



In the Heart of the Beat: The Poetry of Rap (African American Cultural Theory and Heritage)

Alexs Pate

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Despite its extraordinary popularity and worldwide influence, the world of rap and hip hop is under constant attack. Impressions and interpretations of its meaning and power are perpetually being challenged. Somewhere someone is bemoaning the negative impact of rap music on contemporary culture. In *In the Heart of the Beat: The Poetry of Rap*, bestselling author and scholar Alexs Pate argues for a fresh understanding of rap as an example of powerful and effective poetry, rather than a negative cultural phenomenon.

Pate articulates a way of "reading" rap that makes visible both its contemporary and historical literary values. He encourages the reader to step beyond the dominance of the beat and the raw language and come to an appreciation of rap's literary and poetic dimensions. What emerges is a vision of rap as an exemplary form of literary expression, rather than a profane and trendy musical genre. Pate focuses on works by several well-known artists to reveal in rap music, despite its penchant for vulgarity, a power and beauty that is the heart of great literature.

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