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# Throwin' Words At U: A Lyrical Analysis of MC Lyte's Rap Texts

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## Abstract

Recently, rap music has become a prominent musical genre and is possibly one of the most popular and influential forms of African-American music of the 1980s and 1990s (Erlewine *et al* 921). Rap is dominated by male artists, although females have been increasingly writing and recording rap music. Considerable research has been conducted on various aspects of the rap phenomenon, but there has been little focus on analysing rap lyrics using traditional literary criticism. The present study analysed the rap texts of MC Lyte, an enduring female rap artist, employing literary techniques used to analyse poetry. The development of rap music is traced from its inception, identifying some of its features and impact, particularly within the economically-disadvantaged and predominantly African-American areas of large cities. The emergence of women rappers, and how their input has contributed to the changing nature of rap music, both in its subject-matter and in the language techniques used, is discussed. MC Lyte was chosen as a representative female rapper because she had recorded several albums spanning more than a decade, because she focuses on issues affecting African-American women and because her lyrical techniques have developed across time. Drawing similarities between rap music and “street poetry”, a comprehensive textual analysis was conducted on the albums of MC Lyte. Her use of vocabulary and common elements of poetry was examined, as well as the topics she addresses. The analysis shows that Lyte uses both the common characteristics of rap music, and traditional literary techniques, to successfully comment on issues relevant to her audience. Many of her lyrics involved self-promotion and denigration of other rappers, common elements in rap music. Other lyrics commented and advised on important issues facing African-Americans living in poor black communities, particularly women. Many texts, however, had a more universal relevance. While her lyrics show a consistency across albums, the literary devices and language techniques became more complex, and a wider range of issues were discussed. Inherent limitations in the study were that other possible forms of analysis were not conducted, such as sociological and feminist approaches. Comparisons with other rap artists were not possible due to the lack of prior research into their lyrics. These were identified as topics for future research.

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# Introduction

African-Americans have often been sustained, healed and nurtured by the translation of their experience into art (Gilroy, *Black Atlantic* 78) and this is perhaps most evident in their music. Throughout history, music has been created to enhance the human experience; it somehow elevates and makes one feel better about oneself. The music created and performed by African-Americans seems to have both a therapeutic and a socially reinforcing power for those who consider themselves oppressed and limited in their ability to speak out and be heard. Many theorists believe that African-American music has been, and continues to be, music which has the ability to heal not only African-Americans, but music lovers in general (Cashmore 10; Gilroy, *Black Atlantic* 78; Haskins 182; Oliver 9; Sexton 13). African-Americans have always played a large role in the shaping of styles and images of American popular music (Haskins 182; Hatch and Millward 129; Naison 130). Nowhere is this more evident than in rap music.

## The Emergence of Rap

Rap music emerged on the streets of New York towards the end of the 1970s. Young African-American males took two of the most basic devices in the recording industry - turntables and microphones - and turned them into musical instruments (Chambers 189). By using two turntables, they combined other artists' recordings, phasing them in and out, speeding them up, slowing them down and strategically working them into a collage of beats and rhythms to create an original piece of work. Over these sounds, a performer (known as the MC) would talk or "rap" in a form of improvised "street poetry", a performance orientated form of poetry which is characterised by its focus on the everyday life of those on the streets (Dawes 6). Thus, rap music was born.

Rap music arose in the context of the sad conditions in the streets of the poor urban black communities in America; areas where suffering, poverty, deprivation, lack and oppression are commonplace. Rap offered those who lived under these conditions, particularly the young men, an outlet to vent their anger and frustration at the situation they found themselves living in. It also offered them a means by which to gain public recognition and have a public voice. Rap did for the poor blacks in America in the 80s what reggae had done for the poor blacks in Jamaica a decade earlier; it enabled them to become noticed and it helped to create a renewed sense of identity and pride within their local community (Hebdige 136). Audience members felt empowered by the words of rap artists who were talking about common everyday experiences shared by both them and

the rapper. Performers used rap as an expression of resistance or rebellion against the bleak living conditions they seemed trapped in (Boyd 63).

Rap is very much rooted in the experience of lower class blacks, and has gradually developed into part of a culture termed “hip hop” (Hebdige 136; Longhurst 150). Hip hop culture encapsulates not only the music of the streets but also the dance, clothing, language, graffiti and above all, the attitude from there. Rap music and hip hop have been particularly important to African-American youth as these innovations have allowed them to form both alternative identities and positions of social status (Rose, “A Style” 78). Rap music provided a medium for these young people to resist and reject the stereotypes which society bestowed upon them, transcending these stereotypes by speaking out against the prejudices which both the audience and the rap artists face every day.

History is of central importance to African-Americans and is considered essential to the realisation of both their individual and collective freedom (Gilroy, *Ain't No Black* 207). It seems that a knowledge of their history is vital to African-Americans because a key component of their oppression has been an attempt to dislocate them from their historical roots. Too many young African-Americans never get told of any history before slavery. This is what many rappers speak out against in the lyrics of their songs. Young people of African-American descent have been able to re-educate themselves about their history through rap music; they believe it is important that the truth be told about their past. Many of the rap lyrics tell of a history which began a long time before slavery. In this way, rap is far more than just another form of music; it is an important tool for education.

For centuries, African-Americans were forced to create coded means to communicate with one another in order to protect themselves from danger. In the deep South, slaves were prohibited from using and keeping loud instruments which would give sign or notice to one another, so they invented secret means by which to communicate (Brackett 112; Rose, “Fear” 538; Southern 182). In a similar manner to these slaves, rappers have refined and developed their music and lyrics in such a way that it provides a form of coded communication between the oppressed. African-Americans have created their own original form of vocabulary, often termed “black talk” or “street slang” (Fernando 266; Safire 41; Szwed 144). These words, which when used in their original context would possess negative connotations, are given a positive slant, endowing them with a completely different definition, sometimes even inverting their meaning. Black talk is also the African-Americans’ way of guarding their communications from outsiders, particularly Europeans, who do not understand what they refer to. This form of communication not only serves as a protective device, but also allows African-Americans to form a type of community within themselves; they are able to empower themselves

with the knowledge that they speak a type of vocabulary that only they can understand (Szwed 149).

Rappers draw on this black talk frequently; it is of great importance to them and it is this vocabulary which provides the main content of their lyrics (Costello and Wallace 53; Perkins, "Youth" 262). This street slang consists of words easily recognised by those who reside in the poorer communities in America. The vocabulary is constantly changing, emphasising the need for listeners to be a part of these poorer communities in order to understand any new words, or new meanings to familiar words, which may arise in the lyrics. Rappers empower both themselves and those in the audience who are able to understand, by using words that only they would know. They further empower themselves by alienating those in the audience who do not understand what the slang refers to, thereby isolating those that do not belong.

Artists also utilise a variety of literary and language techniques in their raps. These include allegory, double meanings, neologisms, repetition, alliteration and onomatopoeia in combination with black talk (Fernando 266; Gates, "2 Live" 162; Pratt 210). As with their use of slang, they use these language devices to communicate, to share messages that only those who are familiar with their use of these devices can fully understand.

Several theorists, in studying how these ways of speaking have developed in black communities, particularly in the poorer areas, have suggested that they have close historical links to African oral tradition (Gilroy, *Black Atlantic* 76; Rose, *Black Noise* 27; Szwed 145). They have recognised similarities between both the verbal and musical styles of rap music and traditional oral African-American practices such as African war chants, playing the "dozens", "toasting", field hollers, the "lining out" of hymns in church and tale telling (Pratt 210; Shuker 247; Shusterman 614; Toop 94). This link can be seen clearly in rap music's percussive sounds, polyrhythmic texture, timbral richness, and call-and-response patterns (Walser 297). Several commentators believe that rap music is a return to the fundamental components of African music, with its prime focus on rhythm and voice (Eyerman and Jamison 105; Gilroy, *Ain't No Black* 211; Shusterman 615). But rap music differs from other musical genres, not only in its language devices and vocabulary, but also in its musical form. Unlike most other forms of music, rap places the voice of the artist at the very centre of the text with instrumentation in the background; the rapper's lyrics and ways of speaking are the main focus of the song (Walser 296).

Like other musical forms, rap has a number of identifiable subgenres (Hebdige 136; Shuker 247), although, with rap, these are distinguishable largely in terms of their lyrical

content rather than their musical style. Currently, the most prominent form of rap is “gangsta” rap, which is identified by, and often criticised for, its clinical descriptions of sex, its promotion of violent solutions to black problems, its denigration of women in making frequent reference to them as “bitches” and “whores”, and its glorification of the gangster lifestyle<sup>1</sup>. Examples of gangsta rappers include N.W.A., Snoop Doggy Dogg, Eminem, Jay-Z, DMX, Foxy Brown and Lil’ Kim. Another subgenre of rap is “hardcore” or “message” rap which addresses more political issues specifically relevant to a black community and focuses on offering advice to listeners on a number of topical issues relevant to a rap audience (Hebdige 136; Longhurst 155; Ransby and Matthews 528). Rappers like Arrested Development, Public Enemy, A Tribe Called Quest and KRS-One are included in this category. “Booty” rappers like 2 Live Crew, BWP (Bytches with Problems) and HWA (Hoez with Attitude) perform raps which are characterised by an obsession with sex, and often perverted descriptions of sexual activity (Bayles 352; Perkins, “Rap Attack” 24). “Female” rap is rap by female artists that focuses on the experiences of African-American women, particularly emphasising the importance of strength, independence and empowerment of women (Irving 116; Roberts 150; Rose, *Black Noise* 165; Valdes 354). Queen Latifah, MC Lyte, Monie Love, Salt N Pepa and Lauryn Hill provide examples in this category. Another subgenre is “nonsense” or “comical” rap which takes a humorous, light-hearted look at common situations; these raps are particularly aimed at youth. Examples of comical rappers include DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, Young MC and Biz Markie. While the main elements of these subgenres are distinguishable, it does not mean however, that one or more elements are not included in other subgenres.

Most rap music is centred on self-promotion, and the dynamic of rap requires the rap artist to focus on personal narrative. The style of rap has always been to brag about oneself by dedicating endless rhymes to one’s appearance, showing the ability to entertain the audience and, above all, by asserting that no other rapper can compare (Valdes 349). Unlike many traditional oral African-American practices, rap often places less focus on information-passing. Rather, the emphasis is on personal word-power and the ability to win verbal contests through entertaining one’s audience. This element of control, of the power of words well used, and the status one can achieve through gaining this control, is of central concern to the rap artist. Most rap pieces also mention the rapper’s sexual desirability, commercial success, or possession of material goods, but usually these are secondary to statements about the rapper’s verbal power. A rapper’s aim is to take control of the language, to outdo any competition, and to be the master over the audience.

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion on “gangsta” rap, see (Bayles 356; Butts 76; hooks, *Black Looks* 35; Kolawole 9; Longhurst 151; Naison 131; Ransby and Matthews 531; Staples 79).



John Szwed talks at great length about “the man-of-words” - an identifiable social type whose aims are to entertain and instruct anywhere and anytime and to ~~whom~~<sup>call</sup> calling attention to himself as an unexcelled speaker (148). One can see close links between the man-of-words and rap artists. Both are concerned with achieving status and drawing the audience to them, which they do by using various verbal and literary devices to entice the audience and persuade them to listen to what they have to say.

Like the man-of-words, accomplished rappers are able to grab the audience’s attention with their verbal dexterity and are able to speak with conviction and authority about issues which relate to them and their listeners. Delivery is of vital importance to a rapper, as the manner of delivery can profoundly affect the understanding of the content. It is essential for successful rappers to exude confidence and power; they must seize the audience’s attention and win their admiration (Dimitriadis 184). With rap music, the point is not merely to show that one can rhyme, but that one can rhyme differently to and better than anyone else. The lines are never of equal length and it therefore becomes a test of the rapper’s skills to fit them to the beat. Either they pile up the words and deliver them with speed or they use fewer words and stretch them out with pauses and carefully calculated breaks. Rappers are also concerned, however, with flow; with a fluidity in their lyrics. A skilled rapper moves easily and powerfully through complex lyrics but also has the ability to alternate speed, to pause, and to cause rupture not only in their words but also in their music.

Rap lyrics are a critical part of a rapper’s identity and this explains why authorship and individuality in rap music are so crucial to any rap artist. Of course, there are hundreds of shared phrases and slang words across rap lyrics, but any particular rap text conveys the personal and emotive voice of the rapper (Rose, *Black Noise* 95). Unlike traditional Western literary notions of composition, where the text can stand quite separately from the performer, rap lyrics are closely linked with both the author and the performer and are the voice of both.

Rappers are particularly concerned with “naming”. This term refers to both the taking on of new stage names to highlight particular roles or personal characteristics that they wish to emphasise, and also to the tendency to introduce themselves early in their songs and repeat their name throughout (Gilroy, *Ain’t No Black* 216; Lipsitz 23; Rose, “A Style” 80). Katrina Irving has suggested that by repeating their new name, rappers assert their chosen identity as part of a self-construction which enables them to empower themselves and counter the facelessness and namelessness experienced by poor black youth in American culture (112). By renaming themselves, and then constantly making references

to their new name, rappers aim to redefine and reposition themselves, taking on different personas that allow them to talk with authority about different situations.

In terms of setting, the “hood” (short for “neighbourhood”) is a dominant metaphor in rap music, used to emphasise the plight of poor black communities (Boyd 41; Scheurer 245). A narrative about various aspects of life in the hood is a theme which runs through most rap lyrics. Rap is therefore an expressive form of music that is inherently confrontational because of the specific historical, socio-political and economic context from which it has emerged (Zook 519). In most instances rappers claim to be expressing themselves and their concerns in the best way they know how.

This idea of “keeping it real” has certainly been exploited, especially since the discovery of the commercial viability of hip hop culture in general, and gangsta rap in particular. But on the whole, the issues raised in many of the rap lyrics do seem to reflect the social conditions of both the rap artist and the listener<sup>2</sup>. Supporters of rap see it as a means by which rappers can talk about certain realities of street life, expressing viewpoints which are often not represented in mainstream music. While the male-dominated rap scene can at times be undeniably sexist and violent, this unfortunately, often seems to reflect the culture of the streets. Most rappers base their songs on personal experience of what they see going on around them (Cloonan 56; Cooper 1; hooks, *Outlaw* 122; Kennedy 413; Lipsitz 22; Marlowe 221).

Rap music seems to be surrounded by controversy. Some critics argue that rap has no merit; that it is simply a senseless form of music which allows performers to openly abuse women, promote violence and use profanity (Cashmore 154; Dines and Humez 479; hooks, *Black Looks* 34). Others assert that it is an effective means by which to communicate with youth, a form of music which not only encourages black empowerment but a sense of community within the lower classes (Boyd 41; Decker 117; Hebdige 136). Both types of assertion have received strong support. Since its beginnings, rap has often been criticised for its promotion of violent solutions to black problems and, in particular, its denigration of women (Longhurst 151; Naison 131; Ransby and Matthews 526; Rose, *Black Noise* 55). However, it has also been praised for its ability to educate and provide valuable political and social commentary (Butts 76; Marlowe 221; Perkins, “Rap Attack” 33).

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<sup>2</sup> For discussions on this see (Baker 74; Bayles 354; D. and Jah 248; Fernando 117; Fornas 109; Perkins, “Rap Attack” 33; Ransby and Matthews 528; Staples 79).



Some rappers choose to focus solely on the negative conditions that exist in some inner-city communities and write raps about them. On a positive note, however, there is an increasing number of rap artists who should be given credit for their ability, despite coming from such communities, to express black autonomy and pride through their raps. Many rap artists actually write lyrics which aim to uplift and inform. Rap music and hip hop culture have been recognised as an integral part of youth culture (D. and Jah 256; Kitwana 150; Ransby and Matthews 528). While the lyrics often focus on a narrative of life in the ghettos of America, the messages expressed through rap have been acknowledged as transcending cultures (Irving 107; Longhurst 151).

This would help explain rap's widespread appeal; It speaks to people of different genders, different ages, different races and different cultures, encouraging self-determination and cultural pride (Zook 521). Although men were certainly the originators of rap music, women have always been active participants in the development of rap and its lyrics. Today, with the rapid rise in the number of female rap artists, rap lyrics are increasingly concerned with issues which directly affect women, in particular, they emphasise the importance and positive role of African-American women in society.

