**2006**

 **14-16 Years**

**3rd Place**

**Sindiwe Mvubu**

**How are the values of gangsta rap affecting youth today? What values are expressed in gangsta rap songs**

Rap first originated among black and Hispanic performers in New York as a form of street poetry, where people would gather in the street and listen in the

Gangster rap focuses mostly on drugs, weapons, women and crime.

In my essay I will look at these values expressed in gangster rap and how they affect youth today.

The correct meaning to 1970’s. Rap started as a form of chanting, similar to that of historical African tribe. It was often improvised. gangster in the English dictionary means “a member of an organised gang of criminals”. It’s negative and has a bad view to it

My view on gangster rap goes either way positively or negatively. I say it depends on the rapper. You can have rappers who rap about positive things about life what they have achieved, how they succeeded to become a selling artist.

Then you have the others, rap about women degrading them giving them rude and insulting names, rapping about money drugs and weapons. Youth as young as 10 rap about these things, the effect is worrying.

If children on the street listen to this type of music, what might happen if they might copy? Might is not the word

Rappers promote drugs in their songs, rapping about how they take it and that its good for you, the rappers almost advertise drugs to the youths. The effect of this is that attitudes may change in favour of taking drugs or maybe just trying it.

This leads to health problems and behavioural problems, which could change, and the drugs could make you become violent then arguments occur probably at home.

 The question is where do youths get money to buy the drugs and if youth haven’t got money youths could start stealing and then that becomes crime and police become involved.

A majority of gangster rappers rap about having a gun or using it or maybe having knives. This promotes children as young as 7 to buy a toy gun. If they aren’t taught the difference between the toy and the real one and told good and bad at home by their parents, youths could be influenced by rappers to go and get the real one.

Hoe how many times have you heard that in a rappers song I have countless of times these are names given to women in their videos who are seen dressed half naked. They are shown as objects and not by their personality. The women have low respect to no respect for women and themselves, they sell themselves out.

Girls seeing this in videos may think being treated that way is what men want.

Have you ever wanted to catch someone’s eye by wearing something a bit flashy revealing eye catchy, I know my friends have when trying to impress a guy they may get ideas from the TV about what to wear and what a guy may like since that female has got them all over her.

I’m sure you will agree with me its well know that swearing is a big part of that music, gangster rap swearing is used a lot as encouragement for youths to say the words when rapping along swear words include bitch hoes and nigger.

Nigger which was and often is offensive to those of colour but rappers find it's alright to use the word nigger even though it was a word to separate us.

But coming from the ghetto an environment rappers grew up in there weren't many prospects for the future for them.

But overall coming from a poor background to becoming millionaires achieving the American dream and living the life a comfortable place they can call their own. Having great success that they can buy any house car or accessory they want.

Role models for African community is mainly gangster rappers because you do find black lawyers doctors police men but they are not highlighted on TV.

A child coming home from school the first thing they do is turn the channel to MTV or MTV Base or channel U, music channels where they could find a number of gangster rappers rapping about the above values. If they were to switch to the news there would be a low representation of black lawyers and so on.

In large number of black families the youths are raised by single parents usually the mother, so with no father figure to look up to for guidance, they may be drawn to look at the gangster rappers who are dominant and popular.

Of course now rap promotes violence and misogyny. It was admired as a popular culture telling black kids to be proud and do something with their life and not idolize the drug dealers and ghetto heroes like nowadays. But rap is doing exactly what rap was originally trying to get away from.