryl L. Keyes. University of Illinois Press, 2002. *Know What I Mean?: Reflections on Hip Hop* by Michael Eric Dyson. Basic Civitas Books, 2007.

Ray Briggs is currently Assistant Director of Jazz Studies at CSU Long Beach, Past-President of the California Institute for the Preservation of Jazz, and has coordinated the Instrumental and Vocal Jazz Workshop supported through CSU SummerArts. At CSULB, he teaches academic courses in ethnomusicology and leads several jazz combos.

*(GE-approved course; fulfills the Visual and Performance Arts Analysis and Practice requirement)

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