## **Women in Rap**

It is difficult to identify unequivocally the first female rap recording (Perkins, "Rap Attack" 29) but most critics acknowledge that Lady B's 1979 hit "To the Beat Y'all" was among the earliest. The first female rap group, Sequence, appeared in 1981 with their underground hit "Funk You Up". But in 1984 a point of pivotal importance in the development of women's rap occurred. A male group called UTFO released a song "Roxanne Roxanne" which prompted several responses from black and Latino women. The most popular of these was "Roxanne's Revenge" which was written and recorded by a 14 year old girl from Long Island City, named Lolita Shante Gooden, who took the stage name Roxanne Shante. This song was extremely important in the development of rap, because it raised "disrespect" or "dis" rap to new levels, and brought female rap into the mainstream (Guevara 349; Perkins, "Rap Attack" 16; Valdes 57). Dis rap, although not a separate rap subgenre, permeates most forms of rap. It involves the rap artist making direct insults about that artist's competitors or enemies. In "Roxanne's Revenge", Shante wrote a rap which directly responded to the sexist accusations made against women in UTFO's "Roxanne Roxanne". After Shante's hit, dis became one of the most prominent features of rap. It was used by rap artists to emphasise their own language and lyrical abilities while "disrespecting" those of their competition.

Following Shante's success, a new wave of female rap emerged and at the forefront was a group called Salt N Pepa. Cheryl "Salt" James, Sandra "Pepa" Denton, and their disc jockey (DJ) Deirdre "Spinderella" Roper, formed their group in Queens, New York and they have been hailed by some as the most commercially successful female rap act in both the United States and Britain (Kolawole 12; Valdes 350). Challenging men in songs such as "Tramp" and "Independent", Salt N Pepa used lyrics involving pop sensibility in conjunction with a feminist attitude to rise to success. Another prominent female rap artist is Queen Latifah (Dana Owens) who emerged from New Jersey in 1989. Latifah chose to assume a royal black female image, emphasising in her lyrics the importance of roots and culture as well as encouraging females to stand up for themselves (Allen 175; Decker 117). Other female rappers embraced gangsta rap, and are finding huge commercial success in the portrayal of themselves as "gangsta bitches" (Valdes 356). These include Foxy Brown, Da Brat, Eve and Lil' Kim, all rappers who have adopted this particularly aggressive form of rap to raise issues regarding their relationships with men and to talk about their lives in the hood (Rose, *Black Noise* 174).

Because rap has always been dominated by males, it has taken women rappers a very long time to achieve any recognition. At first, women featured mainly as decoration, standing beside DJs or dancing behind male MCs, or depicted in secondary roles as bystanders rather than as active participants (Guevara 51; K. O'Brien 1; Rose, "One Queen" 317; Valdes 349). From the beginning, sexism and misogyny were common elements in the lyrics of rap music (Allen 175; George 130; Harrison 165; hooks, *Outlaw* 117) and men overwhelmingly dominated the rap scene. However, more female rappers began to emerge and many have set out to define a prominent and respectable place for themselves in the rap world. Not only have they played a vital role in changing the attitudes toward women within the rap community, but also, through their lyrics, they have been largely responsible for raising a variety of other issues. Like all rappers, they maintain an ongoing dialogue with their audiences but they also address the lyrics of male rappers, challenging male views on violence, sexuality, race and culture (Rose, *Black Noise* 146).

In many ways, women have experienced far more opposition to their involvement in rap music than have men. Rapping has strong roots in activities which have tended to be predominantly engaged in by males, such as African war chants, and street games like "toasting" and "dozens", all of which are types of verbal contests that emphasise the speaker's linguistic abilities (Kelley 140; Shusterman 615; Toop 94). Because of this, women have had to work much harder to be recognised in the rap industry, as they are fighting prejudices not only against their race, but against their gender.

Female artists have always tended to be marginalised in the entertainment world (Kolawole 12; Perry 526; Rose, *Black Noise* 154; Valdes 357), and female rap artists are no exception. There is a commonly held misconception that women's lyrics are not valid; that somehow men's interpretations of women and their motives are far more sound than a woman's own declarations (Smith 127). The media assist greatly in maintaining women's secondary position within rap music, with a tendency to ignore, negate or stereotype women's participation in the rap industry (Butler and Paisley 290; Guevara 51). However, female rappers oppose these misconceptions, not simply by objecting to these views, but by speaking in very different and quite distinct ways. They present their own positions on gender politics, often challenging the sexism of many male rappers and articulating the black experience in their own terms (Morris 80).

Female rappers, however, do not merely complain about the unjust treatment by men or the dominant negative characterisations of women. Instead, they are intent on redefining their roles as women, and placing themselves in positions of power (Irving 117; L. O'Brien 16). Speaking with force and authority, female rappers use their lyrics to assert their strength and articulate their desires. Many of them draw energy from a simultaneous discussion of race and gender. Through their lyrics, female rappers make explicit and overt assertions about female strength and autonomy, and at the same time they discuss issues central to the African-American experience in general.

Some female rappers take a strong feminist stance in their lyrics, but most seem content with acknowledging that they are female and do not consciously adopt a feminist identity. Many of them realise that, simply by being women, they are able to articulate and elaborate upon competing interests between men and women within the black community (Decker 116). Their rap music is not inherently feminist or political (Guevara 56; Roberts 142) and many female rappers are able to use their lyrics and particular characteristics of rap to emphasise the strengths of women without consciously assuming a feminist stance. Their lyrics not only offer an alternative to the sexism of many male rappers, but they also articulate the African-American experience in something other than male terms. Female rappers add an important and often alternative perspective in a male-dominated industry.

Since female rappers first emerged, there has been considerable controversy over how they promote themselves in order to sell records. Many female rappers use their sexuality to gain a wider audience. Several view their femininity as intrinsically related to their sexual attractiveness and men's desire for them. At the other end of the scale, however, are female rappers who, although explicitly labelling themselves as "feminine", present themselves in ways that have often been criticised as lacking any physical or verbal signs

of femininity (Kolawole 11; Perry 528). Instead of donning bra tops and tight mini skirts, these rap artists clothe themselves in a more subdued manner. By doing this, they are stating that they wish to be taken seriously as artists and not just as objects of sexual desirability.

For the more conservatively dressed female rappers, being taken seriously means being seen as a subject rather than an object. These artists are concerned that many female rappers have become objectified, selling records largely because of their bodies and not because of their talent as rappers. Refusing to become objectified by wearing sexually provocative clothing, they emphasise the importance of their voice to their success as performers. They command respect because their popularity is based on the complexity of their lyrics and the strength of their delivery, not on how much of their body they reveal.

Black female rappers have been praised for their ability to present various issues in a manner which is both original and unique. They are an important and resistive voice in rap and in contemporary women's cultural production in general (Rose, *Black Noise* 182). Thankfully, with the emergence of more and more female rappers, the notion of female inferiority in the rap world is gradually changing. This is clearly reflected in the increasing number of female rap album sales and the prominence of women in the rap charts today (Rose, *Black Noise* 154; Valdes 356). As the number of strong females entering the rap scene increases, a more balanced perception of rap is beginning to take effect. After all, the reason rap remains one of the most innovative of all forms of modern music is its ability to adjust to changing times and to constantly reinvent itself (Cowan 8; Shuker 248). With the increasing popularity of female rap artists, rap has been forced, once again, to adapt itself to change.

## **Aims of the Thesis**

The present research was conducted to examine key elements in the lyrics of black female rap. Initially, the research was to be conducted on every female rapper in the music industry who had released two or more rap albums. However, early on, it became quite clear that there was a very large number of female rappers in the music industry, just in America. Many of these rappers had not gained much exposure in New Zealand, hence many of their works were not available here. Others were a part of the "underground" rap scene in America which made their texts extremely difficult, even impossible, to locate. So the selection was narrowed down to a handful of prominent and easily accessible female rappers. Even then, however, it became evident that a full analysis of their lyrics would generate data far too extensive for a Masters Thesis. It seemed more realistic to focus on a single female rapper, one who had been important to the development of

female rap. Although this would limit cross-artist comparisons it would allow a broader and more in-depth look at the works of that artist. By extensively analysing the lyrics of most of her raps, the focus would be to identify major themes and language techniques and any developments in these across time.

This thesis provides a lyrical analysis of the albums of MC Lyte, looking at the development of her song lyrics from the release of her first album in 1988 through to her latest in 1998. MC Lyte was chosen because she was one of the first female rappers to emerge from the predominantly male rap scene and she has continued to make recordings up to the present day<sup>3</sup>. Her albums, which have spanned a decade of rap music, seemed to provide a good example of female rap lyrics and how these lyrics have changed and developed from the early days of rap to the present day. Lyte's emergence on the rap scene has been hailed as the moment when hip hop reached a new dimension and she has often been pinpointed as the leader in the reinvention of female rap (Perkins, "Rap Attack" 31; Valdes 353).

## MC Lyte

Born in Queens, New York in 1972, MC Lyte (Lana Moorer) released her debut single "I Cram To Understand U" in 1988, at the tender age of 16. She has since released six albums; *Lyte As A Rock* (1988), *Eyes On This* (1989), *Act Like U Know* (1991), *Ain't No Other* (1993), *Bad As I Wanna B* (1996) and *Seven And Seven* (1998). Lyte has always approached her career with both commitment and integrity. Concerned with being taken seriously as an artist, Lyte has contributed to changing the nature of hip hop. Unlike many of her female counterparts, Lyte has refused to use her physical sexuality as a means by which to sell records. She has also used her status as a rap artist to appear in public-service campaigns for AIDS awareness and to visit schools for the Stop the Violence movement (Valdes 353).

As a rapper, Lyte has been identified as hard-hitting and confrontational, not afraid to "tell it like it is" (Costello and Wallace 5). She has managed to successfully survive in the very male-dominated scene of rap music, and has done this by not only entertaining her listeners, but by challenging them. To both her female and male audience members, Lyte offers street-smart advice, and suggests alternative solutions to problems in relationships (Perkins, "Rap Attack" 31; Rose, *Black Noise* 161). She makes strong use of disrespect, while countering any disrespect shown towards her by using clever comebacks and witty assertions.

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<sup>3</sup> Lyte is still releasing single tracks, but a new album, although imminent, has not yet been released.

Lyte is considered to have a gift for telling a story, and uses lyrical wit and “dis” to reveal truths about the harsh realities of life in the ghetto and to make important comments on the romantic interactions between men and women (Irving 116; Perkins, “Rap Attack” 30; Rose, *Black Noise* 155; Valdes 353). In choosing the name MC Lyte (making a play on the word “light”), she claims to offer an illuminating perspective on life, a radical revisioning of what her audience encounter every day (Roberts 147). By identifying and critiquing the terms of courtship, for both men and women, Lyte instigates the exploration and revision of a woman’s role in the courtship process (Rose, *Black Noise* 161). She asserts the need for women to be fearless and self-possessed and, although she emphasises the importance of being strong and street-smart, Lyte does not relinquish her femininity (Perry 526). By offering a woman’s interpretation of the terms of heterosexual relationships, Lyte’s raps have been commended for their ability to throw new light on male-female sexual power relations (Rose, *Black Noise* 155).

But it appears that Lyte’s success as a rapper is not due solely to the subject-matter of her rap music. She seems to use, whether consciously or not, a number of lyrical techniques and devices that enhance her music. A major aim of this thesis was to examine, not only the topics she talked about and what she said about them, but also what lyrical tools she employed to strengthen and enhance her presentation.



# Methodology

## Rationale for Selection of Texts and Approach to Analysis

This research examined the vocabulary, subject-matter, literary devices and other language techniques used by MC Lyte, and investigated whether any changes have occurred over time, across her albums. It focused on the spoken words of MC Lyte and their meaning, not on lyrics which she sang. Including only the rap texts is consistent with the definition given by several theorists that rap is a series of words chanted or spoken in time to rhythms (Bayles 341; Hebdige 136). Texts were transcribed directly from the covering booklets of MC Lyte's CDs and where lyrics were not included in the covers, they were downloaded from song lyric websites on the Internet.

Like many rap artists, MC Lyte features guest artists on some tracks of her albums, particularly in more recent recordings. Only rap texts where MC Lyte performed alone were included in the analysis, as this thesis focused on her writing and rapping. As the language devices and literary techniques of MC Lyte were of central concern, it was also important that all songs analysed were either written, or co-written, by MC Lyte. Lyrics written solely by anyone else were omitted.

This thesis focuses on what MC Lyte has to say and how she says it. No attempt was made to give an explicitly feminist analysis on Lyte's song lyrics although a feminist stance has often been taken by commentators on women's rap (hooks, *Black Looks* 35; Rose, *Black Noise* 152). Considering the nature of the research and the content of many of the songs being analysed, it was inevitable that this thesis would touch on certain feminist issues. While gender specific issues were not emphasised, if they were an integral part of a rap, they were addressed using the same tools of analysis chosen to analyse other important issues.

While the main concern in this research has been with the lyrics and language techniques utilised by MC Lyte, completely omitting the performance factor of rap music would have been unrealistic. Where it appeared relevant to the understanding and meaning of the rap lyrics, elements of musical analysis were incorporated. These, however, were only used to elucidate the lyrical analysis or elaborate on it.

Theorists have addressed the question of why songs have words and the social importance of lyrics. It has been suggested that there are certain flaws in assuming that,

by analysing song lyrics, conclusions can be made that popular songs reflect general social attitudes (Frith 105). In the present study, sociological conclusions have not been drawn about Lyte's lyrics. Nor has any attempt been made to evaluate the actual effect of her lyrics on her listeners. The focus was on the lyrics *per se*, as the aim was to identify how MC Lyte constructs meaning through her use of language, vocabulary and word manipulation. By divorcing each song from its actual performance or the words from their musical settings, each song was treated as a poem.

## **Method of Analysis**

In order to deconstruct the rap texts using literary analysis techniques, it was necessary to identify what literary form rap approximated. Rap music has been linked most closely with poetry, and more specifically, "street poetry", a subgenre of "performance poetry" (Cashmore 155; Eyerman and Jamison 105; Shuker 247). Similarities exist between rap and street poetry in that both are socially and politically defined and both emphasise the importance of the audience (Beasley 32; Dawes 15). The rap audience, like the audience of street poetry is deemed to be the poor and the illiterate; therefore the language is simple and uncomplicated (Dawes 15). Like street poetry, rap relies heavily on the language of "street culture" and is, in many instances, inaccessible to those who have no understanding of the allusions and lexical improvisations that are common to that culture (Dawes 15). In fact, some theorists have asserted that much of the emerging street poetry being written currently amounts to rap stylings; so much so, critics often find it difficult to distinguish between the two as both forms use the same patterns, rhythms and postures of language, and often the themes are the same (Dawes 18).

Allowing that rap texts could be successfully deconstructed using analysis tools similar to those of poetry critics, it was necessary to obtain a means by which to clearly define some common literary elements of poetry. A book entitled "Poetry: An Introduction" by Ruth Miller and Robert A. Greenberg was chosen as the authors' intention in compiling this book was to enable students to "read poems with understanding...and to provide them with a basic vocabulary for analysing and talking about poems" (vii). This was in line with the aims of this thesis. While other books on poetry analysis might have been chosen, this particular text provided a comprehensive and accessible guide to analysis that could be applied systematically to the chosen rap texts. The various elements of poetry, as defined by Miller and Greenberg, were used as a guideline by which to analyse the rap texts. An in-depth investigation was conducted on each rap text, using their tools of analysis, to identify the different literary techniques and language devices used.



Many of the elements of poetry analysis were applicable to the analysis of rap lyrics. As when analysing poetry, it was helpful to consider in each rap text the following elements:

- the "speaker" or the person in whose voice the lyrics were presented (narrative technique)
- the particular setting, as this often contributes to a text's effect and meaning
- the subject or theme of the text
- how the language was used and the effects of sound and sound patterns on it by identifying common elements of poetry such as rhyme, diction, allusion, figurative language, slang, incomplete sentences, word order, enjambment, consonance, assonance, personification, imagery, repetition, alliteration and imperatives.

