

Voices of Hip-Hop in Madison

Elisa Guerrero, Maire Cait Mullen, Toni Ray, and Randy Stoecker,

with

Natalie Carr, Avery Cotter, Ann a Dawley, Jacob Erlein, Chloe Green, Kayla Kramschuster,
Hannah Pauly, Julia Prange, Kathryne Ruffalo, Zoey Rugel, and Gilad Zvi

May 2019

Thanks to Catherine Torner, the Morgridge Center Intern who assisted with the project, and to members of the Urban Community Arts Network, who helped guide the overall design of the project as well as the construction of the interview, focus group, and survey methods.

CONTENTS

Summary	p. 3
Introduction and Background	p. 4
Hip-Hop Climate in Madison	p. 4
Urban Community Arts Network	p. 4
Previous Research Reports	p. 5
UW Madison Community and Environmental Sociology Partnership with UCAN	p. 5
Methods	p. 5
Interview and Focus Group Findings	p. 7
Impressions of the Madison Hip-Hop Scene	p. 7
Under-recognized	p. 7
Under-supported	p. 8
Unhealthy competition	p. 9
Madison Compared	p. 10
Barriers to Expanding Hip-Hop in Madison	p. 11
Misrepresentation and Underrepresentation in Media	p. 11
Misconceptions and Racial Bias	p. 12
Venue Access	p. 14
Lack of Solidarity in the Hip-Hop Community	p. 16
Strategies for Improvement	p. 17
Changing Negative Perceptions	p. 17
Venue and Radio Access	p. 19
Security	p. 20
Improving Unity within the Community	p. 20
Conclusion	p. 21
Notes	p. 22
Appendix A	p. 24
Appendix B: Interview and Focus Group Guide	p. 25

Summary

Background and Methods

This research was conducted by the UW Madison Community and Environmental Sociology department capstone course, in partnership with the Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN). We interviewed 32 members of the Madison Hip-Hop scene, using focus groups and individual interviews, to understand how they perceive the local Hip-Hop scene and what they would like to see happen to improve it.

Findings

Impressions of the Madison Hip-Hop Scene: Most interviewees mentioned that they felt as though the local Hip-Hop scene was largely invisible to the greater Madison public. They perceived a lack of support for Hip-Hop from venues and those in control of the entertainment scene in Madison, despite there being an audience for the genre. Even when venues are receptive to Hip-Hop, they are often looking for a certain type that is not representative of local artists. When there are only a few venues in the city that are willing or able to play Hip-Hop, tension among the community of Hip-Hop artists is inevitable. Many artists believe they would find more support in other cities.

Barriers to Expanding Hip-Hop in Madison: Interviewees discussed negative media coverage, and a lack of coverage, especially when compared to coverage of other genres, as a major barrier to the acceptance of Hip-Hop in Madison. Interviewees pointed to the racially coded language used, and coverage associating Hip-Hop with violence. Along with the general misconceptions of Hip-Hop, most interviewees believed that residents, police, and venue owners hold both conscious and unconscious racial biases towards the genre. Interviewees also mentioned how difficult it is for Hip-Hop artists to get access to performance venues and local radio play. And many interviewees discussed the lack of solidarity and community within local Hip-Hop, including artists not supporting, respecting, or working with one another.

Strategies for improvement: Respondents thought that, for Hip-Hop to thrive, community support for Hip-Hop needs to be built, through community and school outreach. They also said they need better access to venues and the radio, to showcase their music. Others said there should be a better relationship between Hip-Hop and the police. Finally, they said that the Hip-Hop community needs to unify, collaborate, and support artists within the community.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

What issues, challenges, and successes do members of the local Madison Hip-Hop community experience? A University of Wisconsin-Madison Community and Environmental Sociology Capstone course partnered with the Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN), to gather stories from the local Hip-Hop community.

This is the third in a series of research projects produced by the partnership since 2016. The first research project showed that there is no more correlation between violence and Hip-Hop shows in Madison than for other genre. The second project showed that Madison print news media provide uneven coverage of Hip-Hop shows and performers.¹ These research projects have informed the work of a city government sponsored task force, led by UCAN, on equity in entertainment in Madison. Our current project supports that effort.

Hip-Hop Climate in Madison

The Hip-Hop climate in Madison is cyclical; sometimes acceptance of the culture is up and sometimes it is down. The general feeling among members of the Hip-Hop community is that the scene now seems to be on the upswing. However, this upswing has still been in the face of many obstacles, such as censoring of some Hip-Hop songs in bars, repealing of liquor licenses, closing of venues, and general racism felt by people of color in the Madison area. The Frequency, a local venue, hosted Hip-Hop shows often before closing earlier this year. They announced a one-year ban on Hip-Hop shows in 2016 after violence had broken out after a show.² And regardless of the recent research showing Hip-Hop shows do not attract more violence than other genres, there is still more police presence at Hip-Hop shows than shows of other genres in Madison, such as country or alternative events.

The barriers to Hip-Hop put in place by venues make it difficult for rappers, DJs, and other artists in the Hip-Hop scene to book shows in prime locations, such as downtown Madison. Inability to find work consistently at a good location has directly impacted the community and the culture, weakening both. Even though Madison is considered a liberal town, there is still perceived racism in the way the government and businesses handle issues and work with the Hip-Hop community. With the lack of community support, artists often believe they can become more successful if they leave Madison or the Midwest. This departure of talent further hurts the Hip-Hop community. With all these factors in motion, the presence of UCAN helps sustain a more positive vibe in the Hip-Hop community. It is our hope that our research will help this community come together with the greater Madison area to create a healthier and more open space for artists and fans.

Urban Community Arts Network (UCAN)

UCAN is a local non-profit that developed as a response to the cyclical nature of Hip-Hop in Madison, with the goal of empowering and unifying the community through urban arts, specifically Hip-Hop.³ UCAN fosters creativity and collaboration by organizing live music events, promoting professional growth through low-cost workshops, and striving to create safe performance opportunities for all local Hip-Hop artists. They work to keep an open dialogue with City officials, the Madison Police Dept. and local venue owners to create sustainable opportunities that will keep the Madison Hip-Hop community vibrant. UCAN organized in response to the continued exclusion of Hip-Hop from Madison area venues and music events.

The Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment was the result of nine years of work by the Hip-Hop community in Madison, with UCAN leading the effort for the past seven years.⁴ Partnering with students from the University of Wisconsin-Madison allowed UCAN to access research supporting their efforts.

