

Local Politics Matter

The Real Power of Black Hip-Hop and Rap Music

The Cuban youth movement and their love of American Black Hip-Hop and Rap music was one of the key factors that pushed Raul Castro to say yes to America's offer of Diplomatic rapprochement. Forty to forty-five percent of the Cuban population is under age 30. Over the past 20 years an underground movement sprang up that used contraband antennas to capture Black American Hip-Hop and Rap music videos from Miami radio stations (WEDR JAMS and WHQT Hot 105) and TV broadcast and offer it to the Island's youth. During the 90s and up to the present the captured music videos were downloaded to diskettes and sold on the underground black market. Eighty percent of the islanders are thought to be involved in this market.

These Hip-Hop and Rap videos drove the Cuban youth and young adults (primarily Black) to start developing their own brands of Hip-Hop and Rap infusing the Spanish beat and tempo with Black American

How Cuba Was Opened Up to America's Diplomatic Entreaties for Rapprochement

type lyrics. Early in the movement Cuban artist fought against censorship and brutal crackdowns and closures by the police to move their music out of the underground. As the movement became very popular in the [Havana Suburb](#) of Alamar, a large housing project, and spread throughout the island the people began to want more wealth and the material things that it buys than the current economy run by the government has to offer. In the videos the Cuban youth saw freedom of expression, exaggerated bling and luxury and they wanted it for themselves. This led to the growth of the underground Cuban Rap music industry. Just like the Black American music the Cuban artist used their music to convey political and socially charged messages for greater freedoms and more capitalist influence and wealth.

This new found freedom of expression put pressure on the Cuban Government to start looking for ways to expand

you never
THOUGHT THAT
HIP
HOP
would take it
THIS FAR

their economy. This required that they needed to accept the American Government's entreaties for diplomatic rapprochement and open the island up to the inevitable capitalist invasion that it would bring. With the help of America the Cuban Government will now be able to open up and expand their economy to satisfy the people's desire for more wealth like they had seen for so many years on those underground Black American Hip-Hop and Rap videos.

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