

= New school hip hop =

The new school of hip hop was a movement in hip hop music starting 1983 ? 84 with the early records of Run ? D.M.C. and LL Cool J. Like the hip hop preceding it , it came predominantly from New York City . The new school was initially characterized in form by drum machine led minimalism , often tinged with elements of rock . It was notable for taunts and boasts about rapping , and socio @-@ political commentary , both delivered in an aggressive , self @-@ assertive style . In image as in song its artists projected a tough , cool , street b @-@ boy attitude . These elements contrasted sharply with the funk and disco influenced outfits , novelty hits , live bands , synthesizers and party rhymes of artists prevalent in 1984 , and rendered them old school . New school artists made shorter songs that could more easily gain radio play , and more cohesive LPs than their old school counterparts . By 1986 their releases began to establish the hip hop album as a fixture of the mainstream .

More inclusively , golden age hip hop is a phrase usually framing the late 1980s in mainstream hip hop , said to be characterized by its diversity , quality , innovation and influence , and associated with Public Enemy , KRS @-@ One and his Boogie Down Productions , Eric B. & Rakim , Ultramagnetic MCs , De La Soul , A Tribe Called Quest , and the Jungle Brothers due to their themes of Afrocentricity and political militancy , their experimental music , and their eclectic sampling . This same period is sometimes referred to as " mid @-@ school " or a " middle school " in hip hop , the phrase covering acts such as Gang Starr , The UMC 's , Main Source , Lord Finesse , EPMD , Just Ice , Stetsasonic , True Mathematics , and Mantronix .

The innovations of Run @-@ D.M.C. , LL Cool J , and new school producers such as Larry Smith , and Rick Rubin of Def Jam , were quickly advanced on by the Beastie Boys , Marley Marl and his Juice Crew MCs , Boogie Down Productions , Public Enemy , and Eric B. & Rakim . Hip @-@ hop production became denser , rhymes and beats faster , as the drum machine was augmented with the sampler technology . Rakim took lyrics about the art of rapping to new heights , while KRS @-@ One and Chuck D pushed " message rap " towards black activism . Native Tongues artists ' inclusive , sample @-@ crowded music accompanied their positivity , Afrocentricity and playful energy . With the eventual commercial dominance of West Coast gangsta rap , particularly the emergence of the relaxed sounds of G @-@ funk by the early nineties , the East Coast new school / golden age can be said to have ended , with hardcore rappers such as the Wu @-@ Tang Clan and gangsta rappers such as Nas and The Notorious B.I.G. coming to dominate the East Coast scene .

The terms " old school " and " new school " have fallen more and more into the common vernacular as synonyms for " old " and " new " (witness the 2003 Urban Dictionary entry for new school which reads , " Anything contemporary ") and are often applied in this conversational way to hip hop , to the confusion and occasional exasperation of writers who use the terms historically . The phrase " leader of the new school " , coined in hip hop by Chuck D in 1988 , and presumably given further currency by the group with the exact name Leaders of the New School (who were named by Chuck D prior to signing with Elektra in 1989) , remains popular . It has been applied to artists ranging from Jay @-@ Z to Lupe Fiasco .

= = Prehistory = =

Elements of new school had existed in some form in the popular culture since hip @-@ hop 's birth . The first MCs rapped over DJs swapping back and forth between two copies of the same record playing the same drum break , or playing instrumental portions or versions of a broad range of records . This part of the culture was initiated by Kool DJ Herc in 1972 using breaks from James Brown , The Incredible Bongo Band and English rock group Babe Ruth in his block parties . Brown 's music ? " extensive vamps " in which his voice was " a percussive instrument with frequent rhythmic grunts " , and " with rhythm @-@ section patterns ... [resembling] West African polyrhythms " ? was a keynote of hip hop 's early days . By 1975 , Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaataa had taken up Kool Herc 's breakbeat style of DJing , each with their own accompanying rappers . Flash was especially associated with an important break known as " The Bells " ? a cut

@-@ up of the intro to Bob James 's jazz cover of Paul Simon 's " Take Me To The Mardi Gras " ? while Bambaataa delighted in springing occasional rock music breaks from records like " Mary , Mary " , " Honky Tonk Women " , " Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band " and Grand Funk Railroad 's " Inside Looking Out " on unsuspecting b @-@ boys .