Previous Research Reports

There were two previous research projects conducted by Community and Environmental Sociology capstone classes in partnership with UCAN. The first analyzed the relationship between live music performance and violence in Madison, Wisconsin from 2008-2016. The main focus of this project was to analyze police calls from Madison bars with entertainment licenses to investigate the general belief that live Hip-Hop events are more violent than other music genres. The data for this project was collected by comparing police calls that were made during the times of live music events to see if Hip-Hop events had a disproportionately high number of reports. Students analyzed locations that held live music events and coded the events according to the genre. They then compared this data to police calls and reports that were filed at the same time as the live music events, looking for violence indicators. Students analyzed a total of 4,624 police calls. The findings were that Hip-Hop, when compared to all other genres of live music performances, did not have a higher instance of violence in Madison.⁵

The second research project looked at how the major Madison print media portrayed Hip-Hop. Students used the same eight-year period as for the previous study, searching through the major newspapers for stories about Hip-Hop and then coding them for a variety of variables. The research found that there were significant variations between publications in how positively or negatively they portrayed Hip-Hop, that stories written by local reporters tended to be more positive than stories obtained through newswires, and that stories about Black artists tended to be more negative than stories about white artists.⁶

The UW Madison Community and Environmental Sociology Partnership With UCAN

The Hip-Hop scene in Madison has been impacted by the Urban Community Arts Network's partnership with UW Madison's Community and Environmental Sociology capstone students since 2016. Karen Reece, president of UCAN, and Randy Stoecker, professor of Community and Environmental Sociology, joined forces at first through Justified Anger, an organization seeking to ameliorate the harm resulting from racial gaps in economic and social outcomes in Madison. Karen mentioned to Randy that UCAN had research needs that would fit well with the capstone class.

Our capstone class continued the partnership with UCAN this year with research on the barriers facing the Hip-Hop community from the perspective of the community members themselves. In our partnership with UCAN we got the chance to understand what struggles are imposed on those in Madison who are passionate about this form of music and all that surrounds it.

METHODS

In the fall of 2018, the Community and Environmental Sociology Capstone students, along with their Professor Randy Stoecker, and in partnership with Urban Community Arts Network President Karen Reece, developed the research. We began by learning about the history and culture of Hip-Hop from members of UCAN themselves. Later on we met with

UCAN members again to discuss the best ways to reach out to members of the community, which groups we should talk to, and what sorts of questions we should ask. Based on these discussions, we decided to gather information through focus groups and interviews.

Our methods for interviews and focus groups were similar. After meeting with several members of UCAN and members of the Hip-Hop community and discussing the climate and concerns of the community, we began compiling questions. We brainstormed questions over a few class periods and, with the help of UCAN leaders, created concise questions that captured the overarching issues with the past, present, and future of the Madison Hip-Hop community. We used the same five core questions for both focus groups and interviews. Because our qualitative research relies on stories and details, we added sub-questions for interviews in hopes of generating more conversation. We decided that sub-questions were not necessary for focus groups in the interest of time. Our interview questions are listed in Appendix B.

With the help of UCAN, we compiled a list of rappers, DJs, producers, dancers, supporters, reporters, etc. to contact and set-up either in-person or phone call interviews. Our recruitment script is available in Appendix A. UCAN formed all of the focus groups, separating individuals into “emerging” artists, “veteran” artists, and “mixed” focus groups. The emerging artists are residents of the Greater Madison Area that have recently joined the Hip-Hop community. Veteran artists (sometimes referred to as “OGs,” which stands for Original Gangstas) are individuals who are some of the first rappers and producers in the Madison area. The mixed focus group contained a variety of ages and types of Hip-Hop involvement. We also interviewed three emerging focus group members individually after the initial meeting at their request.

Focus groups lasted about forty-five minutes to an hour. Interviews varied from fifteen to thirty minutes. We met in locations all over Madison, including grocery store community rooms, restaurants, recording studios, and coffee shops. Each focus group and interview had two students present. This way, notes were thorough and comparable. We also recorded every interview and focus group on two recorders. One person also attended the UCAN Level Up town hall gathering, where issues similar to our focus group questions came up, and some of that information is added to this report.

With the help of the recordings and our notes, we were able to code every interview and focus group from the first semester. Coding also required two people; this way we could ensure that individual coders did not misinterpret or skip over topics. For ease and to maintain the quality of the work, the people who were present at interviews also coded those interviews. Different interviews and focus groups generated both similar and different codes, requiring us to recode in some cases.

For the 2019 spring semester, three of the original twelve students continued interviewing Madison Hip-Hop members, compiling new information, and revising the research report. Our methods stayed relatively the same. We continued working closely with Karen Reece, who provided information on who to contact and advice on how to reorganize the data. We fit the spring interviews into the existing coding scheme and inserted select quotes into the paper. In total, we interviewed 32 people. Table 1 shows the various roles our interviewees played in the Hip-Hop scene. After conducting our final interviews and revamping the format of the paper to

reflect the major themes we observed, we created and presented a poster at the UW-Madison Undergraduate Symposium.

Table 1: Roles of Interviewees

Rapper	13
Rapper/ Producer	4
Promoter	2
Rapper/ Promoter	3
Combination	10
Total	32

The responses and enthusiasm we received from the community was overwhelming, but there were still instances where people's responses were vague and needed more explanation or a specific example. One of the biggest challenges was getting people to provide concrete examples and stories instead of general statements. Another challenge with some focus groups was that they sometimes strayed from our focus. One technique we used to manage this was altering questions slightly depending on who the interviewee was, such as a veteran artist versus an emerging artist. Another challenge we faced was coding; because each set of interviewers did their own coding and it was impractical to create a codebook prior to the interviews, the codes were initially different and had to be reconciled.

INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

Impressions of the Madison Hip-Hop Scene

Our interviewees had a great deal to say about the current state of Hip-Hop in Madison. While each participant had unique experiences and opinions surrounding the scene, we found that people repeatedly spoke to four themes, with at least one of them being mentioned over the course of every interview/focus group. Participants felt that the local Hip-Hop community was under-recognized in the city, it was under-supported by the Madison community, there was an intense sense of competition between local artists, and it was notably easier to find success in cities outside of Madison.

