

‘It Ain’t Where You’re From, It’s Where You’re At’:
International Hip Hop Studies Conference

CALL FOR PAPERS

Wolfson College, University of Cambridge
23-24 June 2016
<http://hiphopstudies.org>

Keynote speakers:

Tricia Rose, Brown University
Murray Forman, Northeastern University

The AHRC ‘Performing hip hop Englishness’ project, in collaboration with Wolfson College at the University of Cambridge, is pleased to invite proposals for papers to be presented at the international hip hop studies conference ‘It ain’t where you’re from, it’s where you’re at’.

It ain’t where you’re from:

The line ‘it ain’t where you’re from, it’s where you’re at’, from Rakim’s ‘In the Ghetto’, has become a commonly articulated hip hop trope that can be variously understood as a way of emphasizing one’s location and action in the moment, as well as privileging one’s orientation over one’s ontology. How can we, as scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds working in the field of hip hop studies, interpret this phrase? How far can it take us? What does it obscure? What is the role of negation in the construction of hip hop’s various histories, its cultural politics, and its re-territorialisations?

It’s where you’re at:

The line ‘it ain’t where you’re from, it’s where you’re at’ can also be used to highlight the roles of artistic skill, cosmopolitan awareness, and critical engagement with the local. How can an emphasis on ‘where you’re at’ help us to understand the ethics and aesthetics of hip hop? What relevance does the privileging of orientation have to the development of hip hop studies as an interdisciplinary field? We encourage papers that shed light on this phrase and its implications for hip hop culture and hip hop studies, particularly in relation to issues of place, space, temporality, language, ethnicity, ethics, and politics.

Where are we at?

Over the last four decades hip hop has grown to become one of the most popular cultural forms and practices across the globe. As hip hop evolves so too does hip hop studies. However, the trajectory of hip hop studies is not only dependent on the changing nature of its object of study but also its own methods, theories and contexts. What should hip hop scholars be doing now and in the future? This conference will attempt to take stock of where both hip hop and we as hip hop scholars are at.

We invite proposals (title and abstract) of no more than 200 words for 20 minute papers. Please send submissions to the conference convener, James Butterworth (jrb86@cam.ac.uk), by **4th March 2016**. Acceptances will be issued by mid-March.