Following the analysis of each text, common characteristics across albums were summarised and the way MC Lyte used these to convey meaning was discussed. Developments across albums were also identified, with specific reference being made to any significant changes in the subject-matter and the complexity of her language techniques.

# Textual Analysis

## Lyte As A Rock (1988)

### Lyte As A Rock

In this song, Lyte discusses her abilities as a rap artist, and talks about her different lyrical skills. She begins by asserting her position as a strong, independent woman. She is not the least bit hesitant, immediately using imperatives to instruct her audience:

“Move out the way”

“Step back”

“Get out my face”

She is aggressive and angry in tone as she speaks to those men in her audience who try to “score” her. Lyte seems frustrated as she has to repeat herself. She asks several questions, emphasising her frustration:

“Must I say it again?”

“Me, heavy?”

“First base?”

Speaking directly to these men, referring to them as “you” and attacking them straight to their face, Lyte uses repetition to emphasise how pathetic she thinks their attempts are:

“You smile, you wink, you big fake flake”

“You beg, you borrow, now you have to learn”

Lyte makes specific reference to the title of her song playing with the idea of her name and using it in reference to size or weight. Lyte claims to be as “lyte as a rock”, a “boulder” in particular, powerful and destructive. She continues the allusion to herself as a rock, a strong firmly placed object, showing that she is grounded and supportive, describing herself as having “stability, potential and strength”. Here Lyte claims that others can rely on her to be stable and honest and she criticises others for not having the same power as her:

“Yes I am a Rock and you are a pebble”

comparing their skills and gifts with hers by using size to make her point.

Lyte talks constantly about her skills, and warns her audience to never underestimate her abilities, stating that she is the “World Ultimate” and that “no one can stop me”. Lyte asserts that she is a “scholar”, implying that she is knowledgeable and knows exactly what she is talking about. She is the “leader of the hip hop followers” and repeats the

claim that she “can’t be stopped”. Lyte encourages her listeners to have confidence in her ability to not only make good music, but also to offer good advice. Her ability to make good music comes out in Lyte’s use of repetition; she describes how the only thing which can control her is her rap music:

“I’m a slave, I’m a slave, I’m a slave to the rhythm”

She is in control of every other area of her life, but when it comes to making music, it is out of her hands; she lets the rhythm take hold of her and guide her to success.

### **MC Lyte Likes Swingin’**

Lyte begins this song with strength and conviction claiming:

“I may come on strong but that’s what you like  
You like a female MC who can handle the mic”

She is telling her audience that she knows what they enjoy, thereby controlling the situation. She maintains that everything she writes and performs is for the benefit of her listeners, for their enjoyment:

“I like to rap to make the whole world sing”

Lyte constantly reiterates to her audience how she is aiming to please them; she is giving them what they have requested. Lyte does this by speaking directly to her audience, using first person narrative technique. She refers to them in the second person as “you” and tells them that she has listened to their demands regarding what they want to hear, and she is providing rap music for them, which is in accordance with those demands:

“Never turn it down cause it’s what you requested”  
“You believe it too that’s why you never walk away  
You like the way I do it, you like my style  
Study it like a book cause you know I’m worth your while”

Lyte makes references to certain products and their accompanying slogans, which her audience would be familiar with, to emphasise her skill and ability to please people and provide them with music that they will enjoy:

“Like Coke is it, I hit the spot  
Like good vibrations, I’m like Sunkist  
The rap is smooth cause it’s sealed with Chapstick”

Lyte’s allusion to Coke implies that, like a cold, refreshing drink on a hot day, she is able to hit the mark exactly and satisfy her listeners with her music. The same applies to her reference to Sunkist - cool and refreshing, her rhymes are unique and provide her listeners with a sense of satisfaction. Lyte maintains that her rhymes glide and flow, a lot

like Chapstick as it is applied to dry lips. All these images add to Lyte's assertions that her rap music is a pleasurable experience for her audience:

"Lyte is good for ya"

Throughout the song Lyte makes reference to the fact that she is a "female MC", asserting her position not only as a strong talented rapper, but also as a strong talented rapper who is a woman:

"I'm the type of female, well I like to swing"

Lyte challenges her audience to question her, completely confident in her ability. By using repetition, Lyte stresses that she has got the answers to everything because, as she constantly asserts, she is ready for anything:

"Ask me what's important, I'll tell you time and effort"

"Ask me how I do it, it's like scratchin' records"

## 10% Dis

Lyte begins this song by being extremely confrontational. Discussing those who try to disrespect her and copy her style and technique, Lyte challenges her competition by using repetition:

"Hit me why don'tcha, hit me why don'tcha"

Lyte encourages her enemies to dare to cross the line; she obviously has no fear and has complete confidence in her ability to outdo her competition. Lyte proves this to her listeners by manipulating her words and juggling tenses and word order within sentences:

"Suckers steal a beat, when you know they can't win

You stole the beat, are you havin' fun?"

"You are what I label as a nerve plucker

You're pluckin' my nerves, you MC sucka"

Lyte uses this technique to criticise her competition, to emphasise the fact that they annoy her with their inability to be original in their rap music. Making specific reference to James Bond, Lyte draws parallels between herself and him:

"My word is Bond

Like James, killin' everybody in sight"

Lyte knows that her audience will be familiar with this movie character who is known for his ability to charm as well as destroy all enemies. A well-trained professional who gets the job done, Lyte alludes to him, claiming that she, too, will eliminate all competition with the same skill as Bond.

Using imperatives, Lyte maintains control by commanding:

“Follow instructions, don’t lose context”

“Don’t turn away”

“Don’t boast”

and she reduces her competition to nothing as she angrily criticises everything they do, claiming that they have no skills or ability at all. Lyte calls them “a cheatin’ mic”, “a fuckin’ liar” and “a joke”. She maintains that:

“If a beat is not for sale, then it can’t be bought”

“I think you oughta stop, before you gets in too deep”

“You’re chasin’ a chuckwagon”

and claims that her competition steal other rapper’s styles and technique, something which is highly criticised in the rap industry.

Using phrases that would be familiar to her audience, Lyte addresses them in street slang. By using this device, Lyte creates a sense of community between herself and her listeners; they share a common vocabulary and she invites them to join her in her experiences:

“Wait for some female to step up and pop junk”

“Now I’m not tryin to say that I’m into static”

“So I sit around the way for you to make my day”

Lyte is upfront and honest in her rhymes, she does not hide behind a persona and talk about things she does not understand. Unlike fake rappers, Lyte maintains that she is a young woman from the streets who writes her own raps, and talks about experiences she has really had, which are by no means fabricated:

“Others write your rhymes, while I write my own

I don’t create a character, when I’m on the microphone

I am myself, no games to be played

No script to be written, no scene to be made”

This is very important to any rap audience - they do not want to hear rappers talking about issues or situations that they have never experienced. Lyte draws her audience to her by maintaining that she is one of them, talking of common experiences and situations she shares with her listeners.

Speaking metaphorically, Lyte threatens to cause physical injury to her enemies, making specific reference to different parts of their bodies:

“We can go for the hands”

“Cause I’m just about ready to fly this fist

Against your lips”

“And I’m a serve then burn ya like a piece of toast

Pop you in the microwave to watch your head bubble  
Your skin just crumble”

Lyte uses these verbal threats as a form of defence against her competition, warning them to stay clear of her.

### **Paper Thin**

Lyte asserts herself right from the beginning of this song, letting any prospective male suitors know that she is clued up on men’s techniques at trying to woo women and that she refuses to be manipulated by any man. Talking directly to the men in her audience, Lyte addresses them as “you” and refers to herself in the first person, using “I” and “me”. Using this narrative technique, Lyte lists all the fake ways in which men will try to pick women up, identifying many of the techniques men use, which her audience, particularly the females, can easily relate to. She shows how she reacts to them:

“When you say you love me, it doesn’t matter

It goes to my head as just chit chatter”

“What you say I take none of it seriously”

“I hate when one attempts to analyse”

“I despise those who even try

To look into my eyes to see what I’m thinking”

By listing the different tricks men use, Lyte makes her audience all aware that nothing gets past her; she is clued up on their methods of persuasion but she can see through all that, calling their attempts “paper thin”, reiterating the title of the song.

Lyte is forceful and dominant when talking to her audience, and particularly when addressing any males who may be interested in her. She speaks in imperatives and instructs them:

“Step off, grab your coat and get lost”

“Wrap your scarf around your throat and go back and catch a rope”

Lyte is aggressive in her instructions, and shows that she refuses to be manipulated by any man. This she also emphasises by using the lyrics of another song “Hit the Road, Jack” and changing the chorus to fit her own song:

“And hit the road Sam don’t you come back

No more, no more, no more, no more

Hit the road Sam, don’t you come back no more”

Lyte’s listeners would be familiar with these lyrics and would recognise the words. The repetition of certain phrases, like “hit the road”, “don’t you come back” and “no more”

adds emphasis to the fact that Lyte is adamant about her position, and refuses to let anyone who will abuse her or treat her badly stay around.

Lyte also makes it quite clear that she is not out to take advantage of men:

“I’m not the kind of girl to try to play a man out”

Instead, she enters a relationship cautiously, showing that she is careful when allowing a man into her life, stating that:

“I take precaution when choosing my mate”

and describing the different steps she goes through on each date. She spells out exactly what she will or will not allow a man to do, using words like “simple” and “easy” to describe her reasoning. Identity is of central concern to Lyte and she claims to be the one calling all the shots, as she asserts:

“I know who I am”

and that once she finds someone she cares for then she gives of herself completely:

“I give it my heart

I mean my mind, my soul, my body, I mean every part”

From these descriptions it is clear that Lyte has a strong side which refuses to be misled by men, but once she trusts in a man, then she allows herself to love completely, letting her guard down.

### **Lyte Thee MC**

In this song, Lyte plays around with her name, referring to herself in the third person. By using this narrative technique, Lyte stresses that she commands respect wherever she goes:

“From now on it’s not MC Lyte

Listen up everyone, it’s Lyte thee MC”

and by using the word “thee”, Lyte implies that she is old-fashioned, traditional and deserving of a formal title.

Having asserted that she is the one in control, demanding respect, Lyte proceeds to outline everything that she does not like about certain people and certain situations. She does this in an aggressive manner, asserting her position and viewpoint. Lyte uses physical descriptions of aggression to describe how she will deal with any competition:

“Tacklin’ anyone who tries to stop me”

and she does not hesitate to call her competition names like “sucker” and “Bigfoot”, claiming superiority over them as they are “uncivilised”, and that their raps are primitive compared with hers.

Lyte asserts her skills as a gifted rapper, claiming that she is always in control of her audience:

“I am the talker you’re just the listener”

and describes how rap music is her outlet for venting any anger or frustration she feels:

“Release all the anger all the aggravation

Convert it into word, just sorta like a conversation”

Lyte claims that her rap has a “logic” to it and that many cannot comprehend the complexity of her raps:

“The problem is you can’t understand”

Lyte asserts that her presence commands respect wherever she goes:

“Everything is silent just in case I want to talk”

and this respect is justified as she is knowledgeable and gives advice which is valuable:

“Every rhyme I say, you ought to appreciate it”

Lyte is confident in her skills and ability to outdo any other rapper. She comments that:

“Competition I take it is good for the soul”

“Competition I take it is food for the mind”

and encourages others to try and challenge her. Lyte is fully aware of those who try to imitate her style and technique, calling them “suckers” and criticising them for being original. Using street slang to describe their tricks, Lyte relates to her audience by using vocabulary they will understand:

“All the mess you be talkin’

Meanwhile hawkin’”

“Suckers in the corner just keep on clockin’”

Using the personal pronoun “you” to attack them directly, and referring to herself in the first person, Lyte makes accusations against her imitators:

“You see the green I wear, you go buy the same sweater

You look me up and down, it’s like the jeans

You go to Macey’s and for hours you stand

On line just to buy what you saw Lyte wearing”

She confronts her competition, letting them know that she knows how they envy her and want to be just like her, copying not only her style of rapping but her style of dressing too. Lyte launches an all-out attack by following line after line with examples of how they try to copy her original styles. She leaves no room for confusion, by addressing them as “you”, identifying exactly who the perpetrators are. Yet even though she enjoys making rap music, Lyte stresses that it is something which must be taken seriously, especially if



one wishes to be successful. Lyte alludes to when she was younger and could have a good time:

“Sorry silly rabbit, tricks are for kids  
Brings back memories of the things I did  
Play jokes on suckers just for the fun  
But now I’m much older those days are done  
Everything is business forget about games”

Lyte emphasises that she likes to have a good time but she must remain focused at all times so that her listeners will enjoy and benefit from her music, and she, in turn, will be taken seriously as an artist.

### **I Cram To Understand U**

In this song Lyte talks about a relationship she once had with a young man named Sam. In retrospect, she questions how she could have ever loved him, saying “I don’t know why” but asserts that, at the time, he was “number one”. Here, Lyte identifies with her audience, as many of them would have been in the same situation as her, falling for someone and not noticing any of their faults, or at least ignoring these flaws, until reflecting on the situation later:

“I shoulda knew the consequences right from the start”  
“But like a fool in love I fell for his game”

Lyte uses incorrect grammar and street slang, to retell her story so that her audience will understand the allusions she is making. By talking about herself in the first person, telling the story from her own viewpoint, Lyte uses her own situation as an example to her listeners.

Lyte takes extra steps to give her story credibility. By making references to her home city Brooklyn, Lyte identifies with her listeners who are also from Brooklyn, talking about specific places or hangouts there:

“In Empire winked his eye, and then he kept walkin’  
And all of those who live in Brooklyn know just what I’m talkin’  
The roller disco where we all used to go  
Just to have some fun back in 1981  
You know the place, Empire Boulevard”

Lyte knows that those from Brooklyn will be familiar with the Empire, and by using the collective pronoun “we”, Lyte implies that all of them have been there at some stage - it is a common place where they all may have met. This use of “we” makes Lyte’s experience more believable and authentic - she is one of them going through the same experiences as her audience, therefore she can be trusted.

Lyte describes how she is introduced to Sam at the roller disco, and they have some light conversation. Using consonance and playing around with similar sounding words, Lyte says:

“We dipped and we dapped and we chit and we chat”

They gradually get to know each other, making the usual small talk of young people recently introduced. However, this is in stark contrast to what Sam says next:

“He said: ‘Look, I’m in the mood for love’

which strikes both Lyte, and her listeners, as unusual. They have only just met and already he is talking about love. However, his next comment reveals his true intentions:

“Let’s go to my house, lay back and get nice”

Lyte sees through his charm when he uses this line. Obviously trying to get her into bed, Lyte asserts that he should “slow down” as she is “not one of the girls to go rippin’ around”. Lyte refuses to be used for sex, and outlines this clearly to both Sam and her audience.

Gradually their relationship develops, and Lyte retells little incidents that occur, situations which should have had her concerned about whether she could trust Sam:

“I walked into the door, there was a girl on the couch”

“You said: ‘Wait Lyte, you’re confused, this girl is my cousin’”

As she describes the different scenarios, her audience are able to see clearly that Sam is acting suspiciously and is obviously guilty and dishonest. In this way, Lyte puts her audience in a privileged position. By using this storytelling technique, Lyte warns her female listeners of certain signs which indicate that the men in their lives are not being completely upfront. Lyte herself is warned by others that Sam is a drug dealer, but instead of listening she gets all defensive, claiming it is none of their business, aggressively telling them to “fuck up”. Lyte describes herself as “mad” and “offended” and responding to those trying to help her in “an aggravated tone”. This is all tied up in her sense of pride, as Lyte puts it:

“When I wanna find out, I find out on my own”

Even though she begins to suspect that Sam is not being true to her, especially after what everyone keeps telling her, Lyte still desires him and feels that she needs him. As Lyte describes it:

“My heart kept yellin’

Burning, begging for affection from you Sam”

By using these verbs to describe how she feels, Lyte gives off a sense of desperation, a need to love and be loved by this man. She gives him money and continues to support him, but finally she reaches breaking point and walks out on him. Later she learns that Sam was not only dealing drugs but he was also addicted to crack. Looking back, Lyte

sees that she was given clues all along the way, from Sam's unusual behaviour to other people's advice, but she did not want to take any notice. Instead, she chose to learn the hard way. By sharing her experience with her listeners, Lyte has used her story to help her audience, to prevent them from making the same mistakes she did.