Under-recognized

Interview participants repeatedly mentioned that a major characteristic of the current scene is that Madison residents who are not already part of the scene simply do not know it exists. A reporter who has worked in the scene for a number of years noted that if he were speaking to someone about Hip-Hop in Madison, the first thing he would do is inform them that it exists and there are local artists working hard, saying:

If I was talking to somebody who wasn't into Hip-Hop or somebody who wasn't from here and wasn't into Hip-Hop, to both of them I would say that it's thriving. Madison,

Wisconsin is not somewhere you would think of that there is a large Hip-Hop community and I wouldn't say it's large, but I would say it's devoted, it exists, there's new artists coming up through it, there are veteran artists who are still around, there are artists who start here and go elsewhere.

This opinion comes from someone who is an observer of Hip-Hop rather than someone active in the scene, and thus is not reliant on making a living off of the craft, so they may have a more optimistic view than others. Those working in the scene had a different perspective. One interviewee said that the Madison Hip-Hop scene is

Nonexistent. At least in the public eye.

Another added:

[Madison residents] probably don't know much about it. I mean I am in the scene and still don't even know much about it, so people on the outside are probably even further on the outside than I realize.

It may not have always been this way. Some older, more experienced artists that we spoke to, some of whom may no longer be active in the scene, reminisced about when Hip-Hop went through a period of success and opportunity in the late 90's and early 2000's, and which has since declined. One member of the mixed focus group, who has been active in the Madison scene for a number of years, expressed his frustration by saying

Once upon a time it was real sweet. I mean I used to make a lot of money on shows, do a lot of shows, a lot of local artists would be able to collaborate on those shows and make money together and there was a few month period a few years back where it all kind of changed and artists were forced to pay to play.⁷

A member of the veteran focus group also commented on the topic saying:

I think there were more champions back then, people saying 'Hey imma do this at my spot'...and I feel like those people,...venues, places, where we used to be all the time, [venue owners] would be like 'No this is something that I believe in...'

These comments suggest that there was a time when the Madison Hip-Hop scene better linked together artists and received greater support from venues. But the lack of visibility for the scene today does not mean the absence of a ready and willing audience for Hip-Hop in Madison. Almost all participants, old and young, veterans and newcomers, brought up the fact that there is an audience for Hip-Hop in Madison but there is a severe lack of venues that are booking Hip-Hop artists and DJs or even playing Hip-Hop music, preventing local artists from becoming known to the greater public.

Under-supported

When describing the Madison Hip-Hop scene, most participants mentioned multiple times that there are so few Hip-Hop venues, shows or events that it is difficult for fans to access

them and for artists to profit from them, making artists feel like they have little support from both the city and their fanbase. One DJ/Producer said,

I wish there were more shows. More Hip-Hop shows in the city with either local artists, regional artists or even national acts.

Another interviewee, with a more optimistic perception than others on how popular the genre is in Madison, said that Hip-Hop is

Unpopular...to venues, [but] popular to the people...There's a whole community of people that are waiting to be served, college people like Hip-Hop music, young people like Hip-Hop music, and people that don't go to school here like Hip-Hop music.

One member of the mixed focus group said,

It seems pretty dead to me. There's not a lot of opportunities. There isn't any consistency as far as performing or venues,

To which others responded that even when venues are receptive to Hip-Hop, they are often looking for a certain type that is not representative of local artists. As another participant remarked about the overall scene:

It is underutilized, underappreciated. It's really hard to get successful promotion for events or just get events at venues in ideal or optimal situations. You have to really work to put on a good Hip-Hop show and to get the word out there and people to turn up because there is such a negative connotation with Hip-Hop in Madison, where you always feel like you're working extra hard to get yourself out there.

There seemed to be a consensus among all interviewees that there are not enough Hip-Hop shows in Madison, and the younger people who are currently active in the scene talked mostly about troubles with booking venues. One said,

We're hungry and talented, it's a lot of talented people out here, it's just there's not a lot of avenues for us to go through, so you have to go elsewhere. So, you know, it's hard to get support, when...you don't have it at home.

The lack of support from the city, venues and greater public has meant that artists have to compete for visibility and an income. This situation, has ultimately led to a scene that is fractured and unappealing when compared to other nearby cities.

Unhealthy Competition

Artists think a lack of venues and attention to local artists (among other reasons) creates an unhealthy competition among performers. When there are only a few venues in the city that are willing or able to play Hip-Hop, tension among the community is inevitable. As one rapper from the veteran focus group put it

When you only got like two spots to do Hip-Hop, everybody in Hip-Hop doesn't get along.

He argues that more venues would decrease this tension and help the scene thrive. There are also tensions between different subgenres within Hip-Hop. One person from the mixed focus group explained,

there is a cliqueiness to the scene... I think the different genres growing from Hip-Hop have caused that... different opinions about genres.

Many interviewees reiterated these feelings, stating in different ways that talent is often overlooked if they do not know the right people, and that artists have difficulty connecting to other artists. One artist even discussed that, in his experience, even when there is connection and collaboration, it often is accompanied by suspicions of selfishness and ulterior motives. There is a concern that there are very few people in the scene who are truly working to uplift others, rather than just themselves and their friends.

Madison Compared

Many of the interview and focus group participants have had experience touring and performing in cities outside of Madison. They repeatedly mentioned how the Hip-Hop community is more marginalized in Madison and that it is much more difficult to maintain a Hip-Hop career with the current state of the Madison Hip-Hop scene. The veteran focus group discussed that, if not for roots they have in Madison, such as their kids, that they would not stay here because of the struggles experienced by people in Hip-Hop, with one stating:

You get a lot more love out[side] of this town than you do in this town... Milwaukee, Rockford, Minnesota, you go anywhere outside of Madison they appreciate Hip-Hop. You know, they appreciate the word, they appreciate the head nod, you know, all the work that we put into our craft. But out here, it's like there's no appreciation honestly.

And someone else said:

Every other city in America seems to figure out how to deal with it, from a small town to, you know, Atlanta, Georgia, Chicago, to, you know, everywhere. It's nationally syndicated, you know, on radio stations, I don't see why there should be an issue with it.

This experience of feeling marginalized in Madison is not unique to the veteran artists. One young rapper suggested people who are talented and truly love Hip-Hop will not stay here because there is no room to grow or succeed, so they leave:

There's a lot of pushback when it comes to Hip-Hop in Madison and that kind of makes it hard for people to want to emerge out of their own city, so you see a lot of people moving to LA or like different areas where they can get more exposure but that also causes Madison's scene to lack a little bit just because there's not anything happening here.