The earliest hip @-@ hop records replaced the DJ with a live band playing funk and disco influenced tunes , or " interpolating " the tunes themselves , as in " Rapper 's Delight " (Sugar Hill , 1979) and " King Tim III (Personality Jock) " (Spring , 1979) . It was the soft , futuristic funk closely tied to disco that ruled hip hop 's early days on record , to the exclusion of the hard James Brown beats so beloved of the first b @-@ boys . Figures such as Flash and Bambaataa were involved in some early instances of moving the sound away from that of a live band , as in Flash 's DJ track " The Adventures of Grandmaster Flash on the Wheels of Steel " (Sugar Hill , 1981) , and even innovating popular new sounds and subgenres , as in the synthesizer @-@ laden electro of Bambaataa 's ode to crack smoking : " Planet Rock " (Tommy Boy , 1982) . Often though the rawer elements present in live shows did not make it past the recording studio .

Bambaataa 's first records , for instance , two versions of " Zulu Nation Throwdown " (Winley , 1980) , were recorded with just drums and rhymes . When Bambaataa heard the released records , a complete live band had been added . Something closer to his intentions can be heard on a portion of Death Mix , a low @-@ quality bootleg of a Zulu Nation night at James Monroe High School in the Bronx , released without his permission on Winley Records in 1983 . Likewise on the bootleg Live Convention ' 82 (Disco Wax , 1982) , Grand Wizard Theodore cuts the first six bars of Rufus Thomas 's " Do the Funky Penguin " together for five and a half minutes while an MC raps over the top . Grandmaster Flash 's " Superrappin ' " (Enjoy , 1979) had a pumping syncopated rhythm and The Furious Five emulating his spinbacks and needle drops and chanting that " that Flash is on the beatbox going ... " The beatbox itself however , a drum machine which Flash had added to his turntable set @-@ up some time earlier , was absent on the record , the drums being produced by a live drummer .

Kool Moe Dee 's verbal personal attacks on Busy Bee Starski live at Harlem World in 1982 caused a popular sensation in hip hop circles . In the same way , groups like the Cold Crush Brothers and The Force MCs were known for their routines , competitive attitude , and battle rhymes . Tapes of battles like these circulated widely , even without them becoming viable recordings . Apart from some social commentary like Melle Melle 's one verse on " Superrappin ' " , Kurtis Blow 's ruefully comedic " The Breaks " (Mercury , 1980) and a spurt of records following the success of Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five 's " The Message " (Sugar Hill , 1982) , the old school specialized lyrically in party rhymes .

= = Advent = =

One time , in probably 1983 , I was in the park in Brooklyn . I was getting beat up by about eight kids , I don 't even remember why . But as it was happening , this dude was walkin ' by with one of those big boom boxes . And as he 's walking by , we hear [imitates the unmistakable intro drum pattern from Run @-@ D.M.C. 's ' Sucker MCs ' , loudly] . They all stopped beating me , and we all just stood there , listening to this phenomenon . I could have run , but I didn 't , I was just so entranced by what I heard . Then the dude with the box passed by and the kids continued to beat me up . But it didn 't matter . I felt good . I knew right then that I had to get into this hip hop shit .