#### **Kickin' 4 Brooklyn**

This song, as the title implies, is about being in Brooklyn, and Lyte describes how the people there like to have a good time:

"Now I was rockin' this party in the 90s for Brooklyn  
You know where the people get hype and rock a party  
From Friday to Saturday night"

"That's the thing about Brooklyn, they never get enough  
Of the rap and the music and all the good stuff"

By talking about the neighbourhood in which she grew up, Lyte draws a sense of community between herself and those in her audience who are also from Brooklyn.

Lyte then proceeds to talk about herself and her untouchable skills as a rapper, describing how good she is, and how good everyone else in Brooklyn thinks she is:

"I still hold the mic  
I try to put it down and say that I'm through  
But they give it back to me and say continue"

Lyte reiterates this point by using repetition, to show how she can maintain her audience's interest and they enjoy her rapping skills:

"Respect is the crowd, the crowd that I draw"

Lyte also uses repetition to emphasise that there is no chance of her ever being disrespected as her skills and ability are too great to compete with; no one dares take her on:

"Never am I dissed and never ever shall I be"

To prove her point, Lyte gives an example of one young woman who tries to compete with her. This particular young woman challenges Lyte saying:

"let's see what you can do"

and as Lyte begins to rap, her competition starts to "shake" as she realises that competing with Lyte was "truly a mistake". Lyte shows here how she is feared by others because of her skills, saying that:

"before I turned around she was down the street"

Lyte has asserted that she is an awesome rapper, and now that she has gained the audience's respect, she goes on to compliment them and congratulate them on their ability

to “get hype” and “get down”, that is their ability to have fun and enjoy themselves. They are a single unit, her and her listeners, all wanting one thing - to have a good time, something which Lyte promises to provide. She identifies with her fellow rap lovers by using repetition:

“So hip hoppers hip hoppers from all around”

and invites all of her audience, even those from outside Brooklyn, to join her and “get with the funky sound”.

### **Don't Cry Big Girls**

In this song Lyte talks about the importance of expressing herself through rap. Lyte identifies who she is early on:

“This is Lyte”

ensuring that her audience knows exactly who is talking and will associate the message of this rap with her. Lyte’s tone is nurturing and calm as she explains how she uses rap to express her feelings and to entertain while educating her audience:

“I choose to express my feelings this way”

“Just plainly emphasise the tone

In my voice”

“While I’m teaching I have no attitude”

Lyte emphasises that her raps are not just senseless rhymes churned out to make money. Instead, they are carefully structured from her own experiences, and carefully delivered. Lyte talks as if she has no control over what she says and does; the raps themselves take over her mind and body:

“Rhyme for rhyme I just can’t fight it

Can’t stop the flow, it’s just too persistent”

She talks about her inability to stop the constant rhythms and rhymes that seem to permeate her entire being, implying that rapping is an intrinsic part of her, something which she must share. Lyte takes charge, claiming that she will “never be beaten”. She alludes to herself as a farmer, suggesting that her listeners (her stock) are destined to be guided and led by her:

“Cause, yo, I’m like the farmer and y’all’s the cattle”

Lyte begins each new verse by repeating the last line of the previous verse. This helps to reiterate the point that she has last made before the chorus, as well as creating a sense of continuity throughout the song - each new idea leads on from the last.

Being a female is of central importance to Lyte and she stresses this point by using repetition of the word “girl”, identifying her characteristics and claiming they are synonymous with her gender:

“Lyte takes it like a big girl I’m no jive girl  
Comin’ direct telling you that I’m a live girl”

As Lyte addresses the females in her audience, she speaks directly to those who try to compete with her, referring to them as “you”:

“Be a big girl about it don’t you start crying  
That I mean I made you weep without even trying”

She claims to have the power to reduce her competition to tears and she has no remorse for her actions. Lyte asserts that she is ruthless and aggressive when it comes to those who try to compete with her. To add meaning to her message, Lyte makes reference to size and plays on the word “big” repeating it over and over, showing that it not only refers to physical appearance, but also to maturity and wisdom, particularly amongst females:

“Don’t talk behind my back confront me like a big girl”  
“Big girls, we don’t fight over men”  
“It’s also not a big girl’s style”  
“Lyte is the biggest of the big girls and now you know”  
“And to all the big girls, also the small girls  
You got time to grow up to be big girls”

Lyte suggests that the female members of her audience should listen to her advice, offering them the opportunity to grow into being responsible, independent and strong - Lyte’s definition of a “big girl”. By making reference to the Four Seasons hit “Big Girls Don’t Cry” and cleverly rearranging the words of the title to form an imperative statement, Lyte instructs her listeners. She implies that amongst the “big girls” she is the best, therefore there is no need for them to cry - it is simply the way it is.

## Eyes On This (1989)

### Slave 2 The Rhythm

Lyte begins this song in an extremely confrontational manner, calling the person she is speaking to a “hoe”, asserting who she is, and challenging them to a battle:

“Listen hoe, cause I’m the Lyte one  
And if you’re looking for a fight, you found the right one”

She speaks of fighting with others who challenge her, using words like “conquer” to describe her defeat over other rappers. However Lyte is quick to claim that she is never the “instigator” of these battles, but if she is provoked, then she refuses to ever back down:

“I never look for trouble but somehow it finds me  
But yo I just conquer it and leave it all behind me”

There is no doubt in her mind that she will never lose a battle; she just wins and then moves on.

Lyte describes herself as tough and “outspoken”, someone who is “direct” and who is undefeated. She threatens to leave others “chokin’” and even promises to stick a microphone “in your ass”. Her tone gradually becomes more and more aggressive, as she alludes to herself as a “fuckin’ tornado”, and her words are focused on fighting (and winning):

“I’ll beat you, defeat you, so quietly  
Sneak up and hit you”  
“I’ll slay an MC”

Lyte claims to defeat any competition verbally, by utilising her unstoppable skills as a rapper and MC. Using street slang, Lyte states:

“I’ll wax you and your posse, watch you trip and flinch  
As you drop the mic cause you don’t have the gift”  
“When it comes to dope rhymes on the mic I’m the creator”

In the second verse, Lyte continues to threaten those that disrespect her, warning others to think of the consequences they will face if they try to put her down:

“Yo I am no joke, I’m sharp like barb wire  
Try to touch me though, you’re bound to catch fire”

Here she reiterates that she is destructive and dangerous, and should not be messed with.

Moving on to other things besides disrespecting her enemies, Lyte asserts that she is an excellent rapper who looks at being creative in her raps, and discusses topics of

substance, topics which “bring me commendation”. She raises interesting questions, looking at subjects which can be “fun” or “serious”. But should anyone criticise her then she will not hesitate to “put one in their place”.

### **Cappucino**

Lyte describes visiting a cafe, getting caught up in the crossfire of a drug deal and getting shot. Using first person narrative, Lyte describes what happens and her thought processes in a stream of consciousness narrative. Everything happens so quickly and unexpectedly, and Lyte emphasises this by using words like “pronto”, “quick” and “fast”.

Lyte tells her audience of her sense of apprehension; she is aware of what will happen next as it is a familiar scenario in the hood, and Lyte knows that death is creeping up on her:

“I could feel from behind  
Death, it was getting closer, right behind my back”

Lyte maintains the total confusion with which she is thrown into this situation; the complete shock of everything that happens to her, as she describes being caught between life and death:

“then I died  
I could feel it, I was on the other side  
In between lives, I’m so confused  
What do I do, oh what do I do”

By repeating the last line, Lyte emphasises how lost she feels, how uncertain she is about what will happen next.

Lyte then asks a series of questions to emphasise her confusion:

“How much longer would the torture last?”  
“What do I do?”  
“Was it really time for me to go?”  
“Why oh why did I need cappucino?”

Lyte goes on to describe the afterlife, meeting up with old friends and people she knew from before. Her tone becomes more relaxed as she observes those around her. Lyte comments on those who have died before her, people who seemed to have died for senseless reasons:

“A couple had died in a drug world  
And this one guy died fighting over his girl  
Another died driving while intoxicated”

Lyte comments on what a waste it was for them to die for these reasons. She asks the rhetorical question:

“Why do people make livin’ so complicated?”

Lyte warns her audience, showing them that these lives should not have been ended so pointlessly. She offers them the opportunity to look at their own situations, or the situations of those around them, and to help them choose a different path; a path which will not end in an untimely, senseless death.

Lyte suddenly wakes up and realises it was all a dream. She is filled with elation when she realises that she has been asleep and she describes her happiness, using repetition:

“So glad to be given my life back

So glad to be livin’”

but then she immediately asks “or was dead better?”. Lyte goes on to describe the reality she *does* exist in; how those in the hood are constantly on the run from violence, drugs and other dangers. Questioning the society in which she and her audience live, Lyte comments that until society changes, maybe death is in fact a release from all the horrors that they find themselves living in everyday.

### **Stop, Look, Listen**

Lyte comments on how her skilful raps and clever style of rapping are constantly being copied by other rappers. She criticises these artists by claiming that they have “no trait of originality”, although it is of vital importance to any rapper to be original, fresh, new and creative.

Lyte reiterates that she knows exactly how to control the audience, and that she knows what they like:

“So you can start shakin’ and movin’ all around”

Her rhymes are perfect and complete. Lyte makes allusions to different gemstones, emphasising that her raps are priceless and unique:

“It’s new and improved like a freshly cut diamond

Perfect timin’ like a gem it’s shinin’

Or better yet a ruby, somewhat like a sapphire”

These descriptions help to emphasise that her style and technique are new and original and hard to find; rare and multi-faceted, just like a gemstone.

In the second verse, Lyte addresses directly those who try to compete with her, referring to them as “you” and herself as “I”, confronting them and making assertive statements about her skills:

“Drink and drive, yeah, you’re probably safer



Cause when I start, I never give slack

You feel like a 'kick me' sign was pinned to your back”

Lyte cleverly manipulates words to get her points across. First she uses slang words which rhyme, to describe herself. This emphasises her authentic roots, that she is from the streets:

“Yes I’m the supa dupa with the roper doper”

then she juggles words with the same sound but different meanings around, to show her control over the situation:

“I’m gonna strip you of your peace of mind

Now your piece is mine”

Lyte uses rhyme to emphasise that she is in command of not only the words she is using, but also those who are listening to her songs, particularly those who try to steal her style and technique:

“I tear it repair it

Like a hand-me-down make you wear it

Save all your crocodile tears, grin and bear it

And with all your other brothers you’re gonna share it”

Lyte asks several questions, as if to threaten the opposition, daring them to question her abilities or the instructions that she has given, belittling them as she asks:

“Wanna battle me?”

“You hear me junior?”

### **Throwin’ Words At U**

In this song, Lyte challenges anyone who thinks they can compete with her when it comes to rapping skill and ability. She is confident in her talent and claims:

“I’m a bet it

I hold the title, you might as well forget it

You can put me to the test, I’ll prove I am the best”

Lyte’s tone turns to one of aggression as she threatens her competition, using violent imagery and swear words:

“I rip out ya eyes, cut your tongue off

You can’t talk no more and let the bullshit walk”

“I raid you

I should punish those that mislead you”

“I beatcha ass in your own neighbourhood”

Lyte resorts to name-calling in order to denigrate her competition, claiming that she is on top, but her enemy is “a bitch” and “a half ass MC, a part-time hooker” with no talent, “an amateur”. In referring to her competition, Lyte talks about being “on a mission”, she has “territory that is soon to be conquered”. Lyte alludes to battles and fighting:

“So get equipped now prepare yourself for a fight”

“I’ve pulled your cord and I raid you”

and she continuously threatens those that try to compete with her:

“I’m taking out those that attempt to oppose me”

Lyte talks about being on a completely different level to other rappers, claiming to take her fans to a “new land”, that she is in a “new dimension” creating raps which reach a “new height” - she is in a place where “there ain’t no catching me”. By repeatedly using the word “new”, Lyte claims to be fresh and original, not only in her style and language techniques but also in the issues she talks about. She is the best, claiming that “MC Lyte’s on top of the pile”.

### **Survival Of The Fittest (Remix)**

Lyte immediately begins this song claiming that she is the most capable of surviving as she is strong and superior, making the statement:

“Survival of the fittest overcomes the weakly”

then she begins a full-on attack against those who try to disrespect and offend her. Lyte uses words such as “subtract”, “minus” and “eliminate” to portray what she will do to any competition. She emphasises that she has the “force” to overcome and get rid of anyone who stands in her way.

Lyte tells her audience how she can see through fake people, she is not fooled by them, using words from the streets to describe these types of liars:

“Those that try to front, and try to perpetrate”

Lyte relates to her audience in this way, using words they are familiar with, to describe people that many of them would be surrounded by. Lyte can see right through these people and pinpoints exactly how they act around her:

“Like they know me well when they don’t know me at all”

“Those that try to know me before they meet me”

Lyte is smart enough to see through their fake friendliness and refuses to be fooled by them, or seduced by their kind words or compliments.

Throughout the verses, Lyte constantly changes her narrative point of view, switching between describing herself in the third person:

“Like MC Lyte says, yo you’re gonna get boofed”

“cause it only takes Lyte one time”

“Lyte’ll take you places, you never would have seen”

to using first person narrative:

“Im not the egg to be cracked”

“So when I see you”

“Im the microphone controller”

In this way, she places more weight on the statements she is making. The audience are able to see that she has a lot of confidence in her own abilities, by referring to herself as “I” and making claims about her skills, but by referring to herself in the third person, she distances herself, implying that other people also agree with her and see her as speaking the truth; she asserts that other people agree with her convictions.

Lyte also uses repetition to emphasise particular points she wishes to make about how skilful she is as a rapper:

“It only takes Lyte one time

And one time only”

She only needs to announce herself once; others are so afraid of her and her skills that they only need to be told once.

Lyte also makes a play on her name, suggesting that she can light up the dark; she can illuminate the way for others, with her knowledge, skill and ingenuity:

“Lyte’ll take you places, you never would have seen

If it was dark, ya know what I mean”

In this way, Lyte instructs her audience, placing herself in a position of power, using her authority to guide them, and to demand respect for herself. Using imperatives, Lyte speaks directly to her audience using “I” and “me” to describe herself, and referring to her audience as “you”:

“Ya better be fully strapped”

“Show appreciation, gratitude is necessary”

“Don’t greet me”

“Move back, give me space to breathe”

As always, Lyte juggles words around and manipulates them to make her point:

“I’m not a pushover, so don’t push up on me

I’m not a sidewalk, so don’t try to walk on me”

Lyte refuses to be treated badly by anyone, and emphasises this point in the words she uses. Here, she outlines quite clearly what she is *not* and clarifies that nobody can treat her with disrespect. Maintaining the idea that she is always observant, Lyte makes several allusions to sight and seeing:

“I see people taken advantage of”

“But if you look hard you can see I work overtime”

Nothing gets past her as she is too aware of what is going on around her to miss anything. Lyte is in control and knows exactly what she wants. As she ends the song, Lyte offers some advice to those endeavouring to be rappers. Using imperatives, she instructs them as one who has more knowledge and experience:

“Watch the solar system never stop lookin”

“Show and prove that they can get into it”

“Try your best and use full strategy”

### **Shut the Eff Up!**

Lyte begins this song by claiming to be the best, the champion in any situation:

“Lyte is winning

Any battle in any competition”

She boasts of her ability to knock out anyone who tries to compete with her, but she does all this in a casual manner, without stress:

“So I sit back and relax, cause it makes me laugh”

Lyte shows her audience that she is not going to get all worked up because someone chooses to disrespect her; Lyte is smart enough to know what is going on, she doesn't need to get all stressed out about it.

Lyte maintains the idea that she is extremely watchful and observant, and is constantly aware of what is going on around her. She emphasises this by stating:

“Like a watchtower, hour by hour

Lyte is rhymin, perfect timin”

She knows what her competition is up to because she has been observing them. However, she bides her time, knowing exactly the right moment to strike.

