

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOCIAL CRITICISM
AS SEEN THROUGH NICKI MINAJ'S HIP-HOP
SONG LYRICS**

THESIS

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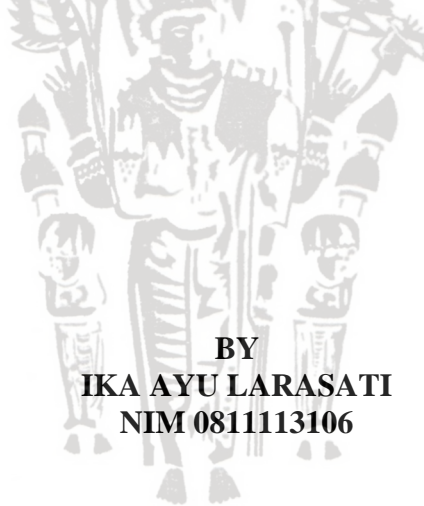
**STUDY PROGRAM OF ENGLISH
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THESIS

**Presented to
Universitas Brawijaya
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Sarjana Sastra**



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ABSTRACT

Larasati, Ika Ayu. 2012., **African-American Social Criticism as Seen through Nicki Minaj's Hip-Hop Song Lyrics**. Study Program of English, Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. Supervisor: Sri Hermingrum; Co-supervisor: Melania Shinta Harendika

Keywords: African-American, social criticism, Nicki Minaj, Hip-Hop music

In ancient time, music is one of the easiest medium to communicate and the function is not only for the rituals, but also for expressing feelings. In its development, the African-American music is vary such as **Folk music, Gospel, Blues, Jazz, and Hip-Hop**. In the last decade, Hip-Hop becomes popular and Blacks uses it as a means to criticize the social conditions. Nicki Minaj is a Rapper who voiced the social situation as a Black woman and it is shown in her six songs, Did It On 'Em, Miss Independent, Stupid Ho, Champion, Fly and Y U Mad, such as an issue about economic, gender, and racial issues.

This study uses an integrated approach, consisting of African-American Music, Hip-Hop as Urban Art, and Blacks' Expression and Aesthetics to criticize the social conditions in the Hip-Hop song lyrics. The analysis is based on the literal facts in Nicki Minaj's lyrics.

This research discloses the classification of the intended targets and the issues rose in Minaj's songs, each divided into three parts. The first is social criticism between the Blacks and the Whites, which constituted due to the race and class differences which affects them economically. The second is the social criticism between men and women, the core issue is gender inequality which affects the material possessions between them. The third is a criticism among Black women, although they are equal in term of gender and race, there is a competition for materials and power which leads the problem into economy issue.

ABSTRAK

Larasati, Ika Ayu. 2012., **Kritik Sosial dalam Masyarakat Afrika-Amerika Melalui Lirik Lagu Hip-Hop oleh Nicki Minaj**. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Brawijaya. Pembimbing: (I) Sri Hermingrum (II) Melania Shinta Harendika

Kata kunci : masyarakat Afrika-Amerika, kritik sosial, Nicki Minaj, musik Hip-Hop

Sejak jaman dahulu, musik adalah salah satu media termudah untuk berkomunikasi dan fungsinya bukan hanya untuk ritual namun juga menunjukkan perasaan manusia. Dalam perkembangannya, musik Afrika-Amerika sangat beragam seperti misalnya musik Folk, Blues, music rohani, Blues, Jazz dan Hip-Hop. Di tahun-tahun terakhir, Hip-Hop menjadi sangat terkenal dan orang Kulit Hitam menggunakannya sebagai alat untuk mengkritik keadaan sosial. Nicki Minaj adalah *Rapper* yang menyuarakan keadaan sosialnya seperti permasalahan ekonomi, jenis kelamin dan perbedaan ras sebagai wanita Kulit Hitam dan hal ini terlihat di keenam lagunya, Did It On 'Em, Miss Independent, Stupid Ho, Champion, Fly dan Y U Mad.

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan yang terintegrasi, terdiri dari *African-American Music*, *Hip-Hop as Urban Art*, dan *The Blacks' Expression* untuk mengkritisi keadaan sosial dalam lirik lagu Hip-Hop. Analisis yang dilakukan berdasarkan fakta literal dalam lirik lagu Nicki Minaj.

Dalam penelitian ini, ditemukan klasifikasi target yang dituju dan isu-isu yang diangkat Minaj dalam lagunya masing-masing dibagi menjadi tiga bagian. Yang pertama adalah kritik sosial antara masyarakat Kulit Hitam dan masyarakat Kulit Putih, yang didasari karena perbedaan ras dan kelas sehingga berdampak pada segi ekonomi. Yang kedua adalah kritik sosial antara laki-laki dan perempuan, dengan inti permasalahan perbedaan perlakuan dari segi jenis kelamin, hal ini berdampak pada kepemilikan materi diantara mereka. Yang ketiga adalah kritik antara sesama perempuan, meskipun jenis kelamin dan ras mereka setara, tetap ada persaingan dalam memperebutkan materi dan kekuasaan hingga isu yang diangkat kembali adalah ekonomi.

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The writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Music cannot be separated from our life because music is one of human expressions that has existed since long years ago. Music as the art of organizing tones to produce a coherent sequence of sound intended to elicit an aesthetic response in the listeners, music is a vocal or instrumental sound having some degree of rhythm, melody, and harmony (Grolier, 2000, p.864). The result of some researches on the origin of music shows that ancient people have been already familiar with music and have used it as a part of rituals in which the implementation is very sacred, so our ancestors can embody the target of such rituals as funeral, religious ceremonies, wedding or welcoming celebrations. For example, the Venda tribe in Africa uses music running with python dance, one of the ceremonies to propose a girl (Manabe, 2010, p.165, para.1). Thus, it can be said that music is a work of art which has existed since long ago.

Recently, music functions not only for the rituals, but also for expressing people's feelings, entertainment, education, and therapy. Music becomes more flourishing because the modern technology serves many supporting media. For example, singers can achieve their popularity not because of their outstanding talent, but because of the promotion role of mass media, both printed and electronic. The more popular the singers, the greater the reward they can get. Nowadays, information technology takes its dominant role. As an example,

individually a singer can make themselves popular through internet like MySpace and Youtube.

1.1.1 Music and Song Lyrics

The ancient musical instruments are taken directly from nature such as drum that is made from wood and animal skins. To produce a good harmony, it is necessary to use such different musical instruments as flutes of different wood blown or even handclapping. The relationship between music and song can be seen through the history of artist's effort to harmonize them. As described in The World Book Encyclopedia (1995, p.40), in a musical group, there will be one leader who reads or sings a phrase and repeats in the chorus, it is then called as the beginning of a song.

Listening to music and songs gives sensations that affect listeners' thoughts or activities. Music and songs are musical compositions which are usually sung by a solo voice and it cannot be separated by the instrument, the tone and lyrics; the combination of these three things makes a song into a pleasant harmony. Another reason why people listen to songs is the beautiful rhythm and also the lyrics that fit to the listeners' feelings. Music and songs are often used as a medium for storytelling and showing the changing of such social condition as daily life, historical memory, human relationship, and the social criticism of the economic, racial, and gender, or sexuality. The audience can get the message of the songs through the song lyrics.

Lyrics certainly have a significant influence to the song, and it is frequently connoted with poetry. Lyrics always relates to the category of poetic literature that is distinguished from narrative and dramatic tale, it is most representative in its sound patterns and is generally characterized by subjectivity and sensuality of expression (Grolier, 2000, p.778). Therefore, the point messages that the singer wants to deliver can be seen through lyrics.

1.1.2 Hip-Hop Music

Music is created to produce harmonious tones and conveys the message as well as creates a special situation for the listeners. The emergence of music in certain area depends on the culture and the social context (MacDonald, 2002).

Hip-Hop music is known as an African-American urban music which emerges because of the influence of minority social condition. African-American refers to American whose ancestors are the member of the Negroid race in Africa.

Rhythmically and harmonically, African-American music is so particular that it is difficult for others to culturally comprehend, perform, and imitate. African-American music contributes to the development of American music today, began from the "folk music" which was used to express the hopes, sorrow, and ordinary people's feeling in everyday lives. Then, it developed to the spirituals which talk about religiosity for Black people, gospel, and Blues music which basically revealed political economy issues and some African-American culture. Other musical genre that comes from African-American is Jazz that was originally used to entertain the "low-class" and the last one is Hip-Hop music which was

originally known for young African-Americans which is now famous throughout the world, Hip-Hop is equally critical of the social situation that is happening (Anderson, 1993, p.256). So mostly, African-American music is used as a means to express what is happening in their community. Besides, music is universal, if the target is for the young generation, Hip-Hop music is in the top of music chart.

1.1.3 Nicki Minaj: A Hip-Hop Singer

A singer is a person who is especially trained or professional vocalist (Grolier, 2000, p.1208). A singer should understand music notation or symbols and adjust the tone to produce a beautiful song. Singers who deliver the messages of the song lyrics also involve their emotion to make the message conveyed. Thus, a song will sound more beautiful if the singer can provide an expression of the song lyrics, for example, in the ballad as the sentimental and romantic song, the singer sings it slowly and dramatically or in Hip-Hop, the singer delivers the message in a striking way to support the messages of the song.

Recently, Hip Hop is a worldwide booming music genre. It is global transformation. The listeners are not just the Blacks but all of kinds of society, Whites, young people, and old people. Undoubtedly, talking about Hip-Hop is not merely about the music but also the culture. Hip-Hop culture also affects the style of art (graffiti), dancing, walking, talking, and also the costume which is usually indicated by such standard style as over sized clothes and pants, Hip-Hop hat, sneakers shoes, and big bling-bling accessories (Bambaataa, 2005). 1970s was pointed out as the rising of Hip-Hop, popularized by Black radio's DJ (Disc

Jockey). Because public liked this new culture, then, it grew until the following year, 1980. During this era, Hip-Hop was merely about up-beat rhythm and fast rapping, and was quite different from recent time which is mostly helped with the remixes of a DJ to provide a good and fresh Hip-Hop music. In this 20th century era, young people prefer unusual things to show their identities. They make different trends such as fashion, conversation, habits, attitude, belief, and music.

Thus, when Nicki Minaj appears in 2009, there are both supporters and haters because people consider her as an unusual figure of Hip-Hop music.

Onika Tanya Maraj, known by her stage name Nicki Minaj was born on December 8, 1984, is a young woman, a Black - American singer. She was born in Trinidad, her parents are mixed Indian and Afro-Trinidadian. In Minaj's early life, she lived in Saint James, Trinidad, with her grandmother until five years old, but then, her parents were looking for a place to live in the Queens, New York City.

According to Minaj, her father drank heavily, took drugs, and once tried to kill her mother by setting the house on fire. While Nicki Minaj was growing up, her life was often chaotic, her parents were constantly fighting and then she used art as means of escapism.

When she grew up, Nicki Minaj was well known as a talented local rapper. She loved to attend art, music, and drama class. A lot of other young female rappers gave an influence to her, friends or neighborhood. It is similar to what she stated in Vibe magazine, "when I grew up I saw females doing certain things, and I thought I had to do that exactly. The female rappers of my day spoke about sex a lot... and I thought that to have the success they got, I would have to

represent the same thing. When in fact I didn't have to represent the same thing"

(Minaj, 2010).

In New York, though Nicki Minaj is a Black, Trinidadian, she is still able to develop her skills, especially in rapping. This is because New York is a multicultural city, so each ethnic group can express each own culture. "The groups that lived in New York were producing a new civilization, not homogeneous or 'Americanised', each group has a full awareness of its own culture. New York is a vantage point of the diversity, rather than any single urban voice, it is similar to the bird's eye view of someone privileged to see all that diversity without actually being part of it" (Kahn, 1995, p.296). Another major influence in New York is the influence of African-American movement that began in Harlem which leads a movement called as Harlem Renaissance that emerged in the beginning of 1920s until 1930s, it was initially to address the issues of racism only. That is why, this movement was a starting point for the rise of African-American community and it can be distinguished by the increasing of popular Black artists who starts being favored by the public.

In 2007, Lil Wayne and Big Rapper, both are famous rappers before Nicki Minaj, discovered her mixtapes uploaded on MySpace. In 2010, Nicki Minaj released her first album *Pink Friday* and it has been certified platinum.

Artists such as Rihanna, Kanye West, Drake, Eminem and more were featured on the album (Moraski, 2012, para.2).

