

## **Poetics of the East Coast Old School Rap and Hip-Hop Lyrics**

Poetika Textů East Coast Old School Rapu a Hip-Hopu

**Zpracoval (author):** Jakub Bolbol

**Vedoucí bakalářské práce (supervisor):** Stephan Delbos, M.F.A., Ph.D.

**Studijní obor (subject):** anglistika/amerikanistika

květen 2021, Praha

### **Abstract**

The thesis explores and analyses the lyrics of the musical genre called rap and cultural movement called hip-hop; the lyrics are analysed and contrasted with the methods of literary analysis and theory. The goal of the thesis is to show that these lyrics, written by African American rappers, are literary texts, narratives and poems, that could be further considered as both American and African American literature in the academic discourse and potential further research. The term East Coast refers to the place of origin of the authors and their local focus in their subject matter: New York and New York's borough of the Bronx; the term Old School refers both to the form and to its placement in time, the 1980s. The thesis briefly introduces the history and origin of hip-hop culture, defines the rap genre and introduces rap terminology, which is used throughout. The thesis then introduces poet Gil Scott-Heron, and a group called The Last Poets, both considered to be the "grandfathers of rap". After establishing the origin and meaning of rap and hip-hop, the focus of the discussion turns to the question of whether hip-hop or rap could be considered as a literary genre. The thesis takes these questions and attempts to answer them in the subsequent chapters dedicated to literary analysis of the lyrics. The texts are divided into two groups, according to their form and subject matter. The first group focuses on the narratives, tropes and social commentaries of the lyricists of the so-called conscious and political hip-hop. These rappers use their texts to report on the social and political situation which damaged the Black community of the 1980s. The second group focuses on rap as poetic expression. This chapter analyses the very form and poetic language of the lyrics: the use of rhymes, figures of speech and figurative language. Moreover, the chapter attempts to establish rap as a form of poetry, both through the analysis of the lyrics and through the personalities of the authors.