David Toop writes of 1984 that " pundits were writing obituaries for hip hop , a passing fad " which " Hollywood had mutated into an all @-@ singing , all @-@ dancing romance " in movies like Flashdance and Breakin ' . Against this , Run @-@ D.M.C. , The Beastie Boys and the label Def Jam were " consciously hardcore " , " a reaction against the populist trend in hip hop at the time " , and " an explosive emergence of an underground alternative " . For Peter Shapiro , Run @-@ D.M.C. 's 1983 two @-@ song release " It 's like That " / " Sucker MCs " " completely changed hip @-@ hop " " rendering everything that preceded it distinctly old school with one fell swoop . " In a 47 @-@ point timeline of hip hop and its antecedents spanning 64 years , Shapiro lists this release as his 43rd point . Reviewing Toop 's book in the LA Weekly , Oliver Wang of Soul Sides concurs ,

hailing Run @-@ D.M.C. as inaugurating the new school of rap .

= = = Run @-@ D.M.C. = = =

Run @-@ D.M.C. rapped over the most sparse of musical backing tracks . In the case of " Sucker MCs " , there was a loud , Oberheim DMX drum machine , a few scratches and nothing else , while the rhymes harangued weak rappers and contrasted them to the group 's success . " It 's like That " was an aggressively delivered message rap whose social commentary has been defined variously as " objective fatalism " , " frustrated and renunciatory " , and just plain " reportage " . Run @-@ D.M.C. wore street clothes , tracksuits , sneakers , one even wore glasses . Their only possible concession to an image extraneous to that of kids on the street was the stylistic flourish of black fedoras atop their heads . This stood in sharp contrast to the popular artists of the time , who had variously bedecked themselves with feathers , suede boots , jerri curls , and red or even pink leather suits .

The group 's early singles are collected on their eponymous debut (Profile , 1984) , introducing rock references in " Rock Box " , and recognized then and now as the best album of hip hop 's early years . The next year , they appeared at Live Aid and released King of Rock (Profile , 1985) , on which they asserted that they were " never ever old school " . Raising Hell (Profile , 1986) was a landmark , containing quintessentially hip hop tracks like " Peter Piper " , " Perfection " and " It 's Tricky " , and going platinum in the year of its release on the back of the huge crossover hit " Walk This Way " . The group had rapped over the beat from the 1975 original in their early days , without so much as knowing the name of the band . When Raising Hell 's producer Rick Rubin heard them playing around with it in the studio , he suggested using the Aerosmith lyrics , and the collaboration between the two groups came about . The album 's last track was " Proud To Be Black " , written under the influence of Chuck D of the as @-@ yet unrecorded Public Enemy . On " My Adidas " the band rapped that they " took the beat from the street and put it on TV " .

Comments from Darryl McDaniels , AKA DMC of Run @-@ D.M.C. , make this connection to the underground explicit : " [T] hat 's exactly what we did . We didn 't really think it was pioneering , we just did what rappers did before us was doing on tapes . When a lot of the old guys , like Kool Moe Dee , The Treacherous Three , and Grandmaster Flash , got in the studio , they never put their greatness on records . Me and Run and Jay would listen ... and we 'd say , ' They didn 't do that shit last night in the Bronx ! ' ... So we said that we weren 't going to be fake . We ain 't gonna wear no costumes . We 're gonna keep it real . "

= = = Def Jam = = =

The other production credit on Raising Hell went to Run 's brother , Russell Simmons ; he ran Rush Artist Management , now Rush Communications , which as well as handling Run @-@ D.M.C. , managed the Beastie Boys , LL Cool J , Whodini and Public Enemy . Simmons also co @-@ owned Def Jam Recordings , an important new school label , with Rubin . Simmons rose with Def Jam to become one of the biggest moguls in rap , while Rubin claimed credit for introducing radio @-@ friendly brevity and song structure to hip hop . Def Jam 's first 12 @-@ inch release was the minimalist drum machine breakdown " I Need A Beat " by LL Cool J (1984) . This was followed by " I Can 't Live Without My Radio " (Def Jam , 1985) , a loud , defiant declaration of public loyalty to his boom box which the New York Times in 1987 called " quintessential rap in its directness , immediacy and assertion of self " . Both were on his debut album for Def Jam , 1985 's Radio (" Reduced by Rick Rubin " , read the liner notes) , which contained another minimalist b @-@ boy classic with shards of rock guitar , " Rock the Bells " . Perhaps rock fan Rubin 's natural protégés were the Beastie Boys , sampling AC / DC on their Rock Hard EP on Def Jam in 1984 , and recording a Run @-@ D.M.C. outtake and a heavy metal parody on their hugely commercially successful debut album Licensed To Ill (Def Jam , 1986) . In 1987 , Raising Hell surpassed three million units sold , and Licensed to Ill five million . Faced with figures like these , major labels finally began buying into independent New York hip hop imprints .