Artists do not feel that they can grow here - and ultimately may feel that their only choice to be successful is to leave the city.

Overall, interview participants painted a fairly bleak picture of the Hip-Hop scene in Madison. There is plenty of talent, but little opportunity, support or room for growth. Participants also

noted that it has not always been this way, but over the years the community has been presented with many barriers and obstacles, which we will discuss in detail in the following section.

Barriers

Our participants overwhelmingly felt that the lack of familiarity and comfort with Hip-Hop in Madison has led to a generally negative perception, plagued with stereotypes and biases, which makes members of the community feel under-recognized, under-supported, and misunderstood. The belief is that many people do not care to know about the scene, and it seems that the little exposure they may have generally comes in the form of biased, uninformed, or incomplete media coverage, leading to an overall negative perception. The following four themes--underrepresentation, misconceptions and racial biases, venue issues, and lack of solidarity within the Hip-Hop community--were most commonly mentioned during interviews and focus groups as the main barriers for cultivating a more positive, vibrant Hip-Hop scene.

Misrepresentation and Underrepresentation in Media

Negative media coverage, or just a lack of coverage, were discussed in several interviews and every focus group. Especially when participants compared their perceptions of the media of Hip-Hop compared to other music genres, they pointed to the racially coded language used for Hip-Hop, how it's racially coded, and the negative portrayals of Hip-Hop and Hip-Hop fans. Negative media representation keeps harmful stereotypes about Hip-Hop alive. Participants in all three focus groups brought up the problems of negative media coverage or a lack of coverage. In the veteran focus group one participant said,

[There's] no positive press in Hip-Hop...yet I can go to the Isthmus at any time and see something positive about bluegrass or a rock band.

This shows the discrepancy among genres of music and brings to light how challenging it is to be successful in the community. Without a consistent outlet, it's hard for artists to gain and maintain momentum with their music.

There's also a pattern of people feeling like there is a skewed representation in the media. Another participant in the mixed focus group stated,

when there are like bar fights, that doesn't get exposed, but if they're playing Hip-Hop then it's just like all over the place.

Individual interview participants also brought up media perceptions as a barrier to being successful. One interviewee stated,

They see in the news someone bought a knife to a show, or there was a shooting or things got out of hand and there was a big fight at the venue or outside of the venue. Well as soon as people see that stuff in the headlines and they see it was associated with Hip-Hop acts or Hip-Hop music they assume going forward that's going to be the case with all Hip-Hop shows in the city, and that's just not true.

Negative media representation keeps the harmful stereotypes about Hip-Hop alive. Along with representation in the media, some interviewees also discussed how representation on the radio is also lacking. Participants in the mixed focus group went into detail about how the lack of radio play is a huge struggle for them. One artist in particular shared his experiences, explaining the void left when a show was cancelled,

Then it's gone now... That was actually my first major single was because of that [radio show] and after that everything was like, ok where else am I going to find that outlet.

Without a consistent outlet, it's hard for artists to gain momentum with their music.

Misconceptions and Racial Biases

A majority of interview participants brought up misunderstandings and misconception that local residents have about Hip-Hop and the Hip-Hop community, which leads to the negative perceptions held about the genre. As one interviewee put it,

I think that the average Madisonian perceives the local Hip-Hop scene as a negative force insofar as public safety is concerned.

Another spoke about the overall misconception that Hip-Hop is linked to violence and therefore should be discouraged.

There's that misconception that if you do anything related to Hip-Hop it's going to cause a problem. You're guaranteed to have a shooting, you're guaranteed to have a fight. Doesn't matter what it is, Hip-Hop is nothing but negative. [The average Madison resident thinks] local Hip-Hop brings nothing but negativity.

Even though we didn't ask for the suspected causes of these beliefs, a few interviewees suggested that part of the problem may be due to a lack of deep knowledge about the scene and the culture of Hip-Hop.

...it seems that people that don't understand the music and the culture are troubled by it because they seem to think that...it's involved with crime and...it's true that in the music, that that can be in the lyrics...a lot of times the content of the lyrics isn't true, you know, this is just storytelling... but I think some people take it as fact and then they fear the people behind the music and they fear the actual music itself and it just sets up all sorts of negative stereotypes...

Another person spoke again about the lack of education about Hip-Hop as an art form:

I don't feel like the education is there to provide for the [broader] community to let them know, to make them understand that Hip-Hop isn't to blame for the things that are going on in the community and a lot of times...it's still being taught and it's still being talked about as a particular race and social class and for a lot of people who are in this community when they see things that are going wrong with a particular race or social class depending on how the media has printed it, they tie it together with whatever is

familiar. So I don't know if this community really understands that Hip-Hop is an expression and art form, and is a lot more than what seems to be being taught.

A number of interview participants further tied the lack of knowledge to negative perceptions by speaking about the impact of Hip-Hop being a predominantly Black form of cultural expression. Most implied that residents, police, and venue owners hold both conscious and unconscious racial biases towards the genre that contribute to the negative perceptions that is so harmful to the Hip-Hop community. One rapper from the Hip-Hop community that was interviewed even said that Hip-Hop is “out of this world stereotyped.” A veteran artist summed up this sentiment in our veteran focus group saying that the average Madison resident thinks that

Hip-Hop is ghetto. That it's a 'hood thing, a black thing, a very uneducated thing and a thing that brings trouble and police and violence.

This statement resulted in a chorus of agreement, with one participant adding,

That's very succinct and horribly accurate.

Another added the thought that, to the average resident,

Black is bad.

In a different interview, someone spoke about how the language used to talk negatively about Hip-Hop and Hip-Hop fans is racially coded.

[Talking about what vendor owners think] 'If you let those people in the door there's gonna be an issue'... and when you ask them about “those people” they start stumbling over their words. They're trying to say everything but people of color. 'Those people that listen to Hip-Hop and go to Hip-Hop shows and pull guns and knives and cause trouble.'

Among our participants there was also the feeling that Madison residents are comfortable engaging with the genre within their own homes, but as soon as the culture and the people involved in the making of the music become visible in their communities they are no longer as accepting, with one interviewee saying:

I think that's the reality right, they can embrace the culture in their homes but when the people who are paying the money, right, the people who are giving their kids the money to then engage in an experience, it becomes different....People associate that experience with the negativity...but they definitely participate in the culture. It's a billion-dollar industry, so somebody's participating in the culture, but they only want it at a surface level.... On the surface they love the art form...but they don't necessarily love the people who have created it or love what place that comes out of.