Recently, Nicki Minaj becomes more popular after launching her new album '*Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded*' on April 3, 2012. Beside her undoubtedly

talent, Nicki's popularity as a unique Hip-Hop singer is strongly supported by some factors. Her such eccentric performance as colorful wig, striking outfit, unusual accessories, and exorism make-up makes her the first female rapper who has a unique style. Since people love her songs and performances, then, she successively accepted Grammy's Awards and then performed as the opening singer of the NBA All-Star in which not every singer gets the chance for it. There are also such successful International Hip-Hop singers as Jay Z, Wiz Khalifa, Lil Wayne, Drake, Birdman, Beyonce, Rihanna, Ciara, and Kelly Rowland.

The existence of Nicki Minaj as a newcomer is a phenomenon because she is the only booming female rapper while the others start to disappear. That is why the study on Nicki Minaj's music and the message of her songs are significant to broaden the variety of object materials.

1.2 Problem of the Study

As a young popular rapper, Nicki Minaj represents the African-American's protest against the condition of social life in connecting with economic, gender, and racial issues through the song lyrics. She immently expresses her synical social protest not only to the Whites but also to her own community – the Blacks.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study on Nicki Minaj's song lyrics is aimed to observe the message of Hip-Hop song lyrics especially in terms of the issues voiced by young African-Americans;

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of the research on Nicki Minaj's song lyrics is expected to broaden the perspectives on music and songs of African-American, since African-American songs and music are not simply the product of art but both are the expressions of social life.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

In daily life, people cannot be separated from works of art as a way to express their feelings; one of the works of art is music. According to Morehead, the more specific definition of music would depend on the definer and the period of the history, as the concept of music has changed greatly over the time. Music at present is “the term has a rather broad scope especially in its use by avant-garde classical, jazz and rock musicians” (1992, p.359). Recently, music not only functions as the ancient rituals as expression of their feelings. Additionally, music is used for entertainment, education, therapy, and even for social criticism. One of music genre is Hip-Hop and it is inherently connected to African-American culture as its root.

2.1.1 African Music

The traditional African music is commonly used as a part of rituals in which the implementation is very sacred, such as funeral, religious ceremonies, wedding, or welcoming celebration. “For African, music is seen as a capability that distinguishes humans from other species; there is an idea that music is one of the communication ways between spirits and human” (Danesi, 2010, p.244). The messages of the songs or sacred mantras tell about life or things around them such

as nature, social life, myths and others. Currently, the African music is growing, as written by Levine in her book *Culture and Black Consciousness*, “The Negro songs do not tend to weave narrative elements together to create a story but instead accumulate images to create feelings. These characteristics have made Black song an especially effective medium for complaint, protest, and the venting of frustration” (1977, p.240). Therefore, the African music is for not only the local ceremonies, but also the expression of their feelings and entertainment. The Africans moved to America with their music, initially, they migrated because of the slave trade by the British Colonies throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. Gradually, the music became popular African-American music.

2.1.2 African-American Music

African-American music is strongly influenced by the traditional African music which makes the similar produced sounds. Sound is related to the rhythm and the vocal style which begins from the notion that oral is sacred such as mantra, as well as the message to be conveyed in words (Morehead, 1992, p.510).

The Europeans as the ancestor of Americans also give significant influence for the African music in America; unquestionably, it gives various African-American music genres. As Morehead wrote, “African-American music or African-American music is the music of Blacks American, resulting from a fusion of African and European traditions. The primary modern forms are Jazz and its many relatives, including Blues, Gospel Music, Spiritual, Rhythm and Blues, Rap and Soul Music” (1992, p.7).

Since the members of urban communities are not from one group only, this definitely impacts the cultural life of its society that exists in the region.

Culture in this case, is the music that emerges in each group as a minority including Black Americans. Related to Levine's idea that, "Music remained an integral part of Black communities and culture, especially when they are contrasted to neighboring racial and ethnic group" (1977, p.203). Thus, with its development, Levine found out that "the Negro secular song is also used as a medium of protest" (1977, p.239).

2.1.3 Song and Singer

In general sense, music is always related to instrument. The word "instrument", originally, is "a German term for a keyboard string instrument, the word now applies to any device for making music" (Morehead, 1992, p.246). The developed music is not merely a play of the instrument, but also the songs with the lyrics inside, which is the written language or message of the song.

1) Song

A song is the act or process of singing or a work intended to be sung especially a work of one or more voices, accompanied or unaccompanied by an instrument. According to Morehead, "The most common use of the term is for a work of solo voice with piano accompaniment, but in popular music, it is a musical work whether instrumental or vocal" (1992, p.508).

2) Singer

If the previous explanation is on a song, then the next will be about the singer who has a very important role in a song because the singer is a performer who uses his or her voice to entertain and interpret music and lyrics. Grolier defines singer as, “a person who is especially trained or professional vocalist” (Grolier, 2000, p.1208). A singer has a vocal role in music that is very precise and

should make a dual production of language and music to convey the message. As Barthes purposed, there is a way for the singer to describe a song which is called *Pheno-song*,

It is the *pheno-song* which covers all the phenomena, all the features which belong to the structure of the language being sung, the rules of the genres ... everything in the performance which is in the service of communication, representation, expression, everything which it is customary talk about, which forms the issues of cultural values, which takes its bearing directly on the ideological alibis of period (subjectivity, expressivity, dramaticism, personality of the artist) (1977, p.181).

Thus, a singer who wanted to convey the message of a song should understand the meaning on the lyrics. Because the story of the song is represented through the lyrics by its language style.

2.1.4 Hip-Hop as an Urban Art

Hip-Hop has become famous in popular culture during the past few decades. Like many other popular culture, such as rock and roll music, Hollywood films, popular novels, and television, Hip-Hop is both the reflection of the culture from which it is performed, as well as the influence to the social criticism of its

listeners. According to Morehead, “Hip-Hop is a type of African-American urban art of the 1970s and 1980s, incorporating elements of Rap and Funk music, break dancing and street art or graffiti” (1992, p.231). The most popular part of Hip-Hop culture is the music which is called Hip-Hop music or Rap. Hip-hop is mostly known as the young African-American music and its typical style of fast - singing (rapping), up-beat rhythm and breakdance.

Originally, Hip-Hop is not the Blacks’. Not all the pioneers of Hip-Hop are African-Americans, such as the pioneers of breakdancing who are young Hispanic and the pioneer of Graffiti who is a young Greek, but since most of Urban people are the Blacks, then the ones who popularized it were Blacks (Bambaataa, 2005, p.116). Hip-Hop music is quiet dominant among young Blacks, many talents and abilities that must be accommodated and routed on the right way or field, and then Hip-Hop music emerged with a special purpose. Namely, to enclose the talents, opinions and spirit of the Blacks. As Anderson affirms that, “Rap was imitated by urban youth gangs who sought positive diversion from violence and drug abuse” (1993, p.267). Blacks found that music and dance are therapeutic in their struggle for against racism and oppression. Hence, Hip-hop itself was originally aimed at rising youth who initially had a positive purpose for them to express their hobby at the positive way through musical ability, singing, dancing, painting and others.

Rap or Hip-Hop music becomes one of Black music contribution to American popular culture.

In early years, Hip-Hop music or Rap spread all over the world with various missions, it is not only to enclose the talents, but to protest, to criticize the

environment and social conditions, and to entertain. At the beginning, the male musicians are dominant, but now in the 20th century, some hip-hop female singers are rising such as Missy Elliot, Lauryn Hill, Eve, and Nicki Minaj. Some of Minaj's songs, *Did It On 'Em*, *Miss Independent*, *Stupid Ho*, *Champion*, *Fly* and *Y U Mad* talk about such social conditions criticism as economic, gender and racial issues, and the starting point of the social conditions experienced by Blacks because of the social oppression.

1) Social Oppression

Social oppression is a basic reason that describes a dominance and subordination in the society which wants to take benefit from the exploitation of the others. Levine states that social oppression is related to the racial issue; the social condition of minority as the effect of American racial patterns, upon Negro psychic, and emotional development (1977, p.239). The African-Americans were discriminated almost in any field beyond the racial things, as stated by Anderson, another basis is "the lack of adequate education, technological training, and job skills. The Blacks do not generally possess the right qualifications that will enable them to increase their economic" (1993, p.241). This condition affects not only the Blacks' economic life, but also their social life instance of increased rates of crime, delinquency, violence, drug, alcohol abuse, and family breakups.

Since Blacks are regarded as the inferior in America, they do not have any chance to speak and show their abilities as equal as the other members of society.

The African-American cannot take a part in political activities like the Whites. That is why African-Americans use art as a medium to express their feeling.

Baker indicates that “art seemed to offer the only means of advancement because it was the only area in America from an African-American perspective where the color had not been rigidly drawn, then the African-American adopted arts as a domain of hope and an area of possible progress” (1999, p.267). This began when the renaissance artist and writer did the *Black Arts Movement* in 1960s.

2) The Blacks’ Expression and Aesthetics

The Blacks’ Aesthetics refers to the *Black Arts Movement* which is the period of artistic and literary development among Black American culture and life in the 1960s and early 1970s. The Black Aesthetic is a medium to facilitate Blacks’ ideals, solidarity, and creativity. Anderson (1993) identified that Blacks Aesthetics reflect the historical, social, political, and economic forces that have shaped over the time. The Blacks aesthetics has influenced the cultural and social complex of American society, the music, song, dance, and rhetoric of African-Americans are appreciated and imitated all over the world.

The first major arts movement publication was in 1964, as common as the *New Negro Movement*. During the *New Negro Movement*, the African-Americans were advanced in visual and performing art and it was the product of movement which was one of the most important times in African-American literary works, it made the Blacks makes their own publishing houses and art institutions. The Black arts contributes to the multiculturalism movement that persuades people, especially minority or racial ethnic to do something to show their voice, background, and history.

Theatre groups, poetry performances, music, and dance were centered on this movement, and therefore, African-Americans were recognized in the area of literature and arts. African American performances were used for their own political advertisement, organization, and community issues beside this movement were spread by the use of newspaper advertisements. As Anderson affirms that “this movement was the period when Blacks broke away from tradition and developed a revitalized sense of racial pride and self expression” (1993, p.253).

2.1.5 Song Lyrics as an Art

In a song, lyric is very important to understand because as the listeners, we can receive the messages and interpreting the content of the song. Lyrics originally refer to poetry that is written to be sung to a lyre (Webster, 1982, p.846), in ancient Greek it is called *Lyrikos* which means melodic word. In ancient people such as African tribes, lyrics are phrases spoken by the leader of a ritual or a ceremony containing the history, myth, nature, spirits and their cultures. However, according to Reaske (1966), “lyric designates a short poem which emphasizes the expression of the individual feelings and emotions rather than external events or attitudes”. Lyric is written, clearly visible and when it is sung, it will lead to some possible responses from the listeners.

Hence, the elements of the lyric composition such as choice of words or diction and the way to employ them takes dominant role in giving the significance of the message.

1) Diction

Not only an author, a song lyrics composer also needs to use some dictions to show any emotion inside the lyrics to the readers or listeners. This is in line with Reaske's argument that, "diction is the use of words in poetry ... the stylistic and tonal qualities of the words which the poet has chosen" (1966, p.31). A literary work will be more precious if the author successfully involves the readers or listeners in the literary works. The author should select the word or vocabulary which is appropriate to the situation. In order to raise the imagination of the devotee of literary works, the author uses various dictions causing a connotation meaning which beautifies the literary work.

2) Connotation

In writing the song lyric as an art, the composers also often use the connotation in his work because it can enrich and beautify the work produced. Reaske states that connotation is "one of the various implications or associations that a word carries, a poet uses the connotations of a word to his own purposes and advantage" (1966, p.29). Besides using the connotation, to beautify the language used in writing a work of literature, there is also another technique: Defamiliarization as seen in the following explanation.

3) Defamiliarization Technique

Defamiliarization is a literary technique which is introduced by Russian Formalist Victor Shklovsky's. This technique is to make the familiar things become unfamiliar and how to make language become literary. The concept of defamiliarization is to make poetry poetic, and the purpose is "to set the mind in a

state of radical unpreparedness, to cultivate the willing suspension of disbelief because without imagery there is no art” (Lodge, 1988, p.17).