= = Further development = =

= = = The Juice Crew = = =

One of hip hop 's most important producers and innovators , Marley Marl found Cold Chillin ' Records and assembled various hip hop acts , including MC Shan , Big Daddy Kane , Biz Markie , Roxanne Shanté , Kool G Rap & DJ Polo , and Masta Ace . His Juice Crew collective was an important force in ushering the " golden age " era of hip hop , with advances in lyrical technique , distinctive personalities of emerging stars like Biz Markie and Big Daddy Kane , and attaining crossover commercial success for hip hop music .

Marley Marl 's first production was an " answer record " to " Sucker MCs " in 1983 entitled " Sucker DJs " by Dimples D. Soon after came 14 @-@ year @-@ old Roxanne Shanté 's answer to UTFO 's " Roxanne Roxanne " , " Roxanne 's Revenge " (1985) , sparking off the huge wave of answer records known as the Roxanne Wars . More disses (insults intended to show disrespect) from Shanté followed : " Bite This " (1985) , " Queen of Rox " (1985) , introducing Biz Markie on " Def Fresh Crew " (1986) , " Payback " (1987) , and perhaps her greatest record , " Have a Nice Day " (1987) .

= = = Boogie Down Productions = = =

Shante 's " Have a Nice Day " had aimed some barbs at the principal two members of a new group from the Bronx called Boogie Down Productions (BDP) : " Now KRS @-@ ONE you should go on vacation with that name soundin ' like a wack radio station , and as for Scott La Rock , you should be ashamed , when T La Rock said " It 's Yours " , he didn 't mean his name " . Boogie Down Productions had manufactured a disagreement with the Juice Crew 's MC Shan , releasing " South Bronx " and " The Bridge is Over " in reply to his " The Bridge " and " Kill That Noise " respectively . KRS @-@ One considered Run @-@ D.M.C. the epitome of rap music in 1984 and had begun to rap following their lead . But he has also said that BDP 's approach reflected a feeling that the early innovators like Run @-@ D.M.C. and LL Cool J were by 1986 tainted by commercial success and out of touch with the streets .

Boogie Down 's first album Criminal Minded (B @-@ Boy , 1987) admitted a reggae influence and had KRS @-@ One imitating the Beatles ' " Hey Jude " on the title track . It also contained two tales of grim street life , yet played for callous laughs : " The P Is Free " , in which KRS speaks of throwing out his girl who wants crack cocaine in exchange for sex , and " 9mm Goes Bang " , in which he shoots a drug dealer then cheerfully sings " la la la la la " . Songs like these presaged the rise of an underground that matched violent lyrics to the hardcore drum machine tracks of the new school . The cover of Criminal Minded was a further reflection of a move towards this sort of radical image , depicting the group in a half @-@ light , holding firearms . The next album By All Means Necessary (B @-@ Boy , 1988) left that element behind for political radicalism following the murder of Scott La Rock , with the title and cover alluding to Malcolm X. KRS @-@ One became involved with the Stop the Violence Movement at this time . Boogie Down Productions , along with Run @-@ D.M.C. and Public Enemy , associated the new school as rap music with a strong message .