Another participant put it in more metaphoric terms stating:

It's the exotification of black culture. You want to go pet it and look at it and tell your friends you went and took a selfie with it, but once that motherfucker gets loose, you don't want that in your house or in the streets.

Many of these perception issues can be traced back to racial tensions. This common theme is echoed by other respondents saying things along the lines of,

to say if you do a Hip-Hop show it's going to cause a problem is just pure ignorance.

Hip-Hop community members are frustrated by these misconceptions and think such beliefs affect their show turnouts,

[the public thinks] I don't wanna go to that. You know I wouldn't fit in it's a certain type of person or crowd... [but] Hip-Hop crowds are the most mixed crowd of any genre of music... Everybody has this perception it's gonna be rugged, though, thugged out type stuff and that's not even close to the truth.

The stigma that Hip-Hop is associated with violence creates issues with things like venue bookings, fan base, and police presence. An interviewee said,

[f]or Hip-Hop artists there's that added hurdle of public perception and police presence.

Many participants in the research also mentioned how the thug/rough reputation is caused by media portrayals, and isn't rooted in reality.

Venue Access

A majority of respondents mentioned that getting access to performance venues in Madison is a barrier for Hip-Hop artists. These problems varied from a lack of venues willing (or able) to welcome Hip-Hop to unnecessary police and security presence at those that do. Many respondents mentioned how difficult it is for Hip-Hop artists to book shows in general. One rapper from the mixed focus group mentioned the trouble he has with booking Hip-Hop shows:

As soon as she mentions Hip-Hop...it's like 'no we can't do it...we just don't want that type of crowd.'

Interviewees often noted that the negative assumptions about Hip-Hop, violence, and race result in difficulty booking shows. Many people assume that shows are violent or dangerous because they see the police presence at shows. The negative perception surrounding Hip-Hop makes residents in the broader community reluctant to attend shows and support local artists. Because of this negative perception, there are fewer opportunities for artists to grow and build support for themselves. From the interviews, a majority of the participants cited stereotypes/lack of acceptance as the reason why Hip-Hop is not thriving in Madison. One rapper in the veteran focus group told a story about a fight that happened after one of his shows. He emphasized that the night was successful (a lot of people supported the event and had a great time); yet, the next time his group wanted to book a show, the venue wanted to charge him more for security. He explains that, in the prior incident,

Because they were black, you just associated them with us.

Many of the individuals claim that one violent disruption in or around a Hip-Hop show ruins the prospect for booking shows in the near future. Another person from the emerging focus group articulated that,

After the shows you can't control what people do. If one little thing happens on State Street after the show, they blame it on the DJ, on the music, because that's the stigma.

Yet, interviewees believe that just as much violence happens at other non-Hip-Hop shows. A study of police calls during performances across genres showed that there is not more violence associated with Hip-Hop shows in Madison⁸. A former police officer from the veteran focus group mentioned they used to get calls to go to other venues not playing Hip-Hop but he

ain't never heard of the ALRC⁹ having a meeting about their stuff [liquor licenses] getting revoked."

In addition to a lack of venues willing to support Hip-Hop, many people talked about external power over venue owners. Even if venues wanted to book Hip-Hop shows, many people believe that venues are intimidated by scare tactics from the Madison police and landlords. One interviewee told a story about someone he knew that was renting a building with plans to make it a music venue. He explains,

The owner of the building... put in the contract a very detailed stipulation that no Hip-Hop was to be performed or played within his property because it would cause unrest and disturbances and violence.

Respondents claim that it's not just building owners who prohibit the playing of Hip-Hop, but also the Madison police. There were multiple stories of police using tactics -- threatening a venue's liquor licenses or shutting it down indefinitely -- in order to stop the booking of more Hip-Hop shows. One rapper explains a personal experience with this:

There was a venue called the Clinic and I was scheduled to perform there and I wanna say about a week before the date of event, gang unit officers from the Madison police department showed up and threatened to shut the bar down if they allowed Hip-Hop music to be performed there.

He continues by explaining that the show never happened. The same rapper said that this does not just happen to venues. The fear of Hip-Hop has spread to businesses across the city. He told us another personal story of the time he was having a CD release party at a clothing store:

A week or two before my CD release party, once again, gang unit officers from the Madison police department were sent to his store and he was threatened.... Normally what they would do is say 'okay well your liquor license is up for renewal so if you book Hip-Hop events we're gonna make it hard for you to get that liquor license' and, ya know, a bar without a liquor license isn't a bar. So, they shut down. So it's a serious threat... instead of threatening him with that, they threatened him with the specter of some sort of violent riot. They said 'yeah, if you book this event there's gonna be a riot and we will have to intervene and you don't want that'. Obviously there wasn't a riot. Ya know, my 93 year old grandfather was there and my parents. It was a fun and safe event. But the police were parked outside the entire time. They didn't come in, they didn't talk to anybody but it was just this kind of intimidation factor that they wanted us to be aware of.

Another issue is the disproportionate police or security presence at the venues that do book Hip-Hop. Artists mentioned there is almost always an excess of police at Hip-Hop shows in comparison to other genres, which perpetuates fear among the general public. One rapper said,

We need the same protection from the police, get those people out of the shows so we can keep our show going... if that threat was taken away publicly, then maybe we'd have more venues saying 'hey' [we're interested in booking you].

Again, this shows how interrelated all the barriers are. The overrepresentation of problematic events at Hip-Hop shows in the media creates a negative perception of Hip-Hop fans, which creates an unneeded police presence and issues booking venues.

Finally, participants talked about the issue of venues supporting only white rappers and national Hip-Hop acts. An observer of the scene made the claim that he

think[s] that there is more acceptance of white rappers who have live musicians with them... I think there is more acceptance of mixed race groups who happen to rap that have live instruments with them. I think there is a scale of apprehension

The issue of venues automatically associating violence and people of color with Hip-Hop results in venues more often supporting white artists. This is an issue that was brought up many times, and is supported by a study of local media portrayals of Hip-Hop that showed white artists being portrayed more favorably than artists of color.¹⁰ Similarly, of the Hip-Hop shows that do get booked in Madison, rappers point out that the vast majority of them only support national artists. A rapper from the veteran focus group explains,

When the Sylvee was being built...[it's a] local venue, you got local money to build it, but you only bringing in national acts. We miss opportunities right there to say 'here's how we're going to service our community.'