Lyte uses repetition to emphasise certain statements, juggling the same words around in her sentences:

“You have all waited, now you can stop waiting”

“When you're dissed, you're dissed”

She is the one in control, now that she's decided the time is up, they can all stop waiting. Once someone has been beaten and disrespected by her, then there is no comeback for them. The decision is final.

In the second verse, Lyte is less relaxed and more confrontational and angry in her tone. She uses harsher language and her comments are quite sarcastic. A series of questions open the verse, emphasising the uncertainty of the young woman whom Lyte is disrespecting:

"The first thing you ask yourself is 'why do I bother?'"

When you should really ask 'where is the father?'"

"Aren't we wild?"

"Everyone has been in you, isn't that sad?"

"Bodily vibrations? Don't make me laugh."

Lyte makes cutting comments about her enemy, using the simile:

"You get around like a cab, now that's too bad

Everyone has been in you"

Lyte uses this simile to make the point that this young woman sleeps around and no one has any respect for her, least of all Lyte. People treat her like a cab, she has been all over town with different men "inside" her. Lyte also uses repetition to emphasise that this young woman is really stupid; she is not gaining anything by living this kind of life:

"You ain't gettin loose, you fuckin' jerk

And you ain't gettin paid, you're just gettin laid"

Lyte is cold and harsh about the reality of the situation, and she points this out by the use of swear words. Continuing to directly address her audience, Lyte makes a reference to her name by incorporating visual imagery into the verse:

"You will get nowhere, the Lyte is too blinding"

"Step back, let the Lyte shine"

Her awesome ability to light the way, overwhelms those around her; Lyte fills the darkness and enlightens others with her style and technique.

Lyte continues to instruct and command respect from her audience in the third verse by using far more imperatives:

"Don't dare to sleep or even prey on"

"Step aside"

and this helps to maintain the idea that she is in control; Lyte demands that others pay attention to what she has to say. She continues to use repetition for emphasis, particularly when referring to herself and the skills that she has:

“I’m far far far from dumb”

Lyte also mixes two tenses within sentences for added emphasis:

“You either have to teach yourself, or you have to be taught”

“Like I said and I will have to say”

Lyte shows that regardless of time, whether it be in the present, the past, or the future, she will always be the authority on rap and she will always be the one calling the shots and instructing others. Lyte frequently makes claims about being so much better than everyone else:

“The Lyte is too wicked, too worthy, too strong”

“Lyte Thee MC is in charge”

“Here on this earth I reign superior”

It is important for her to maintain her position above others, so she reminds her audience on a regular basis that she is the one they should pay attention to. Lyte emphasises the fact that she is smart and perceptive. She knows, before others do, what is going to happen next:

“I sensed it, predicted it, knew it would happen”

As the verses continue Lyte’s anger gradually mounts, and this comes out in the words she chooses to use. She warns her enemies:

“Now I was quite polite, nice I might add  
But you insist on stayin, that makes me mad”

Lyte calls her competition names:

“you wig-wearin clown”

and questions them, confronting them, using swear words:

“do you know who you’re fuckin’ with?”

Lyte is now concerned with payback and threatens to “get evil”. In her anger, Lyte uses several allusions to appliances that will cause harm to her competition:

“I popped your head in a microwave  
I’m into blenders now, so you better behave  
Or put you in a toaster, because you’re getting toasted  
Better yet an oven, because you’re gettin’ roasted”

All these images imply that Lyte is going to “cook” or liquidise her competition - they are nothing but a piece of meat to her and she will take charge of the situation, heating things up and leaving her competition for dead.

## I Am The Lyte

This song is filled with street slang and street talk as Lyte describes her abilities as a rapper:

“I’m hype in this episode  
Cold carrying the extra wide load  
The beat is phat and the rhyme is thick”

Lyte is directly addressing those in her audience who will understand the references that she is making.

Lyte uses several allusions to violence and fighting when describing how she handles her enemies:

“Kickin’ it, bashin’ down competition  
And when I drop the bomb ya listen”  
“I’m slammin’ what you hear”

Here Lyte asserts that she is perfectly willing to go into battle and is not afraid to fight.

Lyte uses the simile “roar like a rhinoceros” to portray that her message will be heard by all; that her raps are deafening and draw a lot of attention. She also alludes to such a large animal, to stress that she is powerful, and like a rhino, demands respect, claiming to be a “heavyweight”.

Next Lyte makes reference to fishing, drawing similarities between catching fish and catching her audience’s attention:

“My looks, the hook, my rhymes, the bait  
And when I throw the line you proceed to take  
The goodie”

Like a good fisherman, she is able to catch fish (her audience) with her skill and knowledge. She is able to tempt her audience into taking a bite on her line (listening to her raps) because they are too good to resist:

“The treat that I hand you  
That you couldn’t refuse”

She wants what is best for her audience and to prove this Lyte uses several phrases which her audience would be familiar with:

“One for all, and all for one”  
“Hurry hurry step right up and see the show”

Lyte talks about joining together, coming together to enjoy her music. Lyte further emphasises how clever she is at rapping by using repetition. Not only does this sound



pleasant to the ear, but she is able to reiterate her abilities and to tell her audience the extent to which her audience reacts to her skilful rapping:

“I use styles, styles and much many styles”

“I leave smiles, smiles and much many smiles”

### **Rhyme Hangover**

In this rap, Lyte slows the pace down, is less aggressive and asserts that this is going to be a pleasurable experience. In it, she describes taking a young man she likes on a journey with her:

“Now it’s time to hype boy for a pleasure ride”

“This voyage you don’t wanna miss”

Lyte speaks directly to him, referring to him as “you” and herself as “I” - this personalises the experience for the audience; either Lyte is speaking directly to one of the young men in the audience, or she is letting her listeners in on a conversation she is having with someone she likes. Either way, she invites them into her experience:

“I suggest you don’t resist”

Lyte uses words which suggest being slightly drugged to describe the feelings the young man will go through with her, telling him he will feel “woozy” and “kinda dizzy”. This stresses that her rhymes are potent and will knock him off his feet. She adds to this by saying:

“Fantasy’s wild and imagination busy”

Lyte promises to take him places that he has only dreamed about. Continuing to expand on the idea of being drugged out, which is also suggested in the song title, Lyte describes how this young man will feel:

“Your head spin, the room moves around

If it’s faint you feel then you oughta sit down”

Her power over him is mesmerising. As her words flow through his mind she encourages him to:

“let the beat seep through the cracks and crannies of your brain”

She is so skilled that she is able to control his thoughts and actions:

“Ya can’t remember your name

Your feet are tip-tapping”

and to put him in a type of trance with her words:

“Takin’ over your mind”

Lyte warns that she is so powerful that her rhymes might actually send him over the edge. She claims that her raps are a type of “incantation” and suggests that there is a “magical” element to her words. Lyte has “no fear” and “stands strong” but she seems concerned that this young man may not be able to handle the power of her words:

“I knew you couldn’t hack it”

Lyte promises that her voice and words will take control of his mind and fill his thoughts constantly, to the point where she may need to “pull out the stretcher and the white straight jacket”, but her only concern is that when he is asked what voices he can hear in his head:

“you tell em MC Lyte”

She does not seem concerned with what possible side effects her raps may have on people, as long as they make sure others know her power to enter people’s minds and leave them with a “Rhyme Hangover”.

### **Please Understand**

In this song, Lyte talks about meeting different men, the feelings she felt for them, and how they treated her. The first young man she talks about is Tommy, who she met in a shopping mall. He was charming and their “relationship grew strong” but things went badly quite quickly. Describing him as a “dumb kid”, Lyte tells her audience how he “went and got some girl pregnant”. Using rhyme, she goes on to tell her listeners that he:

“Started wheelin’ and dealin’”

Didn’t give a damn about how Lyte was feelin’”

“He knew he was usin’ me, and abusin’ me

He also knew that soon he’d be losin’ me”

These “in” words endings emphasise that Tommy was up to no good, playing his little games without a thought about how it was affecting Lyte. But despite his inconsiderate actions, Lyte refused to be a victim and quickly got rid of him. She gets her own back and further emphasises this using rhyme:

“First I clocked him, yeah I docked him

But I rocked him and then I dropped him”

By having all these lines fit together so well, again with similar sound endings, Lyte enables her audience to remember these lines; they will stick in her listener’s heads. She reminds them that despite being treated badly by her man, she came out of the relationship with her own self-respect, and totally in control of the situation.

Lyte then goes on to describe other men who have entered her life, but each of them have either disrespected her:

“Then there was Dave, couldn’t behave”

“He tried to 10% Dis me, but he pissed me off”

or have tried to control her:

“He said he would send me

Pay my airfare if he could come with me”

both of which Lyte refuses to take from any man. By speaking in first person narrative, Lyte encourages the women in her audience to follow her example and demand respect from their men. Simultaneously, she is speaking to the men in her audience, warning them that women can be assertive and should be treated respectfully and not to assume that they can be controlled:

“Cause I’m the boss and you know I’m not havin’ it”

“Listen honey, I don’t need your money

Believe me when I tell you I’ve got my own”

The last young man Lyte talks about is named Corey who she met back in high school. After buying her lunch and giving her a ride home, Corey naturally assumed that they were going to sleep together. However, even at that age, Lyte is a strong, assertive woman who refuses to be treated as an object by men. Describing him as a “playa”, Lyte uses street slang to describe how she rejected him, she “flipped him to the floor” and said “what ya provin’”. Other young women in Lyte’s audience will be able to relate directly to her experience, and she encourages them to be strong like her, and refuse to let men take advantage of them:

“Ya can’t play me I’m Lyte thee MC”

## Act Like You Know (1991)

### When In Love

In this song, Lyte talks in the third person, making an observation about a universal subject - falling in love. She reflects on how one behaves when "in love" and makes references to behaviours that listeners can relate to. Lyte uses examples such as giving your lover the keys to your car; checking your phone messages constantly, even when you are out partying.

Although Lyte is obviously speaking from experience she uses "he", "she" and "they". But to emphasise that she is an authority on the subject, she often ends the verses, with the use of "I" and "I'm":

"I know what happened"

"hear what I'm rappin'"

Lyte's use of diction is carefully centred around slang or street talk:

"those in love know what I'm speakin' of"

"I know what happened she got you strung"

"it would be crazy stormin' outside"

Her use of slang creates a sense of community with her listeners as she talks about common experiences they share. This is reiterated at the end of each chorus when she repeats:

"those in love know what I'm speakin' of"

Lyte has effectively used parallel structure of the verse beginnings, as well as in the title of the song, to allow repetition; to reiterate the subject to her audience. However she enlarges on the theme in each new verse, discussing a different aspect of the same subject-matter:

Verse 1

"You'll do some crazy things when in love..."

Verse 2

"When in love you do things that are strange..."

Verse 3

"When in love you go out of your way to please him..."

## Eyes Are The Soul

In this song Lyte begins by talking about a young man who is dying. She uses a lot of short, incomplete sentences which suggest that there is not much time left before he will die:

"losing sleep stays all night  
wishing he would've used mind"

In the first verse, Lyte speaks in the third person, describing how this young man lived his life; sleeping around, sharing needles and how he is now filled with regret:

"wish he could go back change the direction"

By speaking in the third person, Lyte looks at this young man's situation and can see clearly where he has gone wrong. She offers him "inspiring words", but by distancing herself, she can observe him and offer commentary to her young audience, on where he has made mistakes:

"live by the sword die by the sword"

Lyte uses a lot of words and phrases conveying desperation to conjure up images of how bleak his situation is. She describes him as being "nervous" and "uptight" and "holding on to his very last breath".

In the second verse, Lyte talks about another young man who is addicted to drugs, which he uses to avoid looking at the problems in his life. Lyte uses the "I" pronoun to place herself right in the situation, looking into this young man's eyes. Yet she continues to distance herself slightly, just enough to continue observing him while offering advice to her audience. She shows them how:

"he's lost all control take a look"

By using this imperative phrase she is instructing them, trying to prevent them from following his path.

The third verse looks at a young woman who is both sad and lonely. Lyte talks of watching her grow:

"the little girl down the street"

and observing how this young woman feels as if she is the only one in the world who is facing this situation, although it is a common feeling amongst teenagers.

Throughout the three verses, Lyte continually refers to eyes, sight, and looking. This reiterates the title of the song where Lyte implies that the true nature of a person, no matter how much they try to avoid showing it, can be seen in their eyes, the "windows to the soul".

Although there are end rhymes in each verse, many of the sentences run onto the next. Using enjambment, Lyte implies a sense of continuity, a fluidity:

“But took his time  
To get to know the girl he slap skins with”  
“I look into his eyes he’s so high  
From the crack he thinks that he can fly”  
“She’s going to the gym  
To put it to an end”

These lives that Lyte is telling the audience of flow like a story, non-stop. There are few or no commas and only a couple of full stops. This reiterates the desperateness of these situations. Lyte is in a race against time to tell her audience about these kids.

#### **Search 4 The Lyte**

In this song, Lyte is quite philosophical about her subject. She uses the comparison of darkness and light (a play on her name) to suggest that she has experienced true happiness and this can be experienced by all if they "search for the lyte". She talks of "waitin' at the end of the tunnel", claiming that she has already been through the darkness and has emerged on the other side "where happiness comes in bundles".

Lyte often uses repetition in this song, especially the phrase "get together and search for the lyte". By using imperatives, Lyte instructs her audience to start looking for better things in life, to work towards finding true joy and contentment, something she claims to have found already.

In the first verse, Lyte describes how she is feeling, in first person narrative:

"Im glad"  
"Im hoping"  
"Im waiting"

Lyte is expectant of good, not only for herself, but for her audience.

In the second verse Lyte speaks to her audience directly, addressing them as "you", encouraging them to join her. However, when she discusses those who are fake, those who do not have integrity, she refers to them as "they", thereby alienating them.

In each verse, Lyte encourages her audience to keep trying and to persevere. She is persuasive in her argument and uses repetition to reiterate her point:

Verse 1:  
"It takes time to get to the lyte  
to get in the lyte

to be with the lyte"

Verse 2:

"to get to lyte

to get in the lyte

to be with the lyte"

Verse 4:

"Cause once you've seen the lyte

been with the lyte

got to the lyte

got in the lyte"

Lyte often talks about sight. She claims that those who discover the "lyte" are able to see clearly whereas others are blind and left in the dark and "they fall in the darkness". For those that are not ready however, she warns that "the lyte can be blinding".

Lyte also makes reference to being awake and sleeping:

"first you must be awakened"

and she talks about being "moved" and experiencing a type of spiritual awakening.

In the final verse, Lyte states that true happiness is difficult to find but, once found, the results are amazing. She uses adjectives such as "splendorous" and "wonderful" to describe her feelings of elation. These words add to the general tone of the song which is filled with hope and positivity. Lyte seems to suggest that in one's "search 4 the lyte", one will find spiritual fulfilment. As she puts it:

"finding the lyte means happiness"

### **Act Like You Know**

Rappers are often concerned with looking good and having expensive things. MC Lyte is no exception. In the first verse Lyte describes herself driving around in her BMW with its tinted windows, and even though they cannot see her, everyone knows it is her. Speaking of herself in the third person she brags:

"MC Lyte she's bigger than bolo"

Lyte uses repetition at the beginning of her sentences to emphasise that rapping is something she does to please other people, to keep her fans happy:

"for the people, for the buyers

for all of those that seem to want to try a

MC Lyte tape"



In the first verse Lyte talks of herself in the first person, using personal pronouns like "me" and "I" to personalise her rapping experience. She creates a sense of community with her audience, asserting that everything she does, is done to please her fans:

"So I am givin' everything I got"

In the second verse Lyte talks frequently about using her senses:

"I said"

"I see"

"Hear the little shottie"

As a rapper, she describes what is going on around her, so her audience will know that she is right there with them, on the streets. Lyte emphasises this in the first verse by talking of her ability to rap about genuine experiences that she has from living in the hood:

"the things that I do just ain't for show this is my livin'"

In the second verse she expands on this idea of authenticity, asserting where she is from:

"Brooklyn 90s that's where I'm at"

and how she has the authority to speak about the hood because she has grown up there, and still continues to spend time there.