= = = Eric B. & Rakim = = =

Eric B. & Rakim appeared with the Marley Marl produced " Eric B. Is President " and " My Melody " on Zakia Records in 1986 . Both tracks appeared on Paid in Full (4th & Broadway , 1987) . Just as B.D.P. had , the pair reflected changes in street life on their debut 's cover , which depicted the two wearing huge gold chains and surrounded by money . Like Criminal Minded , the sampling prevalent in the album cemented James Brown 's status as a hip hop source , while Rakim 's allusions

showed the growing influence of mystic Islam @-@ offshoot The Nation of Gods and Earths in hip @-@ hop . The music was minimalist , austere so , with many writers noting that coupled with Rakim 's precise , logical style , the effect was almost one of scientific rigour . The group followed Paid in Full with Follow The Leader (Uni , 1988) (on which they were open @-@ minded enough to sample The Eagles) , Let The Rhythm Hit ' Em (MCA , 1990) and Don 't Sweat The Technique (MCA , 1992) .

Rakim is generally regarded as the most cutting @-@ edge of the MCs of the new school era . Jess Harvell in Pitchfork in 2005 wrote that " Rakim 's innovation was applying a patina of intellectual detachment to rap 's most sacred cause : talking shit about how you 're a better rapper than everyone else . " Christgau in the Village Voice in 1990 wrote of Rakim 's style as " calm , confident , clear . On their third album , as on their phase @-@ shifting 1986 debut , " he continues , " Eric B. ' s samples truly are beats , designed to accentuate the natural music of an idealized black man 's voice . " Looking back at the late eighties in Rolling Stone in 1997 , Ed Morales describes Rakim as " the new @-@ school MC of the moment , using a smooth baritone to become the jazz soloist of mystic Afrocentric rap . "

== = Public Enemy == =

Public Enemy , having been reluctantly convinced to sign to a record label , released Yo ! Bumrush the Show on Def Jam in 1987 . It debuted the Public Enemy logo , a circle of hatted b @-@ boy in a sniper 's cross @-@ hairs , was replete with battle rhymes (" Miuzi Weighs a Ton " , " Public Enemy # 1 ") , social @-@ political fare (" Rightstarter (Message to a Black Man) " and anti @-@ crack messages (" Megablast ") .

The album was a critical and commercial success , particularly in Europe , unusually so for a hip hop album at that time . Bumrush the Show had been recorded on the heels of Run @-@ D.M.C. ' s Raising Hell , but was held back by Def Jam in order for them to concentrate on releasing and promoting the Beastie Boys ' License to Ill . Chuck D of Public Enemy felt that by the time their first record was released , BDP and Rakim had already changed the landscape for how an MC could rap . Public Enemy were already recording their second album It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back (Def Jam , 1988) when Bumrush hit stores .

== = Gangsta rap == =

The underground sound centered on urban violence that was to become gangsta rap existed on the East Coast from soon after Run ? D.M.C. had inaugurated the new school of hip hop . Philadelphia 's Schoolly D self @-@ released " Gangsta Boogie " in 1984 , and " P.S.K. What Does It Mean ? " / " Gucci Time " in 1985 , leading to Saturday Night (Schoolly D , 1986 , Jive , 1987) . The West Coast , which became the home of gangsta rap , had Toddy Tee 's influential Batteram mixtape in 1985 , and Ice @-@ T 's " Six in the Morning " in 1986 before N.W.A 's first records , leading to the hugely successful Straight Outta Compton in 1988 .

== = Native Tongues == =

Developments in the New York new school continuum in this climate were represented by the Native Tongues groups ? The Jungle Brothers , De La Soul , A Tribe Called Quest , Queen Latifah and Monie Love ? along with fellow travellers like Leaders of the New School , KMD and Brand Nubian . They moved away from aggressive , macho posturing , towards ambiguity , fun and Afrocentricity . Their music was sample @-@ crowded , more open and accessible than their new school predecessors . De La Soul 's debut sampled everyone from The Turtles to Steely Dan , while A Tribe Called Quest matched tough beats to mellow jazz samples and playful , thoughtful raps .

== = Endnotes == =