Lack of solidarity in the Hip-Hop community

Majority of interviewees discussed the lack of solidarity and community within local Hip-Hop. Issues include not supporting one another, not respecting one another, and not working with one another. One rapper stated that even though he has been in the scene for three or four years now, that he does not feel *a part* of the scene.

People be having a hidden agenda on why they wanna help you... and I ain't with all that, so that's why I'm trying to do everything by myself.

There is also a sense of clique-ness and exclusion felt by some artists.

I can't get no shows or shit with them [other artists]. I can't get into there, you gotta be a part of their thing... I'm like the outcast.

Tensions also arise between different age groups in the Hip-Hop scene. Even when conducting the focus groups there was discrepancy between younger and older members. However, all members recognize that this lack of connection is bad, because it does not help build community

and prevents talented individuals from connecting with opportunities and veterans of the scene. These ideas are reflected above in the “Unhealthy Competition” section.

These themes expand on the general perceptions discussed in the previous section and include underrepresentation in media, misconceptions, venue issues, and lack of solidarity within the community.

Strategies for Improvement

The last theme that we covered in our interviews with the Hip-Hop community was what strategies they thought would help the scene improve. We asked both what they thought the future would look like and what they thought would need to happen to get it there. Responses were varied, but some common viewpoints and recommendations surfaced. First, most people felt that the negative perception of Hip-Hop would need to change if the scene was going to improve. One solution people presented to this issue was doing more Hip-Hop related programming and outreach in the Madison community, especially in schools. The respondents also emphasized that they need spaces to perform and showcase their music, if they are going to gain popularity. This could be achieved through increased and more equitable access to venues and more exposure on the radio. Finally, many respondents mentioned that the Hip-Hop community would need to become more unified and supportive of each other in order for the scene to thrive.

Changing Negative Perceptions

We’ve seen that our interviewees believe that the negative stereotypes of Hip-Hop as promoting violence hinders its acceptance. Changing these stereotypes could help the success of Hip-Hop community members and would greatly improve the scene. Support from the Madison community could help bring positive awareness to Hip-Hop and help diminish previous negative stereotypes. Once Madison residents are more exposed to Hip-Hop, see the positive impacts it can have, and feel as if they are a part of the community, they will be more likely to support the genre.

Nine participants said that they believe there will be slow, incremental positive change in perceptions. Specifically, they said there is increasing acceptance of Hip-Hop by youth and the millennial generation, which will increase as time goes on and Madison becomes more diverse. For example, one interviewee said:

As the millennials are taking over... I think that it's more accepted with younger age groups now.

Another interviewee said:

The current generation is accepting. It will only continue to get better.

This perception comes from the rapper’s own experience as part of the ‘current generation’ he referenced. He thinks that, as his generation emerges, there will be more overall acceptance of different genres of music. About a third of the participants mentioned they foresee more

community acceptance, and that this will improve the Madison Hip-Hop scene. One interviewee said,

With the younger generation, people buying businesses... I think there's a lot more openness to [Hip-Hop] now than there used to be.

Many others had similar feelings, and also thought that this openness to Hip-Hop would grow with time, and increase as the popularity of Hip-Hop increased. One respondent said,

I would say that Hip-Hop now is the Zeitgeist,

referencing how Hip-Hop has become a defining characteristic of popular culture. Respondents seemed optimistic, but many also believed that more specific actions need to happen for the Madison Hip-Hop scene to truly thrive. One of the specific solutions that various people mentioned that could improve the genre's perception was outreach in the community and in schools. As one artist put it:

Giving back to the community is another way for them to recognize us as artists. If they see [us] out here trying, out here doing things...it's about getting that support.

Four participants have been involved with teaching or mentoring young kids about Hip-Hop. They mentioned that it seems more common now to have educational programming about Hip-Hop, which they see as a way to promote the positive aspects of the genre. As one rapper and teacher put it:

Hip-Hop is for the children...[Hip-Hop] is something really easy to relate to, I think it's something really opening for you to join in to...it's a great outlet.

He is referencing the way that school outreach is helping promote a positive perception of Hip-Hop in the broader community. Another producer and rapper also mentioned educational programs, saying that it is important for the scene to connect with kids. One artist said:

If we go to a lot of these [schools] and we show them what we're doing, I think that would let a lot of people know who we are, and they might gravitate towards [Hip-Hop].

A few respondents recommended cultural training and community education in order to decrease dismissive stereotypes in the community. One interviewee, a local rapper and producer, suggested that additional programs similar to those organized by UCAN be developed so that people can learn about Hip-Hop and, hopefully, have a more positive view of the genre. With new knowledge and perspectives, this type of education could lead to the community becoming more informed about and engaged with local Hip-Hop.

The general public needs to show up for shows. By supporting the Hip-Hop community the negative perceptions will go away.

Two participants specifically mentioned the relationship between UCAN and the University of Wisconsin-Madison that has resulted from previous capstone class research. One manager and promoter expressed that the research projects about police calls and media bias would be important for performing opportunities, because the reports might prompt venue

owners to “take a shot” at Hip-Hop performances. Another participant also referenced the capstone reports, saying that they created an opportunity for “Hip-Hop music lovers” to connect and make the scene thrive. Overall, the UCAN-UW relationship is a point of hope for some people, because they see the connection as a way to promote acceptance of Hip-Hop.

Overall, there were several different strategies that emerged to combat negative stereotypes, but the consensus was that Madison’s view of Hip-Hop would need to become more positive in order for the scene to improve.

Venue and Radio Access

Interviewees across the board agreed that they need equitable experiences in booking Hip-Hop shows in Madison. Access to venues was a critical theme for people when discussing the ways that the scene could improve. Eleven interviewees mentioned venues access as a strategy for improvement. Some predicted that there will be more venues open to Hip-Hop in the future, which will have a positive impact. Others said that discrimination against Hip-Hop by venues is so restrictive that they didn’t think Hip-Hop has a future in Madison. Regardless, they agreed that if things were to improve, artists must have better access to booking venues.