Defamiliarization is applied in the African-American music either, for example the Blues as the labor songs, sacred harmonies, political commentary and ribald humor is a code of African-American cultural signifying. Baker said, “the African-Americans more often embody personal comment and reaction and put their messages across” (1984, p.5). In connecting with defamiliarization technique, Levine found that African-American songs are typically metaphor and line rather than the plot, they are not telling explicit, chronological, and developed stories (1977, p.240). Thus many of African-American songs have deeper meaning than ordinary songs. One of the reasons is because they use their everyday language as African-American in conveying a message of the song.

2.2 Previous Studies

One of the previous studies on Hip-Hop music was performed by Alyssa S. Woods from the University of Michigan, entitled *Rap Vocality and the Construction of Identity* (2009). Woods used musical codes and conventions in the Hip-Hop or Rap to explore gender and race which are expressed vocally through music and lyric convention. The results of Woods’s study is that MCs’ vocality has a close relationship with gender and identity. MC-ing is the action of saying words by following the music beat. The conclusion here that rap’s conventions are primarily coded as Black and male which portrays Black men as oversexed and dangerous. In contrast to the image of the female rapper, they tend to assert their

sexuality and independence. In this dissertation, Woods emphasize on the understanding the ways of MCing in which these vocal practices are tied to race and gender.

A research by Dror Cohen from the University of the Witswatersrand Johannesburg, *The role of Rap / Hip Hop music in the maintenance of meaning and identity in South African youth* (2008), focuses on the identity of young people relating to the influences of Hip-Hop music in South Africa. Whereas a study on Hip-Hop music in connecting with media was done by Autumn B. Lewis, BA. in 2003 from Georgetown University. Lewis observed Hip-Hop in relating to crime and poverty, and the role of media which influence public discourse about Rap and Hip-Hop. This study concludes that several media indicates the negativity of gangsta rap in the essence of citing rap music as the root of declining moral values. The media considers that violence and crime arise because of the influence of rap music, whereas, for minority groups, it is just a means to express what they feel through music. This representation has a direct impact not only on the overall public perception of African-Americans but also on the self-image of the group.

From these previous studies, it can be said that exploring social criticism in Hip-Hop music especially highlighted by a young woman rapper, Nicki Minaj, through her song lyrics is a pioneer research, especially in Literature Department, Faculty of Culture Studies, Universitas Brawijaya.

2.3 Research Method

The way used in conducting the study, comprises of two main points as follows.

2.3.1 Deciding the Object Material

There are six songs of Nicki Minaj out of twenty eight songs will be observed, “*Did It On ‘Em*”, “*Miss Independent*”, “*Stupid Ho*”, “*Champion*”, “*Fly*” and “*Y U Mad*” chosen as the object materials, because they strikingly talk about Blacks social problem.

2.3.2 Analyzing and Interpreting Nicki Minaj’s Song Lyrics

In this activity, there are three steps taken:

- 1) This research is focused on the meaning of the diction used in the six lyrics chosen. This analysis leads to the interpretation because if talking about meaning, “it is primarily about the significance of its message” (Reaske, 1966, p.36).
- 2) After catching the meaning of the words used in the six song lyrics, the interpretation is executed by relating the lyrics to the classification of the issues highlighted: Blacks and Whites, men and women, and women and women.
- 3) From these three classifications, the messages of the social criticism of Nicki Minaj’s song lyrics will be described.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Work of art is not only universal that can be accepted by all kind of groups, but also individual. Such work of art as music reveals the identity of the artist. Thus, music becomes an easy alternative means and is used by people to express feelings. From music, people can catch the message from the lyrics that exists in a song.

Recently, the genre of music is varied. The messages conveyed are not only about beautiful things but also about the culture of certain society. In this globalization era, the most influential genre that criticize the social condition is Hip-Hop that is commonly known as Rap, as stated by Williams that, "Rap is the most representative form of Hip-Hop" (2009, p.1, para 2). The influence of Rap or Hip-Hop music is prolific as seen in movies, fashion, and the music industry. Rap or Hip-Hop music is considered more than just a form of music but a lifestyle (Cohen, 2008, p.9, para.1). Seeing the new genre of music, first Hip-Hop music shows predominant development in America, the most common social protest conveyed in Hip-Hop music is usually about social values, moral and ethical parameters, gender inequality, sexism or misogyny, class conflict, intergenerational dissonance, and the antagonisms of racial problem in America.

These issues can be easily found in the song lyrics of Hip-Hop music and one of the striking protests is sung by Nicki Minaj. Nicki Minaj has given new color in the Hip-Hop industry since 2009. She reaches the peak of her career from

her amateur video taken by the professional Rapper, her collaboration songs with famous singers, and her latest album which has just launched sold over 253.000 copies. Her songs are often in the highest Billboard Chart. This achievement proves that Nicki Minaj is a popular Rapper and 2012 is her triumphal year.

Minaj's Hip-Hop music is managed to produce a new and fresh without leaving messages on social criticism. The social criticisms discussed are races, classes, and sexes which are related to the Blacks and the Whites, Men and Women, and Women and Women. The six songs of Nicki Minaj that strikingly talk about Blacks social problems are, "*Miss Independent*", "*Did It On 'em*", "*Stupid Ho*", "*Champion*", "*Fly*" and "*Y U Mad*". The social criticism of these songs covers three problems: problem between Blacks and Whites, men and women, and women and women.

3.1 Blacks and Whites

Social issues between Blacks and Whites clarify the background for the oppression suffered by Blacks, starts from the racial differences to other social aspects, especially in economic field. This can be seen in Nicki Minaj's songs entitled "*Champion*" and "*Fly*".

3.1.1 The Racial and Gender Issues: The Core Issues between Blacks and Whites

Talking about Blacks and Whites is surely referring to the racial problem, the basis of such Black problems as discrimination and stereotype experienced by the African-American in social life. Physical and skin

discrimination tone affects their lives. Since hundreds years ago, African-American has always been considered as the inferior, the slavery that made a bad impression arises in the minds of African-American until today. Due to racial issues, they are considered as a minority. As Anderson affirm that “African-Americans do not have a decent life and ministry, and they do not get a decent education as well as employment, they lack of resources” (1993).

To make the condition worse, the problem raised is not the racial issue only, but also gender issues experienced by Black women: the increasing of the negative actions, such as prostitute, drugs seller and thief. Moreover, they also become the victims of various groups of society such as White and Black men, White women, and among their own group: Black women. “Black men view Black women only as sex objects, as impediments to our progress, as our enemies ... White society ... Black women dating back to slavery: that Black women are immoral, oversexed, greedy for money and material things, and never to be trusted” (Powell, 2003, p.121). Therefore, Herminingrum in her research on Black women comes to a conclusion that “of in slavery era Black women were commodity of Whites, more than one hundred years aftermath they are commodity of their men” (2010, p.234). Everything is related to one another, such as differences in race, gender discrimination, and the existence of economic classes in society and these matters are exposed by Nicki Minaj through her songs.

3.1.2 The Issues of the Blacks and the Whites

Since Blacks are regarded as the inferior in America, they do not have any chance to speak and show their abilities as equal as the other members of society and they cannot take a part in political activities like the Whites. This certainly affects to poor economical condition and Blacks violence in the communities. When people have no resources and choices, they have no hope. As a result, there are so many African-Americans who continue to live in poverty, crime and do negative actions. For example, they turn into black market activities, sell drugs, and become robbers.

In a song "*Champion*" by Minaj, the idea about this condition is clearly visible. Minaj wants to show to the world that she is a Black woman who begins to rise and does not want to be discriminated by others, as seen in this following lyric.

This is celebration, this is levitation
Look at how you winning now, this took dedication
This is meditation, higher education
This the official competitor elimination
I was taking trips with Web to move weight,
Came back to queens then hit up a new state
Bitches don't know the half like they flunked at math
Bitches ain't have cut up crack up in the stash
(*Champion*, line 1-8; see Appendix 2)

In a part of this lyric, there are no explicit words or dictions stereotyped the Blacks as a rude and violent group. "Today is the celebration and levitation" (line 1), refers to the Blacks', and it seems that Minaj wants to show how significant the changes experienced by Blacks. The word "celebration" in the first line which refers to "mark a happy and important day", and "levitation"

refers to “spiritual power” shows the celebration of the growth of "self-pride" of the Black people, as the impact of *New Negro Movement* in 1964. “The period when Blacks broke away from tradition and developed a revitalized sense or racial pride and self expression” (Anderson, 1993, p.253). Since then, Blacks continuously struggle for equality, which is cannot be obtained easily. The previous lyrics also signify that it takes a long time for Blacks to get any victories.

The word "dedication" indicates that Blacks have to devote self, time, effort, to a good cause or purpose.

In this song, Minaj shows a real example, as a woman, Minaj successfully has an equal position as the Whites in the field of art, singing or rapping. The evidence is that her works are favored by many people, not just the Blacks. This argument is supported by the conclusion of Oneka LaBennett’s interview with Minaj saying that any award won by Minaj cannot be separated from the support of her fans which actually came from various backgrounds.

Events, shows, and tours are always full of fans, regardless of gender, skin color, and age (msmagazine, 2012). Other evidence that people like Minaj’s works is also indicated by her argument in an interview with Capital FM (2012) "I don't ask girls to wear pink hair; they just do it. It's not about Black or White". The successful of Minaj shown in the line "I was taking trips with the Web to move weight" (line 5). This line shows that Minaj’s career started from a website. At first, she was a local rapper in her hometown, Queens. Then her friend uploaded Minaj’s video to the Website, MySpace, so that Minaj’s talent was found by a famous rapper. And now, she succeeded as equal as other parties through Hip-

Hop industry (Moraski, 2012). Minaj's current popularity also made her name famous overseas, not just in her hometown only, it is supported by the 6th line, "Came back to Queens then hit up a new state". After Minaj successfully makes a mixtapes with a record company, she tries to distributed it in her homelands, followed by positive responses, Minaj goes to broader region, the United States and became popular around the world. Here, Minaj wanted to show that Blacks could achieve success, which actually has nothing to do with skin color. Either Blacks or Whites, will both have success as long as they want to try and get the same opportunities as other groups.

Another Black social criticism dealing with the stereotype against Blacks is on the importance of education. The part of "meditation, higher education" (line 3), affirms that Nicki Minaj as a Black does not want to be called as a stupid person who does not concern with the importance of education. Therefore, she hopes that Black people will get education facilities, as well as encourage them to realize that education is important. By getting proper education they can be equal to Whites. Within her career, there are some parties who do not really like Minaj's developments in Hip-Hop Industry, as in line 7 and 8, "Bitches don't know the half like they flunked at math / Bitches ain't have cut up crack up in the stash". "Bitches" is interpreted as a Black woman who does not like the presence of Minaj because she is a success Black female Rapper, though, people who hate Minaj do not know about her life and struggle to get this popularity.

In the second verse, Minaj slightly shows the difficulty of living as Blacks in America. Besides living in a poor condition, they are often associated to

criminal matters. The sentence "It's that run and get a dollar for a ice cream cone" (*Champion*, line 11). "Dollar" is the currency unit of the United States of American (Hornby, 1982, p.257), but in slang language, according to Ratiophi, dollar is the widely accepted unit of money: happiness (2004). The connection between this song and social condition is, Blacks need to struggle, work hard to finance their lives, face any difficulties when they are discriminated. In everyday life, the ownership of money means a lot in determining of social status. So that Blacks are no longer treated differently. But the analogy of the lyrics shows, even to buy ice cream, Blacks have to work very hard because in fact they are regarded as the "number two" therefore, they are suffered from discrimination in various aspects of life. This reminder emerges partly because of Minaj's personal bad experience, as written in the third version of her lyrics, "'Cause they killed my little cousin Nicholas / But my memory's only happy images / This is for the hood, this is for the kids / This is for the single mothers, niggas doing biz" (*Champion*, line 12-15). This verse tells about Nicki Minaj's cousin named Nicholas Telemaque, 27 years old. He was shot at 2.40am after leaving a nightclub near his home on East Flatbush, Brooklyn. He was taken to Kings County Hospital but died on the way. The local police said that Telemaque is a member of Gangs, however, the closest family is doubtful about the police press release. Minaj thought that he was not treated fairly because the competition was considered as the case between the gangsters and the wrong target shooting (Fisher, 2011, para.2).

