Fear of a Bleak Planet: Rapping About Race, Poverty, and the Environment

Event: Panel Discussion and Exhibit Opening Reception

Where: Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center

When: October 4, 2010 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. (Grand Hall)
October 4-31, 2010 Exhibit (Bridgwaters Lounge)

Departmental Sponsors: Archives of African American Music and Culture, College of Arts and Sciences, College Arts and Humanities Institute, Office of Diversity, Equity and Multicultural Affairs

Description:
Hip hop is a complex cultural, social, and political movement that emerged during the post-civil rights era when the urban economy was on a steep decline, governmental support programs were being dismantled, drug abuse was on the rise, and violent crime rates reached alarming heights. Out of this increasingly desolate landscape, rap music arose as a voice of protest, offering commentary on the bleak environment and socio-political issues affecting inner-city communities. Over the past 30 years the movement has grown exponentially.

Presented by the Archives of African American Music and Culture, this exhibit and panel discussion will examine issues of sustainability—including social and racial equality, economic needs, and environmental racism—through the lens of hip hop. Featured panelists include hip hop scholars Fernando Orejuela and Cheryl Keyes. The event is part of the COAS Themester focus on “Sustaint.ability: Thriving on a Small Planet” and Indiana University Libraries Archives and Special Collection Month.

Bio:
Dr. Fernando Orejuela is a Senior Lecturer in IU’s Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology and adjunct faculty in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies. He is currently completing a textbook on hip hop culture to be published by Prentice Hall.

Dr. Cheryl Keyes, Professor of Ethnomusicology in the Department of Ethnomusicology at UCLA, is the author of Rap Music and Street Consciousness, which received a CHOICE award for outstanding academic books in 2004.