Many respondents mentioned that venues being accepting of Hip-Hop is necessary for new artists, noting the influence venues have, in general, on the Hip-Hop scene. While venues regularly book national touring artists, local Madison artists do not have the same opportunities. One person, speaking about why he thought venue access might improve, said,

It’s promising, with the opening of the Sylvee...If the Sylvee can keep on bringing in those large, nationally touring acts I think it’d be fine because it gives local rappers an opportunity to open for those shows and get seen by a lot of people....

Lack of access to performance spaces keeps artists from advancing in the industry and can increase conflict among artists. If more venues booked local artists, then Hip-Hop could flourish in Madison by increasing the community’s exposure to the genre. This could lead to hopeful performers gaining publicity and becoming more mainstream.

In addition to putting on more shows to engage a larger audience, several respondents thought that radio stations could play an important role in the future of Hip-Hop. People mentioned that currently, Hip-Hop isn’t played during desirable time slots, which limits their ability to build support. One person said:

We need somewhere to play our music. The radio is 12 o’clock on Saturday night, or a Sunday morning and that’s all we got.

One radio show in particular was cancelled and left a void for many of the community members:

I used to do the 89.9... we used to have the 10 o’clock to midnight section... and there were things that happened...and they killed that radio show, and the only Hip-Hop we can have now is from midnight until 3, so that messes things up because 10-12 that’s kind of the prime time, right?

Several people in the mixed focus group mentioned the idea of creating a radio station dedicated to Hip-Hop that would allow time for local artists to play. This would give artists the opportunity to play their music, thus helping the local Hip-Hop community gain more of a following.

Security

Related to booking more shows and having better venue access, a few respondents voiced a need for a better relationship between venues, the Hip-Hop community and the police. One respondent thought that venue owners would be more open to booking Hip-Hop shows if he didn't fear there would be negative consequences, saying:

One way that would be possible if venues were not threatened to have their liquor license revoked for scuffles at Hip-Hop shows.

One promoter in particular spoke to the need for security to ensure success for Hip-Hop in Madison:

People can't take security lightly here in Madison, as far as if you're gonna have an issue in your club and have people drinking there you need to have security there. We've had issues in the past where clubs don't provide security... As long as you have it [security] you should be allowed to do your event.

Speaking to Hip-Hop and the police, another respondent said:

*What I would like to see is essentially a set of police designed only for Hip-Hop events. Maybe four or five officers, all minority, who meet with [artists and promoters], so that the [Hip-Hop] community feels like these police are here **with** us and not **for** us. I think that, to me, is the biggest thing."*

Given the many views that respondents had about security and police presence at Hip-Hop events, it's clear that a better relationship needs to be established between those providing security and the community, in order to improve the scene.

Improving Unity within the Community

The respondents had differing opinions about how cohesive the scene currently is as a community, but one theme that emerged when we asked them about improving Hip-Hop was the need to improve unity and connection within the Hip-Hop community. Several people expressed that they were hopeful about the future of Hip-Hop because they felt that more people are connecting with each other. A handful of performers mentioned that they have been meeting other artists more frequently, which makes them feel positive. When talking about the other artists he's been meeting recently, one performer said:

I feel like we are only going to get bigger because we're all starting to meet each other... we're definitely going to build each other up a lot more.

Another rapper said:

I've been meeting more and more people and when you meet people and they're doing their thing, it's optimistic, so I feel good about the future of Hip-Hop in Madison.

He is describing the idea that, as more people in the scene make connections with each other, they are better able to support each other and collaborate. Various people mentioned that artists need to support each other more, to change the culture of competition that they see. A few of the artists we spoke to talked about this. As we have discussed, since there is a lack of venues available, many artists feel they are constantly competing to book venues.

A lot of artists view themselves as competition. Start viewing yourself as community not your competition.

One rapper talked about how artists in Madison needed to stop focusing so much on becoming the first artist to “blow up” from the city. He said that overcoming that mentality and creating connections between artists would help the scene improve. Another interview noted that

It's about relationship; it's about being personal, which is a good thing because it's going to have to be personal for it to be effective.

From here, he continues this idea by saying how local Hip-Hop music needs to be “actually authentic, genuine, and vulnerable” in order for it to take off here.

The emerging focus group talked about how artists would need to be more supportive of each other for the scene to improve moving forward. They talked about ways they could collaborate more frequently and support each other. The participants at the UCAN Level Up town hall gathering in December of 2018 echoed this sentiment. Members of the veteran focus group also suggested bridging the gap between the younger artists and older artists in the community by facilitating collaboration between artists on shows and performances in the future. In an environment like Madison that doesn't feel welcoming to Hip-Hop, making connections with others who are into the same genre and can share their experiences is an avenue for improvement.

CONCLUSION

This third research project in our ongoing effort to understand the place of Hip-Hop in Madison helps to paint a picture of a system of discrimination in entertainment. The stories we have gathered from our 32 participants in the Madison Hip-Hop scene show a local entertainment scene that denies access to local talent in both live venues and radio. Even when Hip-Hop is allowed a live presence in the city, the kind of policing and security imposed upon those events create the perception of an unsafe space.

This system of discrimination in entertainment is founded on faulty assumptions and misrepresentations. Our past research has shown that Hip-Hop is no more likely to be unsafe than any other genre in the city, and that media portrayals can present a subtle racial bias that feeds into the discriminatory entertainment system.¹¹

It is difficult to change this system. One of its consequences is that, with so few outlets in which to perform, the local Hip-Hop community becomes overly competitive and fractured. This makes it difficult to unify and organize to change the discriminatory entertainment system.

Even in the context of this discriminatory entertainment system, however, local Hip-hop artists and their allies maintain hope. The establishment of the city-sponsored Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment, led by UCAN, shows that at least some segments of the community can come together and propose changes. Our hope is that this research can support their work to create a just and equitable entertainment scene in Madison.

Notes

¹ Fearing, Autumn, Taylor Rae Konkle, Jacqueline Laitsch, Hannah Pierce, Claire Rater, Karen Reece, Randy Stoecker, and Theodora Varelis. 2018. "Is Hip-Hop Violent? Analyzing the Relationship Between Live Music Performances and Violence." *Journal of Black Studies*. 49(3):235-255 ; Verbeten, Mari, Aiyana Groh, Jennifer Holland, Randy Stoecker, Iffat Bhuiyan, Bobbie Briggs, Sydney Courier - Oaster, Kathryn Giguere, Rachel Goldbaum, Grace Spella, and Sydney Weiser. Hip-Hop through the Lens of Madison Print Media. 1 July, 2018. http://comm-org.wisc.edu/resources/Hip-Hop_media_report_final.pdf.