Minaj says, the death of her cousin cannot be considered as the hindrance but she must continue to strive to raise the Blacks' equality. So she gets lots of music awards for each of her works. "But my memory's only happy images" (*Champion*, line 13) is a remembrance of Minaj's past painful experiences like the death of Telemaque. It is not an obstacle for her career, but Minaj uses it as a spirit to change Blacks' negative stereotype. Positive thinking makes Minaj focus on the good things so that she remains optimistic and win many music awards indicating her success. It is derived from a hard work, not a skin color. As well as the person is a hard worker, he or she will be a successful person without being racist. This success is addressed to all parties with an emphasis "for the hood, for the kids", "single mothers", and "Niggaz doing biz". These three phrases are Black woman labels. According to Rosaldo and Lamphere (1974), "the hood and the kids" refers to, Blacks' peers and young children, while the "single mother" refers to married Black women but should care of the whole family alone, a single parent household, because their husbands are unemployment or committed in crime. While the term for "Niggaz doing biz" shows the masculinity and superiority of Black man. Whereas "Biz" itself is "show business, a term used by the self-consciously theatrical, originating as 'show biz' in the style of journalese popularized by Variety Magazine" (Thorne, 1990, p.42).

Within the line, the success of Minaj focuses on three important parts in the social life of African-American, "the hoods", "Single mothers" and "Niggaz doing biz". In general, they are highlighted on the socio-economic discrimination.

Discrimination originates since the super class considers Blacks as inferior and incapable to do anything. "The hood" or young Blacks, many of them do not get proper educational facilities that embodies their talents, so that they move to street crime. Minaj wants to show that with the right ways and places, young Blacks could be helpful as their counterparts: the Whites. For "Single mother" as the single parent who have always had such an obvious role in black economic development. Although they must live her family, many of them do not get proper treatments for their needs. And the latter is to "Niggaz doing biz", many Black men who do not work because of the skin color discrimination, they are considered unemployed, lazy and doing crime. Minaj is a picture of success for all of them, so they keep trying to bring a better life, the prosperity is not determined by their race.

In chorus part, "It's a celebration / Put it up for the ghetto / It's time like these / They know who we are by now / They know who we are / Champion, a champion" (*Champion*, line 18-23). The sentence "It's a celebration, Put it up for the ghetto" (*Champion*, line 18) has significant message. The use of the subject "we" is to emphasize that this song, which points to the success of Blacks. According to Hill, when the constructed "we" is threatened by "otherness", then, negative reporting is the logical outcome. Hip-Hop culture has historically been misunderstood and consequently labeled as "otherness" (1999, p. 105) and this is closely related to "Ghetto". Ghetto is an area of mainly lived in by a particular social group, an entire ethnic or economically depressed group, as an alienated area for minorities, and it is very familiar with the development of Hip-Hop

music. Minaj herself grows up at Ghetto, however, she successfully reaches her achievement from this bad, ignorance and crime place. In addition, Minaj also wants to show to people inhabited Ghetto that they are also capable to celebrate their victory moment as long as they try hard.

One of the songs sung by Nicki Minaj as a protest of Blacks is entitled "*Fly*". Through the lyrics, Minaj shows her position as Blacks, past life cannot be separated from despair and working hard to achieve success.

I wish today it will rain all day
Maybe that will kinda make the pain go away
Trying to forgive you for abandoning me
Praying but I think I'm still an angel away
Angel away, yeah strange in a way
Maybe that is why I chase strangers away
They got their guns out aiming at me
But I become Neo when they're aiming at me
Me, me, me against them
Me against enemies, me against friends
Somehow they both seem to become one
A sea full of sharks and they all smell blood
They start coming and I start rising
Must be surprising, I'm just summising
I win, thrive, soar, higher, higher, higher
More fire
(*Fly*, Line 5-20; see Appendix 3)

In the first and second lines, "I wish today it will rain all day / Maybe that will kinda make the pain go away" (*Fly*, line 5-6). Rain replenishes the land and takes out the waste from the land. Minaj figuratively wishes that her life may be cleared of the waste; the pain of her past has brought on her life. The word "go away" (*Fly*, line 6) emphasizes that she is eager to forget all bitter experiences. In connecting with her root, Blacks have been suffered since the first time. The pain as a part of poor society, miserable life, and considered as "the other". But in the

next lines, Minaj tries to forgive those who have hurt her. According to her personal life, Minaj wants to forgive her father, he was a severe drug addict with a long history of violence and failed attempt to kill Minaj's mother (Moraski, 2012, para.1), but in general, she wants to forgive all of the people who left her when she was dropped before this success.

Through the lines "Praying but I think I'm still an angel away / Angel a way, yeah strange in a way" (*Fly*, line 8-9). Minaj shows her spiritual side.

"Angel" is the messenger from God (Hornby, 1982, p.30). Hence, as a Black woman, she believes in God. In her days, she keeps praying for herself and others, but she feels that it is not enough. She still worries about her life and her future. In music industry, a Black woman still regarded as inferior, that is why Minaj meets a lot of obstacles, even the obstacles are her friends. But Minaj does not give up but keep fighting; as shown in the lines "They got their guns out aiming at me / But I become Neo when they're aiming at me / Me, me, me against them / Me against enemies, me against friends / Somehow they both seem to become one" (*Fly*, line 11-15). When people try to stop Minaj, she tries to avoid it. It is

indicated by how Minaj positioned herself as Neo. Neo is a well-known figure in action film *The Matrix Trilogy* who is famous for his action in dodges the bullets in slow motion (RapGenius, 2012). Hence, Minaj positioned herself as Neo in *The Matrix*, so she can avoid the attacks of her competitors properly. The meaning of "Neo" itself is the new thing or "the one" (Urban Dictionary, 2010, para.2)

therefore, Minaj calls herself as a new Hip-Hop star that chosen as "the one", so no one can compete her. Moreover, sometimes Minaj finds difficulties to

distinguish between friends and opponents because both parties try to preclude her career. As a Black woman, the discriminating parties are not just the Whites, but also her own people, Blacks, the man and woman. They are compete to show their power as well.

Minaj also employs imagery, “sea full of sharks and they all smell blood”. Imagery is “images, pictures, or sensory content, which we find in a poem in terms of our sense” (Reaske, 1966, 34). The meaning of “Sharks” is “sea-fish, some kinds of which are large and dangerous” (Hornby, 1982, p.785) but Shark in slang language is a “confidence trickster, a parasite” (Green, 1998, p.1055).

Therefore it can be concluded that “Shark” is bad people who are ready to do anything for what they want, even to impose Nicki Minaj’s success. When the bad people try invading her, Minaj does not give up. She prefers not listening to them and keeping work hard until she succeeds as nowadays.

In Minaj’s personal experience, in relating to the history of Blacks, she has tough period in her life against Whites’ discrimination. Although the Blacks were regarded as the inferior, Minaj believes that now is the time to break the stereotype. Through her songs, Nicki Minaj wants to show that the Blacks can get through the obstacles. This argument is supported by Rihanna's version, “I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive / I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise / to fly / to fly” (*Fly*, line 21-24). The use of “I” makes the song sound very personal and catches the audience’s attention. “I” as a figure who feels confident that she can overcome the obstacles.

In her songs, Minaj criticizes the unequal life between the Whites' and the Blacks'. Minaj mostly raises the issue of skin color, the efforts to get equality, and shows off what has already achieved now. The highlighted thing in the songs is about economic, and it is not only about the form of Black's protest because of their suffer but also as a form to show their success. And it is all conveyed in the upbeat and provocative lyrics to make the listeners believe that they can get what they want. The language used in these two songs is also straightforward, because no meaningful slang is used.

3.2 Men and Women

Gender and economic issues are highlighted in Nicki Minaj's songs, entitled "*Miss Independent*" and "*Did It On 'Em*". Gender, is the background for the emergence of other social problem between Black men and women which is closely related to economic issues.

3.2.1 The Gender Issue: The Core Issue between Black Man and Black Woman

From the historical background, Black men and women experienced different modes of socialization or treatment because of slavery, racism, and discrimination from the Whites perspectives (Anderson, 1993, p130). Between Black men and women, the most suffered sex is the women, because the position of women is often regarded as "the other" or second sex in comparison to men. Men are identified as those who make a living and do the heavy job while the women are identified as gentle, soft, and weak, so, women are mostly assigned as

a mothers and wives who do the housework all the time, moreover, they are considered as passive sexual objects for men (Rosaldo & Lamphere, 1974, p.1).

Men tend to have more prestige than women because they are usually associated to dominant social roles.

This description also exists in some Hip-Hip songs, masculinity or the role of men is very dominant, especially described by male Rappers rather than by the female Rappers. Masculinity is included in the themes which often discuss about the power of men, their economical possession and their case in womanizing. This can be found in several versions of duet partner of Nicki Minaj, such as the song entitled *Y U Mad*. In a featuring songs that sung by female and male Rappers, the male Rapper's part is usually written by the male rapper himself, so the style of language is closed to the characteristics of their everyday language; rude, harsh, and aggressive. Just like in Birdman verse "Triple OG nigga, these hoes know me" (*Y U Mad*, line 23). The "Triple OG", "OG" stands for "original gangster" and the "triple OG" is a higher level of being an OG (Brown, 2011, para.2). Birdman shows his position as a man who is very powerful to rule everything. He also uses other ways to show his superiority by mentioning

Black woman as "Hoes" is shorten of "whore" or prostitute (Thorne, 1990, p.561).

Then Lil' Wayne version,

I bet I can turn her pussy to a fucking fire hydrant
And I do it for my niggas, my muthafucking niggas
Cause these hoes so thirsty like they got the fucking hiccups
I am beast hoe, to say the least hoe
(*Y U Mad*, Line 43-46; see Appendix 7)

From the lyrics, Lil Wayne uses women as the objects of sexuality by mention "Pussy" several times which is female genital in slang language. The part "her pussy to a fucking fire hydrant" is also a connotation of sexual activities demeaning the Black woman's position. Later, same as Birdman, Lil Wayne also uses "hoe" as a term for Black woman. In the last line, Wayne says that "I am beast hoe, to say the least hoe". "The beast" is a person who is very good in something (Urban Dictionary, 2004, para.1), while the "least" is something which is very bad (Thorne, 1990, p309). The emphasis of Wayne as the beast, or man who is good in something is a mirror how a man tries to dominate the woman as the least. Men are regarded as the most powerful party in society, while the female is the number two.

The condition of Black women as inferior has been running since long ago. As well as in African societies, in several rituals, the men become the leaders who lead the ceremony while the women become follower and have fewer responsibilities. As said by Lloyd (1965) that women may control a good part of the food supply, accumulate cash, and trade in distant and important markets; yet when approaching their husbands, wives must feign ignorance and obedient, kneeling to serve the men as they sit.

Now, in modern era, Black women do not really talk about discrimination and exploitation by men, but they talk about their existence as women in term of discrimination in employment, private day-care centers, and improved Health-care facilities. It is important for women be aware of gender

inequality in economical, social, and political. Moreover, women must find a way to voice their opinions so that they are not colonized by the men.

Men are symbolized as having power while women are formed and displayed as passive objects for men's consumption. Male Rappers' lyrics and video clips often show Black women models swinging, dancing, and wearing sexy underwear as a form of sexual exploitation or misogynist on woman body. These images, lyrics, and music are often violent, hyper masculine, and misogynist as the stereotype that women cannot do anything except in sexual terms.

It is described not only based on the stereotypes of physical looks and gender roles, but also based on the influence of social circumstances that require man to be rich, to gain higher position of the environment related to patriarchal systems. The pictures of masculinity are not only tied to race, but also to socio-economic status. Black masculinity in the Hip-Hop music sphere is tied to the hood, the ghetto, and the streets. Even with the more recent trend of Rappers who openly display wealth, there is an understanding that they have to work hard to become rich (Woods, 2009, p.113 para.2). This opinion is also supported by Byron Hurt's discussion in *Beyond Beats and Rhymes*, (2006) "in hip-hop you have to fit into a box to be considered masculine, you have to be strong, tough, have a lot of girls, you have to have money, be a player or pimp, be in control, dominate other men, other people". That is why, the connection between Black men and women in Nicki Minaj's song lyrics is emphasized more to economic issues.

3.2.2 The Economic Issue: In Connecting to Black Men and Black Women

As stated in Minaj's song "*Miss Independent*" featuring Ne-Yo who popular in 2008, "*Miss Independent*" is a duet with Ne-Yo, a male Rapper. This song shows the strength of Minaj as a Black woman. At the opening of this song, she does the MCing followed by the main vocals, Ne-Yo. It seems that Minaj wants to take a control on her position by the role of vocals and also the lyrics; as seen below

You wanna please me then get down for ya crown
You know they call me Downtown Julie Brown
I get a lot, get alot head
I get a lot of fades and I get a lot dreads
See I be in the town closin' million dollars deals up
Real nice view with my million dollar heels up
(*Miss Independent*, line 1-6; see Appendix 4)

The part of the lyrics is about woman who has a power, "You wanna please me then get down for ya crown / You know they call me Downtown Julie Brown". The first line indicates that, female Blacks are the ones who have to satisfy the man, but the emphasized words "You" for man and "me" for the woman, signifies that Minaj as woman has a special position. Literally, the meaning of "crown" is an ornamental headdress of gold, jewels, worn by a sovereign ruler (Hornby, 1982, p.207). But in slang, Green verifies that, "crown" refers male genital (1998, p.295). Therefore, it can be concluded that "crown" here is the rule or the power of man over woman. In reality, woman is considered as powerless, so she is often tricked by man. At first, the woman will be treated well, but in the end, the man will force her to obey his demand as a form of domination. However, Minaj argues that as a woman she cannot be treated like

that because she is a successful independent young Black woman. Then, in the second part, she calls herself a "Julie Brown". Julie Brown is an English actress and former MTV VJ, known as Jamaican. She is one of the successful Black women in the entertainment world in the 1980s era (RapGenius, 2009, para.1).

Therefore, Minaj represents herself as Julie Brown – a successful Black woman in Hip-Hop World.

The following line "See I be in the town closin 'million dollars deals up" informs that Minaj has successfully attracted the attention of music interest.

Since her emergence in 2009 as a local Rapper in Queens, she can manage herself to an international Rapper when the male Rapper like Kanye West, Jay Z and Lil Wayne dominate this era. In 2012, Minaj wins many awards such as Grammy, performs on classy events like NBA All-Star, and joints in collaboration with MAC Cosmetics Company. Besides gaining popularity, she earns abundance of material as described in "real nice view with my million dollar heels up".

Tell the DJ Nicki Minaj said to reel up rewind
Ya'll never met a muthafuckin' boss this fine
I get my own thing, my own bloodclot thing
That's why they call me misses badda bing, badda bing
(*Miss Independent*, line 7-10; see Appendix 4)

From the parts of the lyrics above, in the first line, the "reel up rewind" meaning is similar to "keep playing". Here, Minaj called the DJs, the person who plays songs, to keep playing her recordings, therefore people will keep listening to Minaj's songs and increase her popularity. In the second line Minaj calls herself as "muthafuckinboss" to show that she is the boss or the leader, and emphasizes on "I get my own thing, my own bloodclot thing / That's why they

call me misses badda bing, badda bing” (*Miss Independent*, line 9). As a young Black woman, Minaj is able to support her own life, work hard, pay bills, and buy all her needs. The “Bloodclot” is a Jamaican’s curse word that can sometimes be used the way as “fuck” (Thorne, 1990, p.46). That is why, people around her called Minaj as “Miss Badda Bing”. “Badda” which actually refers to bad, but according to Thorne, bad in certain cases is similar with good (1990, p.20). While “Bing” is a word used to express something that cannot be expressed by words in positive meaning (Urban Dictionary, 2009, p.1). Therefore, Minaj describes herself as the most successful and talented young Black woman. For her partner life, she will look for a rich man; “I’m lookin’ for a king with some good ding a ling / Big truck, beenie man, throw some sim, sima in” (*Miss Independent*, line 11-12). Ding a ling “crazy or foolish person” (Thorne, 1990, p.133), Beenie in Jamaican slang is small (Meex, 2008, para.1), and sima is “A really smart school girl” (falcon, 2004, para.1). Hence, Minaj prefers to choose a wealthy and fun person for her life partner. Man who can understand her position as a smart and successful young Black woman.

The lyrics above is a protest of Minaj to fight the notion that as a Black woman, usually considered as passive and part of the lowest level in the society, and the Black woman can only count on men to fulfill her. Keyes affirms (2002) “woman in Black music is directed against the objectification of female sexuality within patriarchal order”. That is why, as a Black woman, Minaj also imitates male Rapper’s languages to show that she is self-assured and stronger, like she could hold her own on the microphone. As Keyes quotes Sparky Dee,

“you have to become hard and aggressive, if you come soft, you get booed of the stage, and you cannot smile – because smiling indicates vulnerability” (2002, p.208).

The following lyric is sung by Ne-Yo, as Minaj’s duet partner. Ne-Yo chooses the diction which is not commonly used by a male Rapper, such as the use of quick verbal skills, violent, and sexually explicit content. His diction is gentle and the stereotype that African-American men should be rich and powerful is not highlighted in the song entitled "Miss Independent". “There's somethin' about her / Kinda woman that want you but don't need you / 'Cause she walk like a boss / Talk like a boss / She's fly effortlessly / And she move like a boss / Do what a boss do / She got me thinkin' about gettin' involved / That's the kinda girl I need” (*Miss Independent* line 21-31). In fact, Ne-Yo is amazed and adores women who are able to control themselves and do not rely on other people. This is of course, contrast to the image of Rap songs about the Black men who are wealthy, surrounded by women and have power to order. As a Black man Ne-Yo is very interested in women who are independent and it is shown in these following lines,

Kinda woman that can do for herself
I look at her and it makes me proud
There’s somethin' oh so sexy about
Kinda woman that don't even need my help
She said she got it, she got it, no doubt
There's something about her
'Cause she work like a boss, play like a boss
Car and a crib, she 'bout to pay 'em both off
And her bills are paid on time
She made for a boss, only a boss
Anythin' less she tellin' them to get lost
That's the girl that's on my mind
(Ne-Yo, *Miss Independent*, line 42-54; see Appendix 4)

The woman portrayed in the lyrics above is an independent woman.

The word "kinda woman" is repeated twice to emphasize that this kind of woman is special. Ne-Yo loves this woman because she is independent and a hard worker.

She is able to do the works by herself and buy a luxury cars and a big house. "Cause she work like a boss, play like a boss / Car and a crib, she 'bout to pay 'em both off" (*Miss Independent*, line 48-49).

Then, the last verse of Minaj shows little bit of her bossy side as a young Black woman, "I fucks with boss bitches / Type to be caught divorcin' bitch niggas / Corsets and horses / A lot of pink Porsches / Custom made plates, I stay lookin' for some bosses / When you approach me say boss" (*Miss Independent*, line 13-18). Minaj's bossy side exposed in line 16 "pink Porsches".

Porsche is an expensive brand car, and it needs much money to make it in pink color. Minaj also exposed her money with made custom plates so that she deserves to be called as the boss. The two versions of Minaj and Ne-Yo's are about two different opinions between Black man and Black woman regarding material possession. Black man is usually described as rich and powerful, but in this song seems suitable for women who can confront him. Nicki Minaj, uses such rough explicit and aggressive language, as "fuck, bitches, and Niggas". "Fuck" literally means sexual intercourse, but here "fuck" is used to emphasize the word in a sentence (Thorne, 1990, p.189). The term "Bitch" is often used to mention Black woman (Thorne, 1990, p.41), while "Niggas" is for the Black Man (Thorne, 1990, p.360). Minaj's lyrics are more aggressive than Ne-Yo's. In similar way, Nicki Minaj's verse describes a materialistic woman who already has everything

but still wants more for her needs. "When you approach me say boss, Because I paid the muthafuckin' costs"(*Miss Independent*, line 62-63). The last part of the lyrics stress that Minaj is able to pay off all bills given to her. In brief, female rapper shows her independence through songs by an emphasis on materialism, sex, beauty and perfection. "Miss Independent" explains the power of resistance of discrimination between men and women, how African-American women want to show their strength by exposed her material possession over the Black man.

Most of Hip-Hop music lyrics popularized by male Rappers express their opinion in aggressive and vulgar words, however, this tendency also used by female Rappers now. For example in "*Did It On 'Em*", Nicki Minaj sings Rap: "Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em / Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em / Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em" (line 1-4). The meaning of "shitted" is the dirt (Thorne, 1990, p.453), repeated many times to show that Nicki Minaj has adopted a masculine medium in; an aggressive style of male Hip-Hop song. Keyes says "tough and aggressive behavior conveyed through the use of expletives, heightened speech, exaggeration, and dissing" (2002, p.209).

All these bitches is my sons
And I'mma go and get some bibs for 'em
A couple formulas, little pretty lids on 'em
If I had a dick, I would pull it out and piss on 'em
Let me shake it off
I just signed a couple deals I might break you off
And we ain't making up I don't need a mediator
Just let them bums blow steam - radiator
(*Did it on 'em*, line 5-12; see Appendix 5)

The word "Bitches" in "All these bitches is my son" (*Did it on 'em*, line 5) is designed for Black Women who have the same opinion as Nicki Minaj's. Nicki Minaj's friends agree that Minaj is considered as a mother who would do anything for her son. "Son" is a male child of a parent (Hornby, 1982, p.822) while according to Green, "son" is a general term of address to a man or boy, fellow (1998, p. 1111). Hence, it can be conclude that "son" here refers to Minaj's loyal fans that she provides the best in her works for. "A couple formulas, little pretty lids on 'em" (*Did it on 'em*, line 7) is a form of Minaj's innovation as the formulas to give the best works for her fans. The innovation is not a massive, but typically she shows it gradually by changing her performance, performing duet with new partner, and filming a short movie. Such as in line "If I had a dick, I would pull it out and piss on 'em, Let me shake it off". "Dick" is a word refers to man genital (Thorne, 1990, p.128), at this point, if Minaj was born as a man, she will be powerful and proud of the efforts she has done. And in "I just signed a couple deals I might break you off / And we ain't making up I don't need a mediator" (*Did it on 'em*, line 10-11) "a couple deals" explained that in the year of 2012, Minaj succeeds in collaboration with two leading brands. The first is MAC Cosmetic, and the second one is the soft drinks brand, Pepsi Cola. If the success of Minaj will worsen her relationship with her rival, Minaj will not ask anybody for help. So, "mediator" essentially is a person who works with two conflicting parties in order to come to an amicable. As a Black woman, Minaj is sure she can deal with her problems in during her careers. This is one example that Minaj does

not adopt the Black man's language only, but also mimics the strength of man, the domination.

From these examples, it can be concluded that Black female Rappers want to show that men and women are equal. The topics that are often raised about is the equal material wealth, independence, Black women physical perfection, as well as equality of sexual power. Black women are not passive, and they do not want any discrimination and treatment as "the other".

3.3 Women and Women

Female Rappers have been consistently stereotyped as incapable person to write lyrics and perform raps compared to men. Some women rappers in 1980's preferred the label "woman" to "lady" because the latter implied softness, fragility and weakness (Keyes, 2002, p.208), as stated by Roxanne Shante in Keyes's book, "if I was to get up there in a pair of shoes and a dress, I'd be over". Since the beginning of Hip-Hop music, female Rappers have experienced difficulties in participating in the Hip-Hop music industry. But over the years, women have carved out spaces from which they can tell their own stories. These stories ultimately work against male supremacy in the Hip-Hop music industry. Later, as Keyes (2002) affirms, female Rappers label themselves by inverting and/or appropriating male performance behaviors. Resisting hetero sex symbol personas, female Rappers became "hard" like their male peers to avoid being labeled weak and to gain credibility as legitimate MC's.

As the time passes, Black women show their efforts to get equality with the man by adopting some of the styles and characteristics of Black man in Hip-Hop Music such as how they talks, thinks, dresses, styles, and sings. However, this situation cannot make a Black woman's groups out of any social problems. At this time, Black women as the part of community are considered the lowest level, by White men, White Women, Black men and Black women. Though, Black women are classified as a group of the lowest level; in their own community they are differed based on economic achievement and popularity.

3.3.1 The Economic Issue in Black Women

Black women are considered as the lowest level in society. This opinion causes the emergence of some groups amongst Black women. In one side, there are some groups who support each other, but on the other side, there is a part of the group who oppress the member of Black women in their own group. The most influential issue raised in the groups is about material possession which affects the strength of a Black woman in the group.