Lyte implies, in the third verse, that her words and rapping have a type of magic, an enchantment, as she intones:

"Abracadabra Hocus Pocus"

She is always in control and uses assonance to emphasise this point:

"slammin' it and bangin' it"

As she proceeds through the song, Lyte seems to be in a rush. This is emphasised by her incomplete sentences that are often grammatically incorrect. Beginning barely any of her sentences with the use of pronouns, Lyte simply states her point and moves on, implying that a busy woman like her does not have the time to stay and talk for too long:

"takin' on the world"

"Keepin' it hard"

"breakin' all types of ground"

"take it in stride"

"drop a line and exit"

At the end of each verse she reiterates that she is the one in control:

"this is my show"

making sure that we are aware that, no matter how much of a rush she may be in, she always has sufficient time to remind her listeners of who is in charge.

## Poor Georgie

In the first verse, Lyte describes a young man she meets in a night-club, named Georgie. By using first person narrative technique, Lyte suggests that this is someone she has actually met. Then Lyte switches to the voice of Georgie. By eliminating her own presence, Lyte is able to tell her listeners a bit about Georgie, and give the audience insight into how he meets young women and picks them up. From the words he uses it seems that he is not sleazy, just an ordinary young man trying to make conversation:

"How's everything going...can I call you sometime"

Lyte returns to first person narrative, drawing the audience into the situation and helping them to understand her mind set at the time of meeting Georgie; she lets her listeners know exactly what she was thinking. Using enjambment, Lyte moves quickly through her thoughts about Georgie and whether or not she should pursue any interest he shows in her:

"I heard he knows how to make love  
Like an angel from the heavens above"

Using slang, she informs the audience that she decides to give him her phone number:

"I gave him the digits...  
I'd give him a try"

In the second verse she describes their relationship. By using adjectives like "good", "comfort", "sweet", "nice" and "neat", Lyte implies that she was quite content with Georgie and the way he treated her.

In the middle of the second verse, Lyte suddenly steps aside and speaks directly to her audience, or more specifically, to the young women in her audience:

"Girls have you ever had a friend  
That you get with every now and then?"

By addressing her female listeners directly, Lyte wants them to pay attention to what she has to say. She proceeds to give her audience further insight into her own standards and expectations in a relationship. In this particular case, Lyte is aware that Georgie has a lot of young women "spread out from state to state around the world" but as long as he shows her respect, Lyte does not expect him to be loyal to only her:

"I don't care about the other girls just be good to me"

This is an interesting viewpoint for Lyte to take; she seems to be content with being just one of Georgie's many young women:

"he didn't have to be loyal, like men should"

Lyte is so caught up with caring about this man, that she is willing to settle for anything he offers in order to keep him, even if it is not a monogamous relationship.

In the third verse, Lyte describes how Georgie spends a lot of time at the night-club where they met, hanging out with his friends. She goes to the club and finds him there and they have a fight. She is concerned about him and it becomes obvious that Georgie means more to Lyte than just someone to have casual sex with:

"I told him he was messin' up he wouldn't go far"

The next sequence of events happen very fast; there is an increased pace and a lack of pauses. The short words Lyte uses are consistent with how this scene would realistically occur:

"He got mad and asked his friend for the keys to the car

I said don't drive use your head

Drive while you're drunk and you'll kill yourself dead

We began to argue bad words were said

Then he got kicked out by some long haired dread

He ran to the car as if in a hurry

Started the car but his vision was blurry

He didn't care he drove off into the night riding for miles without his headlights"

After describing how Georgie reacts, Lyte steps back again, detaching herself from the situation, to describe in detail the events surrounding Georgie's behaviour. Diagnosed with cancer, Georgie had felt like "he was still young yet running out of time". Then, Lyte flashes back to him in his car where his mind is clogged with thoughts, and then he crashes and kills himself.

The whole pace of the third verse increases. Suddenly, Georgie's situation seems so desperate. Lyte talks of his lack of time, and she races through ideas, with barely any breaks, until he ends up dead - the climax of the verse. Shocked, Lyte describes her feelings about Georgie and the regrets she has, wishing she had told him how she felt:

"how I liked him so much

how he made me feel with the slightest touch"

Lyte advises her audience to learn from her situation and not to leave things until the last minute, when it is too late:

"if you love someone you should say it often"

"no one is promised tomorrow"

## Take It Off

In the first verse, Lyte talks directly to a young man, who has called her on the phone and told her to come over because his parents have gone out and he has got the house to himself. But once she gets there he seems to waste time and this frustrates Lyte. She takes control of the situation asking him directly:

"What did you call me for?"

and then uses imperative language, telling him to:

"treat me right"

"take it off"

"make up your mind"

By constantly referring to herself and what she likes, Lyte emphasises that she gets what she wants:

"Im serious"

"Im curious"

"I don't smoke and I don't get high

but if I say I don't love well that would be a lie

Because I do every chance I get

But if I don't I won't fall I won't fret

Im no fool I got plenty of sense

So I just be cool"

She is in charge, letting him know what she wants, and Lyte ends the verse by instructing him to "take it off", reiterating the title of the song.

In the next verse, Lyte continues to direct the young man, telling him what to do next, instructing him to remove his clothing. She is in charge and she is "not like the other girls". Using a well-known phrase, Lyte presents a gentler side as she promises "tender lovin' care" and tells him "don't get scared". Lyte tells her audience of how she picks up men, stating how she is always "ready to rock" but she is careful in the techniques she uses to pick them up. She lets her listeners in on her thoughts as she says:

"I didn't want to outplay my hand"

Coaxing him into her car, using her female charm, she talks in a smooth manner saying "sweet things that could soothe him". Then, once she has him, her mind "just turned to sin" and she again takes control by telling him to:

"take it off"

"hurry up"

In this verse Lyte asserts that she knows how to “sweet-talk” men, how to manipulate them into getting what she wants; she is smart and always the one in control.

In the final verse, Lyte tells the audience of another young man she meets, and this time she steps aside and talks directly to the females in the audience. She empowers women, letting them know that it is perfectly fine to be the one in control of a relationship. Meeting this next man, Lyte says:

"you can guess girls what was on my mind"

and then she returns to addressing young men as "you":

"You make me feel so good you're a man"

buttering him up in order to get what she wants from him.

### **Beyond The Hype**

Right from the beginning of the song, Lyte talks about her original, inventive way of rapping. In almost every line she uses either "I" or "I'm" - maintaining the idea that she, indeed, is the one in control. Lyte's use of incomplete sentences reinforces the idea that she delivers her raps with both speed and skill, she does not waste words and gets straight to the point:

"I'll deliver as quick as you call my name"

Lyte constantly uses repetition to stress that she knows exactly what her audience want:

"shake you groove you move you"

"one taste one touch one bite"

She promises to provide them with music and lyrics that will enable them to dance and party. Putting her audience first, Lyte reiterates that she raps for the satisfaction of pleasing her fans, not because of publicity or the fame:

"I'm beyond the hype beyond the fame"

She implies that she is down to earth, a rapper who is grounded and not concerned with material things, describing herself as "raw" and "dope".

In the second verse, Lyte continues to affirm that she is "beyond the hype" - that she is only concerned with reality and rapping about what is true:

"telling no lies the truth is in my eyes"

Lyte is the voice of reason, claiming that she does not deceive others, but warns against the media and broadcasters on the news who "blow things out of proportion". Lyte claims to have had first-hand experience of their lies. Being a celebrity and constantly in the public eye, she knows that the media thrive on "hype". Lyte advises her listeners to join her, describing them and herself as "we", encouraging them to "stick" together and move beyond the hype.

In the third verse, Lyte continues to advise. Speaking in imperatives she says:

"You must trust"

"Pick up the pace"

"Forget the rumours"

She creates a sense of community with her listeners, claiming that both they and her are "beyond that".

Lyte is against anything which spells of negativity and advises her audience to "let it go", reminding them that they are on a journey together. They can trust her because she is "down to earth" and will respond to their call; together they will turn their backs on all the hype:

"I'm coming just call my name"

The chorus reiterates the sense of community that Lyte is trying to establish with her audience by using the pronoun "we", emphasising that she and her audience are working together:

"We gotta try and move beyond"

"We gotta try to break on thru"

She repeats these lines after each verse to keep reminding the audience that they are on this journey together.

### **All That**

Lyte talks about a date she went on, giving details, from her perspective, about what they did and where they ate. Her date wants to go out partying but Lyte realises that he is only after one thing - sex. She speaks to him firmly, telling him to:

"pay for my food mother and let's go"

Lyte knows that he is only after "some booty" and she tells him to look for it elsewhere because that is not what she is about. In this way, Lyte asserts that she is smart, she knows the games young men play with young women:

"I'm also perceptive

I know your kind"

Lyte uses this incident as an example for her female audience members, to encourage them to not be afraid of being "aggressive" with a man who just wants to "slap it flip it and rub it down". By using these words, Lyte cheapens the act of casual sex, identifying it for what it is.

Lyte maintains that she is from the hood, that, like her audience, she is from the streets:

"I see what you see"

Being street-wise, Lyte knows exactly what is going on and she sees through those who try to take advantage of her:

"I see suckers many puckeruppers  
Asskissers as well as butt lickers"

Her strong use of language lets the audience know that nothing gets past her. She mixes tenses, using the same words, to emphasise that this kind of deception has always gone on, and will continue to happen:

"Claimin' they will do, or have done, or have did me"

In the last verse, Lyte talks about growing up on the streets. Talking in the first person, she retells certain situations, and uses "I", "me" and "my", to emphasise that this is a true account of what happened to her. She is street smart and clued up on how things work in the hood. In this verse, Lyte maintains that she has always been tough and knows how to look after herself:

"I sliced and diced and then I kept steppin'"

### **Big Bad Sister**

Lyte opens this song by identifying the different areas around New York where they are listening to her music. She acknowledges them by naming them, using slang to state that they are "in the house". In this way, Lyte forms a sense of community with her listeners by including them in her song, making them feel like they are important to her. She mentions Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens, Long Island, the Bronx and Uptown.

In the first verse, Lyte begins by talking about other rappers who cannot perform very well. She uses alliteration to describe their songs as "soft silly stuff", claiming that their music has no credibility. Lyte makes strong statements and then follows these statements with a question, confronting those in her audience who think that they can rap better than her, daring them to contradict anything she has to say:

"Take it from me, or could you really take it?  
And if you got away with it, would you really make it?"

Throughout this verse, Lyte maintains control of the situation, she instructs her audience by using imperatives:

"...you go fetch them"  
"Bring them back into the real rap attack"  
"Tell the silly mothers that we don't give a..."  
"Take it from me"



Lyte's rhyme scheme in the second verse cleverly changes from line to line. She mixes in-line rhymes with end rhymes and the audience never quite knows what to expect. Unlike typical rhyme schemes which basically end each line with a word that rhymes, Lyte alternates between end-line and internal rhymes:

"The big bad sister from around your way  
I'm not tall but I'm small don't matter what I weigh"  
"I get hip with the hop I'm the tip from the top"

In this verse, Lyte maintains the use of personal pronouns, referring to herself as "I" and "me", and to her audience as "you", to emphasise her abilities and skills, as well as to maintain her sense of control, not only of the song, but of her audience:

"Im bigger than bolo, see I go solo"  
"I go all out, you never see me fall out"

Lyte proudly identifies with her ethnicity claiming that "I'm blacker than black" and she makes it quite clear that she does not care what critics think of her or her music. She talks of those who "don't like the words I choose to use" and she is determined to stand strong, refusing to bow to their opinion in order to be popular:

"I ain't no sucka and I ain't into pleasin  
some critic that criticises me for no reason"

Lyte's tone changes to one of anger; she is frustrated with those who try to hold her back and she attacks them verbally. Lyte uses harsh language, stating that:

"I don't give a damn"  
"Fuck the stocks and bonds"  
"day to day bullshit you hear"

She emphasises the point that she is in control by using imperatives:

"Pick up the album"  
"Pay attention and listen"

Then Lyte addresses her enemies directly, referring to them as "non-believers" and "perpetrators". She uses vivid comparisons between herself and them, stating that they will "grieve" and "grovel in sorrow" whereas Lyte will be "the star of today and the star of tomorrow" showing them that nothing will hold her back from rising to the top, while they wallow in despair.

In the last few sentences of the song, Lyte talks about herself, reiterating that she is here to stay, pushing all competition out of the way. She is changing the way rap is viewed and in her own way:

"Im takin out the old jacks..."

"I don't care if it means I have to ruin"

"I will and I shall and I get the job completed"

"Im comin to you live with the 45"

### **Kamikaze**

In this song, Lyte talks about herself, but addresses those in her audience she wishes to alienate. Lyte is talking to her enemies, those that dare to compete with her. She distances herself from them, claiming they try to understand her but cannot:

"You couldn't understand if I spoke in slow motion"

but then she changes her use of pronouns and refers to those she wishes to distance herself from as "they":

"They try to keep me down"

while drawing her audience to her by speaking of her and her listeners as "we".

Lyte uses figurative language, similes which the audience would be familiar with:

"inside runs deep like an ocean"

The use of this simile emphasises the extent of her abilities and her emotions. She is a complex person with bottomless depths, like an ocean.

Lyte asserts that rap has lost its sense of morality, whereas she uses words to teach and educate. Lyte emphasises how she takes charge of the situation:

"I'm a take it change it rename it"

and she addresses the audience directly, speaking in imperatives, urging them to use their minds and choose what they listen to wisely:

"You hip-hoppers you gots to be selective  
and stop lettin' that bull slide for rap"

Lyte has established a relationship with them, stating how her aim in rapping is to educate her audience, that she has their best interests in mind. Therefore, they should listen to her advice:

"First I pleased you now I teach you  
don't dare try to bite the hand that will lead you"

Then Lyte distances herself from those who cannot deal with her raps, claiming that:

"when I talk of education you fear that  
drugs and such you don't wanna hear that"

but then she reprimands them, urging them to allow her to guide them. Speaking of herself in the third person, Lyte suggests that she is someone who is more knowledgeable, who knows what is best for her listeners:

"Lyte'll guide you I know the way to go"

"Remember MC Lyte has the masterplan"

Then Lyte returns to using first person narrative to draw closer to the audience, to gain their confidence in her, in her ability to walk them through her educating process:

"so just close your eyes and just take my hand"

and she ends the verse by uniting the audience with herself, calling them a "we", to draw them all together:

"we can go thick as a posse"

In the second verse, Lyte is frustrated that the quality of rap music has disintegrated, using words such as "angry", "upset" and "wackshit" to describe how she feels. She claims that other rappers are "a disgrace to rap" and that they are causing a "mess". Using strong directives, Lyte instructs other rappers to:

"leave get out of my domain"

"pack your bags and scidaddle"

She warns others not to mess with her, calling them "weak", "lame" and full of "bullshit". Lyte is willing to start an all-out war, but she advises them to "quit" and to "just walk home you don't wanna battle". She refers to herself in the third person when she threatens them, as if she has the power of some outside force:

"you better prepare cause Lyte gives no slack"

"cause in the 90s Lyte is going Kamikaze"

Lyte frequently uses personal pronouns in this verse, empowering herself against the other rappers:

"I'll floor any MC"

"I got the button that'll get rid of wack MCs"

In the second verse, Lyte becomes more philosophical in her approach. She talks about how everyone wants to jump on the band wagon and be a rapper, but she believes that rapping cannot be taught, it is something that comes from inside. She is honest and upfront claiming "I never fess" and uses her authority over listeners to stage a war against other rappers, claiming that they are "impersonators" and they "ain't sayin' shit" - her only advice to them is to give up. Using imperatives she says "you oughta quit" before she goes "kamikaze". The use of the word "kamikaze" in this song, and in the title, is appropriate to the subject-matter which she is discussing. Lyte is declaring war against

rappers who she believes are sell-outs, and like the Kamikaze fighter pilots of World War Two, she is on a single mission, to the death, to get rid of all her enemies. In this case Lyte is talking about fake, untalented rappers:

"waitin' for attack...here's a warnin'...  
Lyte is goin' Kamikaze"

### Like A Virgin

Lyte describes herself at fifteen years old, when she thought she was in love. She is honest with her listeners about her feelings about sex and her first experience of it. Her situation is one that many of her female listeners can relate to, as she describes how he "took my virginity, like he took my heart". But Lyte tells of how she learnt from this experience, and how she learnt to be strong. Lyte emphasises this by talking in first person narrative, using "I" and "my" to describe her feelings and actions:

"I got hard, grew a shell upon my back  
I had to get a grip, to get my life intact  
I had to let em know"

Warning other young women, Lyte refers to scheming young men as "they", condemning them. Using rhyme for emphasis, Lyte shows her female listeners how men often treat women:

"They'll use, bruise and abuse  
Dump your ass and be sure to choose"

Then Lyte speaks directly to her female listeners, addressing them as "you", making them aware of how men are fooling them. Lyte offers them the chance to clearly see how men behave:

"Thinkin' he was pleasin' you,  
when he was just teasin' you"

Then Lyte returns to talking about herself and the situation she was in, referring to herself in the first person, and her boyfriend as "you", personalising the situation:

"I was in love, I walked around in space  
Id rush home from school just to speak to you"

Then one day, Lyte decides that she would like to have sex with him, describing herself as "feelin' in the mood". Lyte encourages her female listeners to take their time and wait till they feel comfortable about sleeping with their man. As it turns out, sex with him is a big disappointment but she was in love at the time and so "that didn't matter". However, this young man then moves away to another city and Lyte describes how hurt and used

she felt, calling herself "naive", "lonely" and "lost". But she learns from this experience and encourages her listeners to follow suit:

"I guess I'm lucky though"

"next time I'll use my head"

### **Lola From The Copa**

In this song, Lyte describes a showgirl named Lola and the life she leads. It seems an empty existence as Lyte describes how she "smiled and danced till morning", and used drugs to keep herself awake. Lola seems lonely, as Lyte tells the audience how Lola has no kids, no mother and no lover. Speaking in the third person, Lyte stands back and gives a brief description of Lola's life.