² Lorenzsonn, Erik. "The Frequency, Citing Dip in Attendance, Says It Will Shut Down." *The Cap Times*, 17 Apr. 2018.

³ Urban Community Arts Network. No date. Mission. <https://urbancommunityartsnetwork.org/about-us/mission/>

⁴Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment. 2018. Report to the Madison Common Council, November 28, 2018. https://madison.com/task-force-on-equity-in-music-and-entertainment/pdf_5f59e7ef-a581-56a8-ae34-7d4babe7ef4b.html

⁵ Fearing, Autumn, Taylor Rae Konkle, Jacqueline Laitsch, Hannah Pierce, Claire Rater, Karen Reece, Randy Stoecker, and Theodora Varelis. 2018. "Is Hip-Hop Violent? Analyzing the Relationship Between Live Music Performances and Violence." *Journal of Black Studies*. 49(3):235-255

⁶ Verbeten, Mari, Aiyana Groh, Jennifer Holland, Randy Stoecker, Iffat Bhuiyan, Bobbie Briggs, Sydney Courier - Oaster, Kathryn Giguere, Rachel Goldbaum, Grace Spella, and Sydney Weiser. Hip-Hop through the Lens of Madison Print Media. 1 July, 2018 http://comm-org.wisc.edu/resources/Hip-Hop_media_report_final.pdf

⁷ Pay to play here, as the focus group participants explained, means that today the most common way to get on stage is to either pay a promoter or participate in showcases that require an entry fee. This greatly hinders all artists ability to earn a living from their craft.

⁸ Fearing, Autumn, Taylor Rae Konkle, Jacqueline Laitsch, Hannah Pierce, Claire Rater, Karen Reece, Randy Stoecker, and Theodora Varelis. 2018. "Is Hip-Hop Violent? Analyzing the Relationship Between Live Music Performances and Violence." *Journal of Black Studies*. 49(3):235-255

⁹ This refers to the Alcohol License Review Committee of the City of Madison.

¹⁰ Mari Verbeten, Aiyana Groh, Jennifer Holland, Randy Stoecker, Iffat Bhuiyan, Bobbie Briggs, Sydney Courier - Oaster, Kathryn Giguere, Rachel Goldbaum, Grace Spella, and Sydney Weiser. Hip-Hop

through the Lens of Madison Print Media. 1 July, 2018. http://comm-org.wisc.edu/resources/Hip-Hop_media_report_final.pdf.

¹¹ Fearing, Autumn, Taylor Rae Konkle, Jacqueline Laitsch, Hannah Pierce, Claire Rater, Karen Reece, Randy Stoecker, and Theodora Varelis. 2018. "Is Hip-Hop Violent? Analyzing the Relationship Between Live Music Performances and Violence." *Journal of Black Studies*. 49(3):235-255 ; Verbeten, Mari, Aiyana Groh, Jennifer Holland, Randy Stoecker, Iffat Bhuiyan, Bobbie Briggs, Sydney Courier - Oaster, Kathryn Giguere, Rachel Goldbaum, Grace Spella, and Sydney Weiser. Hip-Hop through the Lens of Madison Print Media. 1 July, 2018. http://comm-org.wisc.edu/resources/Hip-Hop_media_report_final.pdf.

APPENDIX A

Focus Group and Interview Recruitment Email

Hi __,

I hope that you are doing well (or something more personal)! We here at UCAN are participating in the City of Madison's Task Force on Equity in Music and Entertainment. Our major focuses have been on Equity on Stages, Permits/Licenses, New City Staff Positions, Community/Culture, Venues, Transportation, Media, and Police. we would love to hear some of your thoughts to better inform our recommendations..

UCAN is working with a class of senior students at UW Madison, and their professor, to conduct focus groups and interviews to hear your opinions and stories about Hip-Hop in Madison. In the past two years, previous classes have helped us do research on police calls at live music performances (learn more [here](#)) as well as on racial bias in Madison media media (which you can see more about [here](#)).

We are hoping to have focus groups on:

Tuesday, October 23 from 6:00-7:30P

Sunday, October 28 2:00-3:30P

Sunday, October 28 6:00-7:30P

There will be food and drinks provided. We hope that you can be there for the whole time, but we understand if you can only come for part of it.

Do you think that you would be able to attend any of these? If not, would you be willing to either **talk in person or over the phone** about Hip-Hop in Madison?

We appreciate any time that you are able to spend on this to help us get closer to equity in the music scene in Madison.

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Focus Group Questions

Before we start, we'd like to ask you all follow some basic ground rules. Please try to be respectful throughout our time. Part of being respectful to everyone involved includes not using specific names. If possible, try to use nicknames or pseudonyms. Also, we really want to make sure everyone gets their chance to speak today. We may have to interrupt if we think we are getting off track or someone is not getting the chance to talk.

Intro: Can you tell us your name, how long you've been in the scene, and your role in the Madison Hip-Hop community?

1. What do you think the average Madison resident's perception is of Hip-Hop in this City?
2. What do you think are the biggest barriers to expanding Hip-Hop in Madison? (probes to ask about licensing, transportation, security, police, venues.) What experiences have you had with these barriers?
3. What do you think needs to happen to make Hip-Hop in Madison thrive?
4. What do you think is the future of Hip-Hop in Madison?
5. Is there anything else that we didn't mention that you want to talk about?

*****If you want to interview please let us know, give flyer*****

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me how long you've been in the scene, and a little bit about your role in the Madison Hip-Hop community?
2. If you had to say one thing about the Madison Hip-Hop scene, what would it be?
3. What do you think the average Madison residents' perception of Hip-Hop in this City?
4. What do you think are the biggest barriers to expanding Hip-Hop in Madison? (probes to ask about licensing, transportation, security, police, venues.) What experiences have you had with these barriers?
 - a. Probe: Can you tell me about a specific time you experienced that barrier?
 - b. Clarify: Can you tell me what you mean when you say ____?
5. What do you think is the future of Hip-Hop in Madison?
6. What do you think needs to happen to make Hip-Hop in Madison thrive?
7. Is there anything else that we didn't mention that you want to talk about?
8. We'd like to get some demographic information, would you mind sharing that with us?
 - a. Age:
 - b. Racial Identity:
 - c. Gender Identity: