FROM FLOWS TO FINDING AIDS:

Processing the Houston Hip Hop Collections at the University of Houston Libraries

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INTRODUCTION AND IMPORTANCE

• Hip hop as an area of growing scholarly interest

• Rare and unique materials

• University of Houston is a repository well-suited to collecting hip hop
BACKGROUND FOR COLLECTION

- 2010: Started the new Houston Hip Hop Collecting Area
BACKGROUND FOR COLLECTION

• The collections began focused around collecting the works associated with DJ Screw, an influential Houston-area DJ

• DJ Screw’s family donated his vinyl collection as well as his personal mixed-format papers
BACKGROUND FOR COLLECTION

• Growth to five collections
• Need to move from a collecting focus to a collection management focus
• Hiring of Houston & Texas Archives Fellow to process collections of:
  – Personal papers
  – Business records
  – A living artificial collection
BUSINESS RECORDS

Pen & Pixel Graphics, Inc.  Samplified Digital Recording Studios
ARTIFICIAL COLLECTION

Houston Hip Hop Recording Artists
PRE-PROCESSING ACTIVITIES
CONFERENCE

AWREADY!: THE HOUSTON HIP HOP CONFERENCE, MARCH 27 – 28, 2012
EXHIBIT
DJ SCREW AND THE RISE OF HOUSTON HIP HOP, MARCH – SEPTEMBER 2012
This collection includes photographs, handwritten rap lyrics and song lists for “screw tapes,” and flyers related to the late DJ Screw and his rap collective the Screwed Up Click. These materials document how DJ Screw developed the production technique known as “chopped and screwed,” which is closely associated with Houston hip hop.

Of special note is a book of rap lyrics by Screwed Up Click (S.U.C.) member HAWK. In metallic ink on its black pages, he worked out the sixteen bars that make up a typical rap verse. Some pages of the notebook show sets of rhyming words that he was considering for a verse. Others capture the activities of HAWK’s everyday life, from phone numbers to scores for dominoes games.
PRE-PROCESSING
PROCESSING CHALLENGES
PROCESSING CHALLENGES

• Relying heavily on oral sources

• Name consistency; thesaurus
PROCESSING CHALLENGES

- Unusual formats
  - Memorabilia and ephemera
  - Unusual A/V media
PROCESSING CHALLENGES

• High level of interest
  – Privacy
  – Security

1. Back the A$$ up (Savy)
2. Rosa Parks (Outkast)
3. Range Rover (Pokey)
4. Throw Yo Hands Up (8 Ball & MJG)
5. Get a Stars (C-Note)
6. That's the Nigga (Mystikal)
7. Break Up's (2) Make Ups (Method)
8. Ballin' (Parlay C-Pokey)
9. Belly (8 Ball & MJG)
10. Too Hot (Hot Boys)
11. Sportie Othie Dopilicious (Outkast)
12. E.P.G.H. (Cool Breeze)
13. Like Some How (Geto Boys)
14. Stuntin' (Big Tymers)
15. Murda 4 Life (J.A. Rule)
16. Street Talkin' (Slick Rick)
17. Go Deep (Janet Jackson)
18. Favor 4 a Favor (Was Right)
19. Playas Holiday (T.W.O.Y)
20. Playas Get Chose (Lil O')

Steve
PROCESSING CHALLENGES

- Born-digital materials
PROCESSING CHALLENGES

- Digital projects
- Working with cataloging
QUESTIONS?

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Photo credits:

DJ Screw – Ben DeSoto
Big HAWK – Peter Beste
Collection material – UH Digital Library