Lyte incorporates the use of the chorus of a well-known Barry Manilow song and changes it to fit the subject-matter of her song. Lyte draws together a range of music types, incorporating an old song with her new one, mixing rap with singing. This would also suggest that there are many "Lolas" out there in the world, who are a part of Lyte's world, as well as Barry Manilow's.

In the next verse, Lyte continues her story, describing Lola meeting a man named Zeke at the bar. Lyte labels him "Zeke the Freak", implying that he likes to have sex with lots of different women. Zeke and Lola get drunk and eventually he takes her back to her room to have sex. Lyte continues to tell the story from a distance, using third person narrative, describing Lola and Zeke as "he" and "she". Lyte runs through Zeke's actions quickly using a lot of different verbs, emphasising that he was in a rush. Earlier on she had described how Lola "didn't stop to think" and now it seems as if Zeke is doing the same thing. Lyte describes his series of actions using verbs to show how this man takes advantage of a drunk showgirl as quickly as possible:

"He picked her up off her feet as he escapaded  
down the block then he opened the door  
as he struggled to get in, then put her on the floor"

However, in his rush to take advantage of her in her drunken state, he neglects to use any form of sexual protection.

The third verse ends the story. Lola wakes up, not remembering anything about the night before, as Zeke has left in the night. It is a very short verse, abrupt, and to the point. In a couple of sentences Lyte sums up what has happened:

"Zeke the Freak thought he was thick and slick  
But what Zeke did not know  
is that little Lola, little Lola

from the Copa used to be a hoe  
Now he's paid, thought he had it made  
But Zeke the Freak got AIDS"

By being so abrupt, Lyte hits her audience hard with the facts. She has shown how one night of carelessness can cost someone their whole life. Zeke had not thought about the consequences of having unprotected sex and now he has contracted the HIV virus.

## 2 Young 4 What

In this song Lyte talks about how she likes younger men. In the first verse, Lyte has been told by a younger male that she is "too old" - Lyte's immediate reaction is anger:

"What's with that crap?"

Obviously her pride has been hurt by his insult at her age, so Lyte proceeds to let him know exactly what he is missing out on, by turning her down:

"I coulda showed you things, taught you how to explore"

Lyte asks the young man a series of questions:

"I'm too old?"

"Are you really serious?"

"Age really matters?"

"...what are you too young for?"

Each of her questions reiterates a point she has just made. It is as if she wants to emphasise how ridiculous he is being, by questioning him about the statement he has just made. In this way, Lyte has reversed the hurt to her pride and has gained back her power - she is in control now. Then, she rejects him:

"oh well, forget it, nope nope

But don't you dare touch me, you said you wasn't widdit

You waited too long now, Lyte is not havin' it"

In the second verse, Lyte continues to discuss how she prefers younger men "that are about seventeen" and she explains why. Maintaining the fact that she likes to be the one in control, Lyte is the one to:

"mould em, shape em, make em then I break em in"

Lyte changes her narrative technique from talking directly to the young man, and referring to him as "you" and, instead, now speaks directly to her listeners, telling them what she likes and referring to these young men as "they" and "them":

"I love a young buck that give a firm fuck

But once in a while, they become lovestruck

But that's okay though, cause I can handle them"

Lyte maintains the idea that when she gets a young man, she is the one in control, she gets them to do everything she demands of them:

"I can handle them"

"I make em get the job done

well, swell, make em kiss and tell"

Then at the end of the second verse, Lyte starts talking directly to the young men again, calling them "honey" and referring to them as "you". She tells her listeners about all the things she likes to do, again stating how young men quite often "become lovestruck".

Finally, in the last verse, Lyte continues to describe what kind of a young man she is after:

"Hard workin, not one that sells prescription"

By making this statement, Lyte makes it quite clear that she is not even slightly interested in drug dealers, no matter how cute they are. Throughout this song, Lyte is making it clear to the female audience that it is alright to like younger men, even ones who are still in school. She offers clear advice, speaking directly to her listeners:

"Never let age restrict you from whatcha wanna do"



## Ain't No Other (1993)

### Brooklyn

Right from the beginning of the first verse, Lyte asserts her skills as a rapper, referring to herself in the first person, and claiming that she is getting paid well for her ability:

“I got the intro along with the cashflow”

Lyte particularly emphasises her sex appeal, talking about how sexy she is, and making an allusion to herself as Veronica, a sexy character her audience would recognise from the Archie comic books:

“I get sexy like Veronica”

She is in control of her sexual power and uses “sex as an instrument”. In this verse Lyte seems particularly concerned with describing herself and her attributes:

“I ain't tall but I'm small and I'm slender”

“I'm hard”

Lyte talks about where she is from (Brooklyn) which is also the title of the song. She describes herself as “one bad ass bitch” and talks about how tough the streets of the hood are. Lyte uses harsh words to convey to her audience that her and her friends from Brooklyn are not to be messed with, and warning those from other areas to tread lightly:

“Makin' niggas drop whenever we hit the block”

“we up to no good”

“mess with the wrong one kid you get roughed up”

In the second verse Lyte reiterates how skilled she is as a rapper. The language she uses is threatening and violent:

“I got the rhythm that'll rip up shows

blow down foes

they kill at will”

Lyte justifies the use of such an angry tone by claiming that the hood she grew up in is so rough and that “when you come from where I come from you gotta be tough”. She has had to learn to defend herself verbally in order to survive, and to “think quick”. Lyte also shows her audience that she is smart and fully aware of all that goes on in her neighbourhood. She is conscious of how others behave, claiming that “niggaz are slick” and “niggaz'll call your bluff quick enough”. Lyte uses assertive language to warn others, to caution them and instruct them, as she is experienced in the ways of the hood:

“Watch your back pocket”

“Keep your eye on the man”

Lyte warns of the consequences one will face if they do not pay attention, and remain alert at all times:

“If your town is like my town you don’t wanna mess around  
wind up gettin’ bagged up beat down”

Here Lyte talks directly to her audience, addressing them as “you” and relating to them by talking about “your town” and drawing parallels to “my town”, claiming that they are from similar backgrounds.

Throughout the song, Lyte continues to emphasise her abilities as a rapper, but she is concerned particularly with her credibility as a young woman from the streets, a young woman who has respect from others and who will not be treated with disrespect:

“everywhere that I step, they know my rep  
cuz I’m sayin’ and doin’ shit they won’t forget”

As a performer, Lyte claims to be making a huge impact on rap music, going where others have not been before and that she is “breakin’ down doors”. Lyte uses very harsh, angry language to wake others up and have them pay attention to her and her abilities as a rapper:

“I’ll be rippin’ the whole tour”

“Coming hard for your section”

“about to blow up”

“get the fuck up”

Lyte continues to assert how tough she is and refuses to pay any attention to anyone who is not hard “cuz I ain’t with softies”; if you want to approach her “you can’t be lame”.

### **Ruffneck**

In this song, Lyte describes the type of man she wants, someone who has attitude and does not care what others think of him. She describes his habits, the way he eats:

“only needs his fingers with his food”

the way he dresses:

“karl kani saggin’ timbos draggin’”

and how he behaves when he is with his friends:

“frontin’ in his ride with his home boys braggin’”

Lyte lets men like the “ruffneck” she is describing see themselves in her song, and lets them feel confident that some women find their ways attractive. Secondly, Lyte relates to the women in her audience who like that type of raw, uncouth man, affirming that it is alright to be attracted to this type of man.

In the second verse, Lyte describes his sexual technique and his ability to be quick to get in the mood and get an erection:

“I need a man that’s quick and swift  
to put out the spliff and get stiff”

but he takes his time and is considerate when actually having sex:

“he knows exactly how I want my flow and that’s slow”

Here Lyte uses both short vowel sounds to reiterate the speed with which her man gets turned on and then she uses long vowel sounds to draw out what she is saying about his skills in pleasing her; these longer sounds emphasise that he is in no rush and does not hurry sexual intercourse.

Lyte is quite crass in the way she talks openly about her man, making specific references to his penis:

“everything is fitting large”  
“pumpin’ in and out and out and in”

but this is consistent with the type of man she likes. Lyte describes how her man has no social graces and does not really care about how others view the way he lives:

“drinkin’ a beer, sittin’ his chair  
hands in his pants fiddlin’ with his dick hairs”

Throughout the verses, Lyte repeatedly uses the word “ruff”, not only reiterating the title of the song, but showing that being tough and strong is of central concern to herself, her man, and the people they associate with:

“ready to bag another brother that he ranks ruff enough  
cause if it ain’t ruff, well then he’s all wrong for the lyte  
I love my Ruffneck and ain’t nothin’ going down  
or going up if my Ruffneck ain’t in town”

Lyte frequently uses phrases in this verse which are from the street. She is talking specifically to those who can relate to what she is saying; those who live in the hood, who have met people like her “Ruffneck” and who know exactly who she is talking about:

“put out the spliff”  
“how I want my flow”  
“can he get buck wild”

In the final verse, Lyte continues to emphasise the importance of having a tough boyfriend, a man who knows the street, and can hold his own:

“I need a man that don’t stitch like a bitch...  
doin’ whatever it takes”

“he knows the streets”

Lyte describes his life and everyday activities as being very primal; he is only concerned with the basics:

“eat sleep shit fuck eat sleep shit”

By using verbs only to tell the audience what he does, Lyte maintains that she is straight to the point, like her “Ruffneck” boyfriend. He has little concern for what others think of him. He does not respect others or their property; he is only concerned with doing whatever he wants:

“grabbin’ his jock”

“pissin’ in corners

doin’ 80 by funeral mourners

showin’ little respect”

Most people would be appalled with this type of behaviour, but it impresses Lyte, as she ends the verse with admiration and pride in her final sentence:

“Now that’s a Ruffneck”

### **What’s My Name Yo**

In the first verse, Lyte straightaway asserts her ability as a rapper. Her first sentence incorporates an internal as well as end-line rhyme scheme, talking about how she is in control of both her words and her audience:

“in comes the boom to the bam hit my fans  
make them understand I got the master plan”

Lyte continues to assert this control, showing that she is both smart and wise, emphasising this by constantly referring to herself in the first person:

“I got the master plan”

“I go beserk”

“I listen to kid capri”

“Im not afraid to work”

“I kick ass”

“I got the massive flow”

Lyte also uses sexual references to maintain the idea that she is the one in charge. Figuratively commanding her listeners, instructing them, Lyte says:

“you’re going down  
licket split swallow”

Lyte then talks about her crew, her posse, who, like her, is tough and greatly respected and they will deal with anyone who tries to mess around with them. Lyte refers to her posse and herself using the collective pronoun “we”, maintaining the idea that they are a single unit, inseparable and unified. She refers to the enemy as “you” and addresses them directly in an extremely confrontational manner. Lyte uses harsh, angry and threatening language to warn others:

“we rip when we wreck”

“we be puttin’ brawny niggas in check”

“you’ll learn or get burned”

In the second verse, Lyte reiterates her skills as a rapper. Her opening sentences use a very clever rhyme scheme, using the word endings “-ip -op” to emphasise the point that she is the best, she knows how to manipulate sounds in inventive and original ways to please her listeners:

“I rip shop, I never flip flop I take flight  
from the tip top I rule hip hop”

Lyte reminds her audience of how smart she is and that she has investments set up so that she will never be in need of money:

“I’m prepared to be paid for the rest of my decades”

She uses long vowel sounds to emphasise that she is successful, that she has been around for a long time and will be here for a long time to come, no matter what people do to try and stop her:

“I’ma let you proceed cuz I’ma succeed  
with or without you because I don’t need  
the negativity nor do I need the bad energy  
that you’re trying to give to me”

In the final verse Lyte uses a series of verbs to describe her actions and she uses descriptions of her clothes to tell her listeners how she is on top, maintaining her position:

“I’m never raggin”

“My pants are still saggin”

“Boots still stompin’ ravin’ and rompin”

Lyte also uses a lot of street slang to talk about her skills. By using this device, Lyte continues to draw on a sense of community with those who understand her, and simultaneously alienates those who do not understand what she is saying:

“I’m all that  
I flip a tack

cuz I'm so damn phat"

"the 411 is out"

"your show is torn"

"don't pop no lip"

"I'm audi"

Returning to the use of sexual references, Lyte uses sexual readiness and sexual skills to describe her abilities as a rapper, referring to herself in the first person:

"I get loose I got juice I spread it

Im the best"

Here she implies that she is not only an awesome performer on stage, but also off stage because she is always ready.