The economic issue raised in female Rapper songs is a form of power or possession of Black woman. The aggressive lyrics are not merely to comment woman's position before her fellows but also want to show that her position is more powerful. For example the lyrics of "*Stupid Ho*", "I get it cracking like a bad back / Bitch talkin she the queen when she looking like a lab rat / I'm Angelina, you Jennifer / Come on bitch you see where Brad at?" (line 1-4). In the first line, "cracking like a bad back" shows how Minaj is really shocked and hurt like she

got a backache. This explains the second line, "Bitch talkin' she the queen when she looking like a lab rat". She says to the addressed woman whom she identified as a "*Bitch*" in term for Black woman who feels that she is a great person as "the queen" but actually she is not. At the same time, Minaj calls the woman as a "Lab Rat". In African-American slang, "*Lab*" stands for Labrador dogs, and the "*Rat*" is the lowest rank of prostitutes (Thorne, 1990, p.304). Here, Minaj compares herself to her rival who is addressed as a dog that cannot do anything than a pet. Moreover, if Minaj considers the woman as a person, she will call her as one of the lowest class of prostitute, therefore she cannot be aligned with Minaj's position as a success African-American woman.

African-American women are always identified with something despicable and bad. Those are familiar with the call as a "bitch" and "hoe", after discrimination by Whites and the Black man, now their fellow Black woman also referred to themselves as "prostitute". In this context, the use of rude words is to put others position's down. It aims to show the power or authority of the African-American woman in their environment. However, there is also another way for female Rapper to show her power, typically by overthrow her opponent. It could be by mocking and exposing the wealth she has, and then she is the winner.

Therefore, as an African-American woman, she gets a little recognition from the people around her. This indicates how poor the fair treatment acquired by African-American woman, so that they prefer to compete their fellow African-American woman to get a little confession and control of her popularity and material possession.

In the third line, Nicki Minaj describes herself and the woman she addresses as Angelina and Jennifer. This refers to the problems of Angelina Jolie and Jennifer Aniston in the seizure of the actor named Brad Pitt in which the winner is Angelina Jolie. It is the analogy that "I'm Angelina", and Minaj is a winner who won the hearts of the enthusiasts and her partner in Hip-Hop music, for example Lil Wayne. While woman mentioned is considered as "Jennifer" who is not really interesting for "Brad". Minaj shows that she is a worthy winner of the other female Rapper who tries to impose her success. After she revealed that she is the winner amongst other female rapper, the lyrics later, Minaj reiterated that she is a serious talented rapper, so she does not care if there are parties who do not like her because she convinced that she is the best female Rapper in Hip-Hop industry.

The evidence of what is described above can be found in the lyrics, "Ice my wrists and I piss on bitches / You can suck my diznik if you take this jizzes / You don't like them disses, give my ass some kisses / Yeah they know what this is, givin this the business" (*Stupid Ho*, line 28-31). The use of "piss on bitches" indicates the characteristic of the language that is often used in Rapping.

The word "piss" themselves, in literal meaning is "urinate" (p.877) but according to Thorne, "piss" also means "mad" (1990, p.393) although the meaning of urinate or mad is quite different, but both meaning produces equal bad connotation and is intended for people who do not support Nicki Minaj, the "Bitches". Similarly, in the second line the word "suck" in slang language means, "repellent, inferior or

worthless" (p.500). In this second stanza, Minaj shows her "threat" to the woman addressed if only she dares to take a chance on her; as explained in the next lyric,

Bitches play the back cause they know I'm the front man
Put me on the dollar cause I'm who they trust in
Ayo SB, what's the fucks good?

We ship platinum, them bitches are shipping wood
Them nappy headed hoes but my kitchen good
(*Stupid Ho*, line 11-15; see Appendix 6)

Minaj says "Bitches play the back cause they know I'm the front man"

(*Stupid Ho*, line 11), it verifies that she is not afraid about what has been said by her rivals. "Bitches play the back" explains that the competitors do not have good capabilities as Minaj's, they are stagnant so that their position is below her. These competitors often start a problem by giving allusions in various media, but Minaj is confident, she is a "frontman" or a leader in this Hip-Hop music industry. As mentioned in the lyrics, "SB" standing for Safaree Samuels who is familiarly called SB. He is Minaj's old friend and hypeman. Since long ago, both are duet partner until now as a form of their existence in this Hip-Hop industry.

In Hip-Hop songs there are lot of sarcastic parts used to mock each other, mostly among the rappers to show who have the greatest talents. In fact, there is a special event that is used to quips each other, it is called "*Dissing*". The original meaning of *dissing* is a name of Hip-Hop music game in which the lyrics are insults the rivals, for those who have no words to counter the *Diss*, they are the losers (Bambaataa, 2005, p.52). But in its development, *dissing* is often used to insult other Rapper, it is no longer part of the Hip-Hop music game. Like in "We ship platinum, them bitches are shipping wood, Them nappy headed hoes but my kitchen good" (*Stupid Ho*, line 14-15); Minaj uses the song to quips her opponent

that failed in Hip-Hop industry. "We" here is the parties that support Minaj who finally gets music awards for her works; While "Them bitches" are for parties who impose Minaj, but they also fail in the music industry. Minaj also shows a figurative language "*platinum ship*" that the meaning is the music awards that she gets during her career. Meanwhile, her competitors, the other female Rappers have dropped in Hip-Hop music industry. In line 15, "Them" is intended to the rivals, Minaj called them as "*nappy headed ho*s". The meaning of "nappy headed hos" is "a human female with ugly, frizzy, gross, or unsanitary hair that also happens to be sort of promiscuous or downright slutty. She may or may not be physically attractive, but in most cases she is rather disgusting" (2010, para .1). "My kitchen" is similar to "my appearance or my business" (Thorne, 1990, p.296). Hence, Minaj concludes that her competitors are cluttered and unworthy, while Minaj is so much better with her good effort.

The frontal and striking word is one technique for Rappers to show their "strength", especially as a female Rapper. Minaj uses aggressive words to show that she is stronger than her fellow Black women, she is also able to gain achievement in music industry as the same as male Rapper's. For example in the verse, "You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe [x3]" (*Stupid Ho*, line 18-20) and "And I ain't hit that note / But, fuck you stupid hoe / Yeah, fuck you stupid hoe / I said fuck a stupid hoe / Yeah, fuck a stupid hoe" (*Stupid Ho*, line 66-70).

The words "Hoe" refers to the short of "whore" or "a prostitute, a woman who is not sexually faithful to a man or who has sex with a lot of man" (Thorne, 1990, p.561). Here, Minaj mentions that a woman addressed is called as a "hoe" as used

in Black English, this term is used to insult or to call Black woman who is "not good". In addition, to show her power through strong words, Minaj also expressed her ideas on her rivals in another clear diction, "Stupid hoe is my enemy / Stupid hoe is so whack / Stupid hoe shoulda befriended me / Then she coulda probably came back" (*Stupid Ho*, line 55-58). In this song, the word "stupid" is repeated several times to emphasize on "hoe" or "prostitute" which symbolizes a stupid Black woman, because according to Minaj, only the stupid one would be a part of prostitution. This negative stereotype is hard to be erase from the image of Black women along with this song, Minaj wants to change the stereotype. However, on one hand, Black woman's efforts to eliminate the negative views about them sometimes becomes overshadowed because in Hip-Hop songs, female rappers show that they have the same rights and positions with other groups. On the other hand, female Rappers want to show their masculine side by imitates the language style of male Rappers.

Another example of Nicki Minaj's song that shows the existence of social criticism between women and women, entitled "Y U Mad",

I am the female Weezy, this shit is easy
Pull up in that new new, bitch get a squeegee
Yeah my flow sick, yeah my flow queasy
Haha, they were sleeping on me, z-zz-zz
This pussy clean, this pussy squeaky
That pussy old, that pussy creaky
When I'm out the country, niggas call me Neeki
Hi, how are you? Yes, it's nice to meet me
Damn, Billboard, I mean I'm winning but I'm still bored
Yeah we shine, gold cluster
As for your career, dead... Ghost Busters
(*Y U Mad*, line 1-11; see Appendix 7)

In the first line, Minaj calls herself as "the female Weezy" (*Y U Mad*, line 1), Weezy is the nick name of Lil Wayne, a popular rapper who helps Minaj to become a Hip-Hop star. "Pull up in that new new, bitch get a squeegee / Yeah my flow sick, yeah my flow queasy" (*Y U Mad*, line 2-3) suggests that Minaj's new innovations makes her competitors shocked, such as if someone suddenly squeezed or hit by his friend. "Flow" is proposed to a rapper's ability to rhyme the beats in a skillful manner (Thorne, 1990, p.183). Therefore, Minaj's talents are undeniably, in terms of "sick" the Urban Dictionary defines it as good or crazy, and "queasy" is short for "quick and easy". Meanwhile the sentence, "they were sleeping on me" (*Y U Mad*, line 4) indicates that "they" are the people who underestimate Minaj and never thinks that she succeeds in this Hip-Hop music industry. Minaj asserts her superiority over these women by insulting their appearance, such as in the following lines "This pussy clean, this pussy squeaky / That old pussy, that pussy creaky" (*Y U Mad*, line 5-6), from the first line, "This pussy clean, this pussy squeaky", and the second, "That old pussy, that pussy creaky", is already seen that there are explained about two different things. The first, "This pussy clean, this pussy squeaky", figuratively depicts that Minaj is the new young star in the Rap music industry. Her performance is nice and good, with dictions clean and squeaky interpreted as "the fresh one", while the second is regarded to the old woman who is she addressed. The "old and creaky" here can be referred as old age but also it could be an unattractive works of Minaj's competitor.

In the next line “Damn, Billboard, I mean I’m winning but I’m still bored / Yeah we shine, gold cluster / As for your career, dead... Ghost Busters” (Y U Mad, line 9-11), she curses the Billboard; Billboard chart is a weekly chart for popular songs or albums in the United States. Implicitly, Minaj shows that she often receives many awards, so that she becomes bored. That is why, she will never stop working, until she is satisfied and in the top of popularity. Although there will be lots of competitors or those who oppose her, Minaj will continue to produce the masterpiece until the competitor’s career is lost. Eventhough Minaj uses a lot of rude words, this does not imply a literal act of violence, the phrase more likely indicates that she is better than these women, her female Rapper competitors: sexier, more skills MC, and richer.

Women in Hip-Hop are often placed in a double bind, as the passive objects and inferior people as regarded by the Whites and Black men. The women are ordered to follow the standards of Black men to become passive objects, to have good physic, and to be inferior, or women should eschew the success chance in music industry if they resist the standards. In Hip-Hop, Black women show their identities and feelings by her persona, as expressed by Tricia Rose in her *Black Noise*. She explains “how Black women Rappers interpret and articulate fears, pleasures, and promises of young black women through the lyrics” (1995, p.146). Therefore, Hip-Hop music is an arena for Black women to show their struggle against a confining and treacherous social environment. Like the other female rappers, such as Missy Elliots, M.I.A, and others, Minaj performs as an exaggerated sexuality through her lyrics and image. She asserts her independence

from within the established boundaries of Hip-Hop music, her adopting masculine language, and her attitudes to show her power as a Black woman.

In Hip-Hop song not all of the lyrics use vulgar, rude, and offensive words, some of them use soft and polite language. At this point, it can be concluded that Nicki Minaj writes her lyrics not only in simple, straight forward and easy to understand language, but also uses the defamiliarization technique so that the lyrics become more beautiful and poetic.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

Music cannot be separated from human life because it is one of the fundamental communications. Through music, people can share emotions and meanings by skilled composers and performers such as singers. The singer also uses music to show their identity by expressing their moods and behavior through the lyrics and the genre.

Hip-Hop is a genre that mostly talks about social issues. Actually, Hip-Hop is an African-American urban art of the 1970s and 1980s, incorporating elements of Rap and Funk, break dancing, and street art or graffiti which was influenced by the minority social condition. Hip-Hop music or Rap is known as the young African-American music by its typical of fast - singing style. The purposes are to enclose talents, opinions and spirit of the African-American, as the positive diversion from violence, as a means to protest, to criticize the social conditions, and also to entertain.

In the last decade, one of the famous rappers is Nicki Minaj. She is an African-American young woman whose popularity rises because of her catchy song and eccentric appearance. Some of her songs, such as *Did It On 'Em*, *Miss Independent*, *Stupid Ho*, *Champion*, *Fly* and *Y U Mad* talk about social criticism covering the problem of economic condition, gender, and racial issues. The lyrics of these songs, which reveal social criticism can be classified into three, the

relation between the Blacks and Whites, men and women, and women and women.

African-American often experience oppression and domination from various parties, primarily from the superior Whites in terms of physical or emotional. African-American women are also often dominated by men. Here, Minaj shows her protest by emphasizing on the financial issues, the equality of wealth and rights with men eventhough she is a woman. African-American women as the part of community who are considered as the lowest people have to fight against the White men and women, also the Black men, even against Black women. Though, in their community, among African-American women can support each other, in contrast they can oppress each other.

In concerning with Blacks and Whites, Nicki Minaj applies defamiliarization technique in writing her song lyrics. She uses particular words to show that she can be as equal as other races. She tries to resist the stereotype that Blacks are stupid and lazy. The quite delicate language she used also breaks that the negative perception about the way of African-American' speaking – rude.

However, when talking about man domination against woman, Minaj uses rude words to show that African-American women are able to fight the man's position who spoke harshly as their style. Seeing the fact that African-American women are always put in the lowest rank in social class, Minaj's encounters this in her six songs, *Did It On 'Em, Miss Independent, Stupid Ho, Champion, Fly and Y U Mad*.

Nicki Minaj who has been successful in attracting fans and music observers, and has won many awards is the evidence of an African-American

Black woman's acknowledgement. Minaj even says that her phenomenal presence is not just hers but the entire African-American.

4.2 Suggestion

Hip-Hop and Rap are often regarded as bad influences for young because it is often associated to violence emerging in African-American minority areas.

This is also due to the presence of several hip-hop lyrics that use harsh words and some of African-American term or slang language. Though today, many people listen to the Hip-Hop song and favorite it, there are still few people who understand the purpose of Hip-Hop itself. The surface listeners only listen and mime the style without understanding the meaning; they think that it is a kind of distorted music.

Therefore, for those who want to use Nicki Minaj's song lyrics as further research, it is advisable to use Linguistic approach because this approach will help researchers to discover the meaning behind the rude diction, slang, and harsh speaking style as the specific characteristics used in her Hip-Hop music.

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APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Berita Acara Bimbingan Skripsi



**KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN DAN KEBUDAYAAN UNIVERSITAS
BRAWIJAYA
FAKULTAS ILMU BUDAYA**

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BERITA ACARA BIMBINGAN SKRIPSI

1. Nama : Ika Ayu Larasati
2. NIM : 0811113106
3. Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
4. Judul Skripsi : African-American Social Criticism as seen through in Nicki Minaj's Hip-Hop Song Lyrics
5. Tanggal Mengajukan : 20 Februari 2012
6. Tanggal Selesai Skripsi : 15 Agustus 2012
7. Nama Pembimbing : I. Dr. Sri Herminingrum, M.Hum.
II. Melania Shinta Harendika, M.A.
8. Keterangan Konsultasi

| No | Tanggal | Materi | Pembimbing | Paraf |
|-----|------------------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| 1. | 20 Februari 2012 | Pengajuan Judul | Pembimbing I | |
| 2. | 29 Februari 2012 | Bab I | Pembimbing I | |
| 3. | 5 Maret 2012 | Revisi Bab I | Pembimbing I | |
| 4. | 9 Maret 2012 | Revisi Bab I | Pembimbing I | |
| 5. | 15 Maret 2012 | Revisi Bab I | Pembimbing II | |
| 6. | 19 Maret 2012 | Revisi Bab I | Pembimbing II | |
| 7. | 19 Maret 2012 | Bab II | Pembimbing I | |
| 8. | 26 Maret 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing I | |
| 9. | 2 April 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing I | |
| 10. | 16 April 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing I | |
| 11. | 22 April 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing I | |
| 12. | 23 April 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing II | |
| 13. | 24 April 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing II | |
| 14. | 3 Mei 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing II | |
| 15. | 10 Mei 2012 | Revisi Bab II | Pembimbing II | |
| 16. | 11 Mei 2012 | Bab III | Pembimbing I | |
| 17. | 11 Mei 2012 | ACC Bab I & II | Pembimbing I | |
| 18. | 11 Mei 2012 | ACC Bab I & II | Pembimbing II | |
| 19. | 16 Mei 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing I | |
| 20. | 21 Mei 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing I | |
| 21. | 24 Mei 2012 | Seminar Proposal | Pembimbing I | |

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| 22. | 24 Mei 2012 | Seminar Proposal | Pembimbing II |
| 23. | 4 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing I |
| 24. | 4 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab I & II | Pembimbing I |
| 25. | 11 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing I |
| 26. | 14 Juni 2012 | Bab III | Pembimbing II |
| 27. | 19 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing II |
| 28. | 22 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III & Bab IV | Pembimbing I |
| 29. | 24 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing II |
| 30. | 25 Juni 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing II |
| 31. | 2 Juli 2012 | Revisi Bab III | Pembimbing II |
| 32. | 19 Juli 2012 | Revisi Bab IV | Pembimbing II |
| 33. | 20 Juli 2012 | ACC Bab III & IV | Pembimbing I |
| 34. | 20 Juli 2012 | ACC Bab III & IV | Pembimbing II |
| 35. | 27 Juli 2012 | Seminar Hasil | Pembimbing I |
| 36. | 27 Juli 2012 | Seminar Hasil | Pembimbing II |
| 37. | 6 Agustus 2012 | Revisi Bab I - IV | Pembimbing I |
| 38. | 13 Agustus 2012 | Revisi Bab I - IV | Pembimbing II |
| 39. | 15 Agustus 2012 | ACC untuk ujian | Pembimbing I |
| 40. | 15 Agustus 2012 | ACC untuk ujian | Pembimbing II |
| 41. | 29 Agustus 2012 | Ujian Skripsi | Pembimbing I |
| 42. | 29 Agustus 2012 | Ujian Skripsi | Pembimbing II |

9. Telah di evaluasi dan di uji dengan nilai :

Malang, 29 Agustus 2012

Dosen Pembimbing I

Dosen Pembimbing II

Dr. Sri Herminingrum, M.Hum.

Melania Shinta Harendika, M.A.

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Mengetahui,
Ketua Jurusan

Syariful Muttaqin, M.A.

NIP. 19751101 200312 1 001

Appendix 2:

“Champion”

(Nicki Minaj feat. Nas, Drake, Young Jeezy)

Mmm

This is celebration, this is levitation

Look at how you winning now, this took dedication

This is meditation, higher education

This the official competitor elimination

I was taking trips with Web to move weight,

Came back to queens then hit up a new state

Bitches don't know the half like they flunked at math

Bitches ain't have cut up crack up in the stash

50 cent Italian, icy flow

It's that run and get a dollar for a ice cream cone

'Cause they killed my little cousin Nicholas

But my memory's only happy images

This is for the hood, this is for the kids

This is for the single mothers, niggas doing biz

This one is for TT, Tweety, Viola, Shariki

Candice, Timby, Lauren, Iesha.

It's a celebration

Put it up for the ghetto

It's time like these

They know who we are by now

They know who we are.

Champion, a champion (champion, champion)

[Drake:]

Yeah, okay, we made it to America

I remember when I used to stay with Erica

Label transferred 20 million to comerica

Fucking terrabus got me acting out of character

Young TO nigga, either riding' range

The Ferrari top down, screaming money ain't a thang

Tell me when I changed, girl, but only when I change

'Cause I live this shit for real, niggas know me in the game, they know

Makin' hits in 3 acre cribs

Cookin' up tryna eat nigga steak and ribs

I made a couple stars outta basic chicks

Nowadays blow the candles out, don't even make a wish

Having good times, making good money

Lot of bad bitches but they good to me

I make her do the splits for a rack

Wish you niggas good luck tryna get where I'm at
Straight like that

It's a celebration
Put it up for the ghetto
It's time like these

They know who we are by now
They know who we are.
Champion, a champion (champion, champion)

[Young Jeezy:]

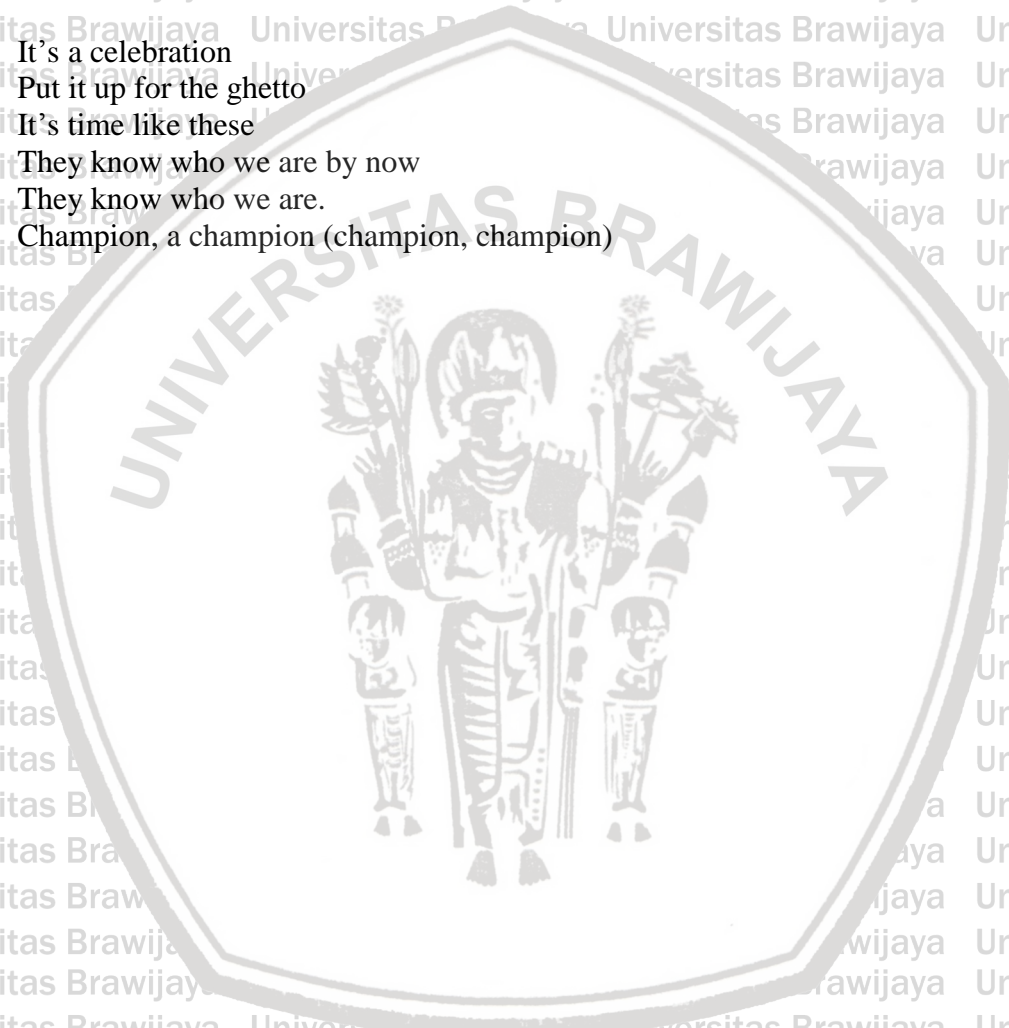
Straight balling in this bitch, Jeremy Lin, mello.
Tell me one thing you won't do? Settle.
Gimme one word for ya chain? Yellow
Pocket full of money, black card, ghetto
Critics say I ain't in the game, A I?
So how you deal with the fame? STAY HIGH
Stay putting down for the town, may I
What you call a crib in the sky? Play high
Half a mil in 3 weeks, yall did it like a champ
Mama taught me pride, yeah, she did it with the stamps
Wait a minute, everybody pause for the photo
Somebody tell these local hating niggas, I'm global
Tell me what I gotta do to get this champagne going
What I gotta do to get this coconut flowing
Don't let me in son, hundred bottles of the ace
Lemme in son, go money cases in my place let's celebrate

It's a celebration
Put it up for the ghetto
It's time like these
They know who we are by now
They know who we are.
Champion, a champion (champion, champion)

[Nas:]

What up Nicki? It's nasty. Yeah. Yeah yeah.
I sold my first 2 million dollars, I was 23.
I'm barely a man yet I had some killers under me
This ain't rated PG, this rated PJ.
'Cause that's where a nigga fuck, murder on replay
My 24th bday, I'm sailing to Bimini
You can see me on a yacht blasting Pac, little nah, I ain't greedy
I'm back to thugging bitches that can make it and kiss other bitches,
My man sister like me, I don't fuck my brother's sister
I just aspire your desire to be different

My 10 year old plan just one year til finish
My list went like this: first thing to sever,
The difference in pussy white black Latin or other
Here's a man who clearly isn't basic,
Waiting list just to hear me or witness the greatness
Loud laughter while writing my next chapter
Fast cash life, happily ever after
Champions
It's a celebration
Put it up for the ghetto
It's time like these
They know who we are by now
They know who we are.
Champion, a champion (champion, champion)



Appendix 3:

"Fly"

(Nicki Minaj feat. Rihanna)

[Chorus: Rihanna]

I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive

I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise

To fly

To fly

[Nicki Minaj:]

I wish today it will rain all day

Maybe that will kinda make the pain go away

Trying to forgive you for abandoning me

Praying but I think I'm still an angel away

Angel away, yeah strange in a way

Maybe that is why I chase strangers away

They got their guns out aiming at me

But I become Neo when they're aiming at me

Me, me, me against them

Me against enemies, me against friends

Somehow they both seem to become one

A sea full of sharks and they all smell blood

They start coming and I start rising

Must be surprising, I'm just summising

I win, thrive, soar, higher, higher, higher

More fire

[Chorus: Rihanna]

I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive

I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise

To fly

To fly

[Nicki Minaj:]

Everybody wanna try to box me in

Suffocating every time it locks me in

Paint their own pictures then they crop me in

But I will remain where the top begins

Cause I am not a word, I am not a line

I am not a girl that can ever be defined

I am not fly, I am levitation

I represent an entire generation

I hear the criticism loud and clear

That is how I know that the time is near

So we become alive in a time of fear
And I ain't got no motherfucking time to spare
Cry my eyes out for days upon days
Such a heavy burden placed upon me
But when you go hard your nays become yay's
Yankee Stadium with Jay's and Kanye's

[Chorus: Rihanna]

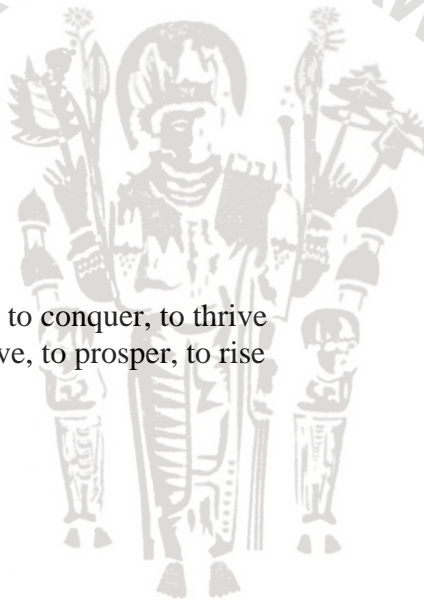
I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive
I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise
To fly
To fly

[Bridge: Nicki Minaj]

Get ready for it
Get ready for it
Get ready for it
I came to win
Get ready for it
Get ready for it
Get ready for it
I came to win

[Chorus: Rihanna]

I came to win, to fight, to conquer, to thrive
I came to win, to survive, to prosper, to rise
To fly
To fly



Appendix 4:

Miss Independent Lyrics

(Nicki Minaj)

[Nicki Minaj:]

you wanna please me then get down ya crown
you know they call me down town julie brown
i get alot get alot head
i get alot of fades and i get lot dread
see i be in the town closin million dollars deals up
real nice view wit my million dolla hills up
tell the dj nicki minaj said to reel up rewind
they neva met a muthafuckin boss this fine
i get my own thing my own bloodclot thing
thats why they call me misses badda bing badda bing
im lookin for a king wit some good ding a lind
big truck beenie man throw some sim sima in
i fucks wit boss bitches types to be caught divorcin bitch niggas
corsets and horses alot pink porshes custome made plate i stay lookin for some
bosses

[Ne-Yo:]

Yeah yeah, yeah yeah
Yeah yeah, yeah yeah
Yeah yeah, yeah yeah yeah
Ooh it's somethin' about
Just somethin' about the way she move
I can't figure it out There's somethin' about her
Said ooh it's somethin' about
Kinda woman that want you but don't need you
Hey, I can't figure it out There's somethin' about her
'Cause she walk like a boss
Talk like a boss
Manicured nails to set the pedicure off
She's fly effortlessly
And she move like a boss
Do what a boss do
She got me thinkin' about gettin' involved
That's the kinda girl I need, oh

[Chorus: Ne-Yo]

She got her own thing,
That's why I love her, Miss Independent

Won't you come and spend a little time?
She got her own thing,
That's why I love her, Miss Independent
Ooh the way we shine Miss Independent yeah

[Ne-Yo:]

Yeah yeah, yeah yeah
Yeah yeah, yeah yeah
Yeah yeah, yeah yeah yeah, oh
Ooh there's somethin' about
Kinda woman that can do for herself
I look at her and it makes me proud
There's somethin' about her
There's somethin' oh so sexy about
Kinda woman that don't even need my help
She said she got it, she got it, no doubt
There's something about her
'Cause she work like a boss, play like a boss
Car and a crib, she 'bout to pay 'em both off
And her bills are paid on time
She made for a boss, only a boss
Anythin' less she tellin' them to get lost
That's the girl that's on my mind

[Chorus: Ne-Yo]

[Ne-Yo:]

Mmm, her favorite thing to say 'Don't worry I got it'
Mmm, and everything she got Best believe she bought it
Mmm, she gon' steal my heart
Ain't no doubt about it Girl, you're everything I need
Said you're everything I need
Yeah yeah Yeah yeah, yeah yeah Yeah yeah, yeah yeah yeah, oh!

[Chorus: Ne-Yo]

Miss Independent That's why I love her

[Nicki Minaj:]

when you approach me say boss
because i paided the muthafuckin costs
when approach me say Boss
cause i'm the muthafuckin boss

Appendix 5:

Did It On Em
(Nicki Minaj)

[Chorus]

Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em
Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em

[Verse 1]

All these bitches is my sons
and I'ma go and get some bibs for 'em
a couple formulas, little pretty lids on 'em
If i had a dick, I would pull it out and piss on 'em
Let me shake it off
I just signed a couple deals i might break you off
and we ain't making up I don't need a mediator
Just let them bums blow steam, radiator

[Chorus]

Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em
Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em

[Verse 2]

This stone is flawless F1
I keep shooters up top in the F1
a lot of bitches beggin' me to eff one
but I'ma eat them rap bitches when the chef come
Throw some fresh one's
more talent in my mu'fuckin left thumb
she a'int a Nicki fan then the bitch def dumb
you a'int my son you my muthafuckin step-son

[Chorus]

Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em
Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em

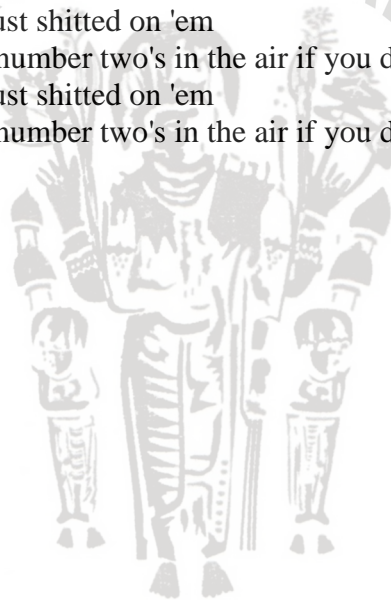
[Verse 3]

All these bitches is my sons

and I a'int talking 'bout Phoenix
bitch I get money so I do's what i pleases
I live where the muthafuckin pools and the trees is
broke bitches so crusty (disgust me)
gave the bitch a ride got the Continental dusty
trust me I keep a couple hundred in the duff' b
couple wet wipes case a bum try to touch me (EW)
Im the terminator bitch talk slick I'ma have to terminate her
These little nappy headed hoers need a perminator
you my seed I spray you with germinator
Move back bugs matter fact you know the queen could use a back rub
If you could turn back time, Cher
You used the be here but now you gone Nair

[Chorus]

Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em
Shitted on 'em, man I just shitted on 'em
Shitted on 'em, put yo' number two's in the air if you did it on 'em



Appendix 6:

"Stupid Hoe"

(Nicki Minaj)

I get it cracking like a bad back.

Bitch talkin she the queen, when she looking like a lab rat

I'm Angelina, you Jennifer

Come on bitch, you see where Brad at

Ice my wrists and I piss on bitches

You can suck my diznik if you take this jizzes

You don't like them disses, give my ass some kisses

Yeah they know what this is, givin this the business

Cause I pull up and I'm stuntin' but I ain't a stuntman

Yes I'm rockin' Jordans but I ain't a jumpman

Bitches play the back cause they know I'm the front man

Put me on the dollar cause I'm who they trust in

Ayo SB, what's the fucks good?

We ship platinum, them bitches are shipping wood

Them nappy headed hoes but my kitchen good

I wish, I wish, I wish, I wish, I wish, I wish

A bitch would

[Hook:]

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe [x3]

You a stupid hoe, (yeah) you a, you a stupid hoe

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, (yeah) you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

Look bubbles go back to your habitat

MJ gone and I ain't having that

How you gon' be the stunt double to the nigga monkey

Top of that I'm in the Phantom looking hella chonky

Ice my wrists and I piss on bitches

You can suck my diznik if you take this jizzes

You don't like them disses, give my ass some kisses

Yeah they know what this is, givin this the business

Cause I pull up in that Porsche but it ain't De Rossi

Pretty bitches only can get in my posse

Yes, My name is Roman, last name is Zolanski

But no relation to Roman Polanski

Hey yo, baby bop, fuck you and your EP

Who's gassin' this hoe? BP?

Hmm thinks, 1, 2, 3, to the Nicki Minaj blink

Cause these hoes so busted

Hoes is so crusty, these bitches is my sons

And I don't want custody

Hoes so busted

Hoes is so crusty, these bitches is my sons

And I don't want custody

[Hook:]

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe [x3]

You a stupid hoe, (yeah) you a, you a stupid hoe

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

You a stupid hoe, (yeah) you a, you a stupid hoe (you stupid, stupid)

If you cute then the crew can roll

If you sexy eat my cooca raw

Put ya cape on, you a super hoe

2012, I'm at the superbowl

Stupid hoes is my enemy

Stupid hoes is so whack

Stupid hoe shoulda befriended me

Then she coulda probably came back

Stupid hoes is my enemy

Stupid hoes is so whack

Stupid hoe shoulda befriended me

Then she coulda probably came back

You're a stupid hoe

You're a stupid hoe

You're a stupid hoe

And I ain't hit that note,

But, fuck you stupid hoe

Yeah, fuck you stupid hoe

I said fuck a stupid hoe,

Yeah, fuck a stupid hoe

I said fuck a stupid hoe,

Yeah, fuck a stupid hoe

I said fuck a stupid hoe

I am the female Weezy...

Appendix 7:

"Y. U. Mad"

(Nicki Minaj feat. Birdman & Lil Wayne)

[Verse 1: Nicki Minaj]

I am the female Weezy, this shit is easy
Pull up in that new new, bitch get a squeegee
Yeah my flow sick, yeah my flow queasy
Haha, they were sleeping on me, z-zz-zz
This pussy clean, this pussy squeaky
That pussy old, that pussy creaky
When I'm out the country, niggas call me Neeki
Hi, how are you? Yes, it's nice to meet me
Damn, Billboard, I mean I'm winning but I'm still bored
Yeah we shine, gold cluster
As for your career, dead... Ghost Busters

[Hook: Nicki Minaj]

That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad
That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad
That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad

[Verse 2: Birdman]

Yeah, Bigga Than Life
C4, we the bidness
Man, fuck ya'll niggas
Get down or lay down
Shoot up anything except a school or playground
Triple OG nigga, these hoes know me
Shining AK blood, just like a trophy
I'm old school, and I'll smack a bitch
Getting money like a muthafucking cracker bitch
What you know about it? Take notes nigga
YMCMB, head coach nigga
Yeah, stuntman, stuntman
Streetsweeper in my hand get the dustpan
Yeah, we done took off nigga
Got the game on lock like football nigga

[Hook: Nicki Minaj]

That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad

That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad
That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad

[Verse 3: Lil Wayne]

Uh, I got the world in my wallet
Swisha full of violet
Niggas think they fly make me check ya flight mileage
That P on my hat is for Piru, not Pirates
I bet I can turn her pussy to a fucking fire hydrant
And I do it for my niggas, my muthafucking niggas
Cause these hoes so thirsty like they got the fucking hiccups
I am beast hoe, to say the least hoe
No cut on the coke, that's coke zero
Yeah tonight, I'll probably fuck another nigga girl
Party time, excellent, Wayne's World
This Cash Money nigga, eat a dick
Been had it on lock, gave the key to Nick'

[Hook: Nicki Minaj]

That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad
That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad
That's why you mad
That's why you why you mad mad