Lyte maintains her identification with different members of the audience by claiming to be successful in both the "underground" scene as well as in the mainstream charts:

"Underground I rock my sound

Up top I still wreck shop"

### **Lil Paul**

In this song, Lyte is talking directly to an ex-lover. She claims that he played around with her but she asserts that this does not matter to her as she has got even by sleeping with his friend Paul. Lyte begins this song in a very angry tone, describing their relationship as "shit" and that when he played around, instead of being sad or upset her reaction was:

"fuck all of that gettin' sentimental"

Lyte retaliates against her ex-lover by immediately asserting Paul's skills as a lover:

"in and out scoop troop yo he rocked it"

even insulting her ex-lover by suggesting that he call Paul to find out how to perform better in bed:

"you need to give him a buzz learn somethin'"

Lyte's words are vengeful and angry. She wants her ex-lover to understand that she is not sitting around upset at losing him, or being mistreated by him. Instead, she has sought her own means by which to get closure - revenge:

"two can play at that game that's how you wanna act"

Lyte achieves this by demoralising her ex-lover, by talking non-stop about what an excellent lover Paul is, how much better in bed he is. By describing their lovemaking, Lyte aims to attack his ego and regain her sense of power over her ex-lover:

"What's sad and also the downfall

Is you my brother was the smallest one of all”

The whole time Lyte describes her relationship with Paul, she maintains the idea that there are no ties between them; both she and Paul have an agreement that this is simply about sex, purely a fling - something they are both comfortable with:

“now I got the nack”

Lyte makes it clear to both her ex-lover and her listeners that she is not going to be mistreated this time. Instead, she has walked into this with both eyes open, happy to use it to her advantage:

“don’t give a fuck about his sign  
me and him we got this opp thing  
it’s just a fling”

Not only has Lyte already discussed in detail how she has had no problems sleeping with her ex-lover’s friend (and blatantly talked about how much better Paul is in bed), but she takes her revenge one step further by telling him how she had considered sleeping with her ex-lover’s little brother:

“I was ready to do your brother”

By being this harsh and cold, Lyte has aimed to put her ex-lover in his place:

“you shouldn’t have tried to play me cuz I’m not like any other”

In this song, Lyte has cleverly warned her ex-lover (and other males in her audience) that women should not be treated disrespectfully otherwise they may turn on their men and seek ways to get revenge:

“shame it had to happen like this...  
but you did me like that now I got no heart”

### **Ain’t No Other**

From the very first line of the first verse, Lyte asserts her abilities as a rapper, talking about her “wicked and wild style”. She alienates those who cannot keep up with her, speaking in a fast, egotistical manner directly to those who are too slow:

“so if you’re not skilled with the quickness  
we best just forget this”

Lyte uses clever rhyme schemes to help emphasise that she knows how to manipulate words and sounds, alternating between rhymes:

“because the track is thick I never slack cuz I’m quick  
I’m not wack I’m slick  
I been known to flick mics like bic”



Using short, sharp words to describe the speed with which she can deliver a rap, Lyte moves at a fast pace:

“I flip and rip”

“I’m that tough”

Lyte also uses her real name “Lana Moorer” which emphasises that everything she says is real. She is not hiding behind a persona, but is upfront and honest:

“I got pull”

Lyte uses imperative sentences to instruct her audience. She is in control and commands them to obey her:

“Grab your stell”

“Come smell my aura”

Towards the end of each verse, Lyte claims she is rich, that her “pockets are full”, but that this was not through selling drugs or committing any crimes - she worked hard and honestly to become a success. Lyte uses repetition to maintain that one does not have to be a criminal to make good money. Using herself as an example, she speaks to her audience directly, using the personal pronoun “I”:

“I...ain’t down with no drug ring

illegal funds I choose to live the right way”

“I’m workin’ 24 night and day”

In the second verse, Lyte uses familiar phrases from children’s ditties, which she intersperses with swearing to emphasise the point that she is not messing around, and does not appreciate others messing around with her:

“So let me in rin tin tin

or I’ll huff and I’ll puff and blow the mother-fucker in

games can’t be played

so fuck the charade”

Reiterating her skills as a rapper, Lyte always expects to get paid lots of money. After all, she is speaking the truth, talking about things she knows a lot about:

“for sure cash in large amounts”

“my rhyme

it ain’t fiction”

Lyte repeats the last few lines of the first verse to remind her audience that all the money she makes is from hard work, not illegal activities, and encourages them to strive for this too.

In the third verse, Lyte makes reference to the speed of her delivery by using short sharp words and internal rhymes:

“quick to draw, no flaws, I got the raw shit”

This verse is filled with incorrect grammar, which emphasises that Lyte does not have time to explain everything in full - she is too fast. Instead, she speaks her main points in such a way that she gets her point across to those who are quick enough and who can understand street slang:

“they pop bad wish they never had and forfeit

I look out for mine duke da moon”

By using these words, Lyte emphasises that she is street-smart and wise, especially when it comes to men. She can see clearly through those who are only interested in her because of her wealth and fame, and she refuses to let them take advantage of her:

“I ain’t for that droop along hoppin’ on the band wagon

I ain’t down wit no tipsters”

Lyte wants someone who is genuine, as she is not the sort of young woman who uses men; she will give her all in a relationship if it is worth keeping. Here Lyte not only warns males not to try and take advantage of her, but she also encourages her female listeners to follow her example, to stand strong and expect only respect from men:

“I just ain’t the type to be lovin’ ‘em and leavin’ ‘em

I give any and all and everything I got

You fuck up once shit is shot hops

I’m too compatible to be taken for granted”

### **I Go On**

Lyte begins the first verse by speaking directly to those in her audience who disrespect her and put her down. Using the personal pronoun “you” to speak to them, she constantly refers to herself using “I” and “me”, claiming that nothing gets past her:

“you flap your tongue and talk about this and that”

“you can’t play me”

Lyte asserts her ability as a rapper, talking about herself constantly and using clever rhyme schemes to reiterate this point, rhyming within lines as well as at the end of lines:

“they can’t handle what I got to give and always will

Im not the run of the mill I got skills”

“I go on and on ask your boy k-born

but I had to kick him out ‘fore the dawn turned to morn”

In the second verse, Lyte is stalking a man, describing herself as “a night owl on the prowl” and the man as “a victim”. Lyte is in control of the situation:

“Now I got him where I want him and he’s all mine”

She talks about their sexual encounter, speaking in street slang, directly to those in her audience who will understand:

“we hit the doo did the bootie in the slow mo”

Lyte says it was nice, but then she tells him goodbye with a rather sudden:

“that’s all”

She abruptly ends their time together with a short sharp statement:

“I came and did it well”

taking an impersonal approach to their sexual encounter. Lyte degrades him by describing him as a “horny dog” who is “kind of slow though when it comes to brain cells”. Here, Lyte reiterates that she is in charge; she has no emotional ties to this man, she simply used him for sex. Changing the role that men usually assume, Lyte impersonalises the situation with the words:

“I hope that you’re not torn  
because my brother life goes on”

In the third verse, we get an insight into why Lyte behaves so impersonally. She refuses to be made a victim by men - in relationships she is the one in control. According to Lyte, most men:

“wanna pop it knock it and lock it”

In other words, they want to have women under their thumb, but Lyte claims:

“I control my destiny .  
Im never lettin’ a punk get the best of me”

Lyte encourages women to stand strong, to refuse to give in to men, and not to settle for anything less than full respect. Claiming her independence and emphasising the importance of being a strong woman, Lyte says:

“Tm not about to be the victim..  
I fight back”

Using rhyme, Lyte emphasises that men should not hit or physically abuse their women. She uses similar word sounds to stress how a woman should *not* be treated:

“do a headcrack  
I’m only here for the liking not to be hit not smacked  
not slapped or kicked”

And Lyte speaks directly to the men in her audience, addressing them as “you”:

“so if you’re coming my way you gotta be strong

enough to know that hittin' a woman is wrong”

Lyte repeats the ending of the last two verses, claiming that she does not want commitment and she is not interested in a relationship:

“keep lookin' cause I ain't stayin' kid”

### One Nine Nine Three

Lyte begins the first verse by asserting that she is the best:

“Number 1 on the list”

and claims to have the ability to be hard and tough:

“I kick butt”

but also, in that toughness, she tells the truth:

“I kick the facts”

Lyte uses a lot of clever rhyme schemes in the first verse, incorporating both internal and end rhymes, to reiterate the fact that other rappers just do not have the skills that she has. Lyte is the best and she can manipulate words to prove her point:

“hifi, why lie you're not fly

so why should you even try”

“...you can't even tangle

my little sister can handle and dismantle

from brooklyn and we sure to cause scandle”

In verse two, Lyte's language becomes more abusive. She talks about walking all over her competition, and uses swear words to really emphasise her points:

“fuck your lame name”

“I stomp in your grill”

“your face oozes up around my boot”

“your busted up crusty ass grill”

Lyte speaks directly to her competition, addressing them using street slang and grammatically incorrect sentences. They may be from the streets, like her, but they are nowhere near as clever as her when it comes to playing with words:

“you understand good”

“I ain't been here this long for nothin'”

Lyte also mentions that she is the only talented *female* rapper around:

“the only rap star in this here game”

so, naturally, all men desire her. She is a strong, talented female and men are attracted to her style and ability. She knows this and speaks directly to the men saying:

“you wanna be my amigo”

Lyte reminds her listeners how she is true to the streets, and only talks about what she knows. Lyte reminds them that she is their guide and would never lie, emphasising this by using various synonyms for lying, which rhyme:

“I’m never stuntin’ frontin’ and I’m never bluntin’”

In the third verse, Lyte maintains the idea that she is both strong and independent, saying:

“solo I stand”

but she then goes on to talk about her crew, and how they all stick together and look out for one another; Lyte even goes so far as to call them her “family”. She uses similar word endings to reiterate her point that they are all one unit, sharing similarities:

“quick slick chicks they got my back”

“negroes I suppose they know how we go”

Lyte repeats the phrase: “they know how” throughout the verse, to emphasise that her posse and her know each other so well:

“they know how shit be goin’ down”

“they know how we be”

“they know how I operate”

Lyte uses well-known phrases when she talks about her crew, to prove to the audience that they have been together a long time and have always stood together:

“thru thick and thin they been there”

“they don’t let it wear and tear”

Speaking directly to her audience Lyte uses street slang and grammatically incorrect sentences, allowing those who understand to have a privileged position over those who do not; Lyte only wishes to speak to and include those who understand her way of talking:

“I’m on some new shit”

“About to evict any nigga that wanna pop lip”

Lyte repeatedly refers to herself in the first person, telling her audience what she is doing and what she is planning to do. She lays down the rules and takes command of her listeners. As Lyte speaks, she leaves no room for alternatives; she is in charge and expects her audience to follow her lead:

“Im on some new shit”

“I gotta keep you active”

“I intend to ascend never will I pretend”

Lyte ends the verse reiterating her sense of control, speaking of herself in the third person, and swearing, to emphasise that she is the best:

“lyte is good, fuck that, lyte is great”

### Can I Get Some Dap

Lyte rhymes the first eight lines of the first verse proving to her listeners that she is a talented and gifted performer. She has travelled around the world, experienced different places and faces, and everywhere she has gone, she has been admired for her capabilities. She proves this by her rhyming skills, utilising both in-line and end rhymes:

“on a regular basis, I visit many places  
see many faces, all ages and aces  
what I’m tryin’ to say is, usually the case is  
I’m the topic of chases, cause I hold all the aces  
some rappers are tasteless, nameless, faceless  
got it so bad they can’t afford shoelaces  
but when it comes to hits, I covered all bases  
leavin’ no tracks or clues or even traces”

Lyte is addressing a particular audience, using street phrases that only those from the hood would understand. She is offering them advice, in a type of code, warning them against danger:

“you gotta come equipped if you plan to flip the script  
if not you’ll be whipped”

Lyte has used a series of words that have similar sound endings to really get her point across; these will be words that her audience will remember and keep in their heads.

Lyte ends the verse by taking command; she lets the audience know that she is smart, and fully aware of those who want to take advantage of her and her position, but that she sees right through them. The only thing she wants, and demands, is respect:

“some just wanna come along for the ride  
but me myself I want some dap on the side”

In the second verse, Lyte explains what “dap” is. “Dap” is respect, and this is something she always expects from others:

“What I want is my dap when dap is due”

Lyte reminds her audience continually that she is a strong, independent woman who makes her own decisions and knows what she wants. Lyte refuses to compromise or to give in to what others want her to do:

“I pick and I choose the best  
fuck the rest”

Lyte tells her listeners exactly where she stands, speaking of herself in the first person, personalising her comments and forcefully telling her audience that she is strong:

“I won't be mistaken for a slut”  
“I refuse to sing the blues”  
“I get loose I got what it takes”

Lyte speaks directly to those in her audience who are against her. Referring to them directly as “you”, she suggests that they are unstable and unable to compete with her. The words Lyte uses to describe them emphasises her position of power, and their sense of helplessness in her presence:

“you might be confused”  
“there's nothing you can do”  
“you quiver and shake”

Lyte continues to give a more comprehensive definition of “dap” in the third verse. She talks about herself repeatedly, using the personal pronouns “I” and “my”, stressing that she is in charge and always demands respect:

“I can't be played suckered I ain't busted”  
“I'm talkin' respect that's what I'm out to collect”

Lyte then proceeds to describe how she believes in talking about what is right. She encourages her audience to listen to her anti-drug, anti-violence and safe sex messages:

“pushin' out the messages that crack is a no no  
guns and violence get you into a mess  
and condoms I strongly suggest”

Here, Lyte uses incomplete sentences, reiterating that she is speaking in a type of street slang that her audience will understand and relate to, as well as stressing that there is not a moment to lose. She is in a rush to get her message across, so she speaks as economically as possible, only including the necessary points.



## Let Me Adem

From the start of the first verse, Lyte makes an attack on all who put her down, who disrespect her ability to rap, and who think they are better and more skilled than her. Lyte speaks directly to them, using the personal pronoun “you” to address her audience, confronting them and putting them on the spot, swearing at them as she makes them the main object of her attack:

“you punk motherfucker”

“teach you chumps”

Lyte repeats the word “beat” to emphasise that she will attack her competition by any means necessary, in order to teach them a lesson:

“get beat up, beat down, beat around, how that sound”

Lyte is forceful and commanding, using imperatives to instruct her enemies and to emphasise that she is in charge:

“come get your lashes”

“come get it if you think you’re full fledged”

Lyte uses a lot of words to describe movement, to show how she is constantly on the go. She is alert and aware of others trying to creep up on her but she is always moving, watching her back:

“slide off the edge”

“shake ‘em off”

“spin it back”

Lyte emphasises this point by describing herself as “non-stop” and someone who will “never slack”.

Lyte has taken well-known phrases, changed them around slightly and then added them into the first verse:

“Fee Fi Foe Fum I smell a sucker”

“Let it pour, let it rain”

“No pain, no gain”

By using these phrases, Lyte associates particular sayings with the attack she is making on her enemies. By making an allusion to Jack and the Beanstalk, Lyte implies that she is the giant, undefeatable and terrifying, always ready to attack an enemy. Then she alludes to the overwhelming power of rain, saturating everything and completely covering all, like her. Lyte continues by reiterating the point that she is unstoppable, not afraid of anything and no amount of pain will stop her from remaining on top.

Lyte speaks of this as a type of warfare, using the language of combat to describe how ready she is for a battle:

“we’re under attack”

“I came prepared armed”

In the second verse, Lyte begins again with the phrase from Jack and the Beanstalk. Still maintaining the idea that she is beginning a type of verbal warfare with her enemies, Lyte uses angry, violent words to describe what she will do to those who try to compete against her, or disrespect her:

“I rip shop and leave shop torn

I be tearin’ down the walls”

“I bash and I smash”

“I bust that ass”

Lyte always speaks in first person, referring to herself as “I”, personalising the attack, and threatening her enemies without hesitation.

Lyte proceeds to remind her audience that she is true to the streets, she is upfront, “hardcore” and “raw”. She only talks about what she knows, what she has experienced. Using rhyme, Lyte maintains that she is honest and truthful, aiming only to educate her listeners:

“I don’t front, perpetrate

I ain’t no stunt and I don’t buy blunts”

Lyte uses a series of words, all with similar sounds, to describe how she will attack her enemies. She warns them about the damage she will cause, and uses rhyme to emphasise the speed with which her skilled words will hit them:

“so don’t come with no mush mush soft like a baby’s tush

you’ll get rushed plain ole crushed kicked in the bush or maybe ambushed”

In the final verse, Lyte reiterates that she is awesome and unstoppable, someone whose “shit is hot” and who is “too large for that”. She describes herself as a “showstopper” who will “do it proper”. Lyte is still in command, right up until the end of the song, speaking to her enemies in imperatives, instructing them:

“get off my back”

“run you can’t hide”

## Steady Fucking

The introduction to this song repeats the line: “dirty bitch, you dirty, dirty bitch” over and over. Lyte is basically launching a full-on attack on Roxanne Shante (another female rapper) who has badmouthed and insulted Lyte. Lyte uses words associated with fighting, combat and killing to describe what she is going to do to Roxanne:

“I got to kick your ass right now”

“I’m a hit you with my land cruiser”

Lyte is really angry and her tone is extremely hostile as she describes how Roxanne is on her “hit list”.

Lyte begins her all-out insult spree, describing Roxanne as a “lowdown dirty loser”, a “poo putt”. However, her greatest insults come in the form of implying that Roxanne is a “hoe” - a promiscuous young woman who is willing to sleep with anyone. She also suggests that Roxanne is a drug addict, calling her child a “crack baby”. Lyte informs her listeners about Roxanne’s past lovers, saying that:

“the fifty-fifth nigga you fucked said your poom poom stinks”

The second verse has Lyte’s insults getting worse, even more abusive, and still referring to Roxanne as a “hoe”. She repeats the line:

“Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking”

implying that Roxanne is more of an object than a person; she is only there to be an object of sex for men. Lyte claims that Roxanne does her mic checks “with a dick in your mouth” and that sex to Roxanne is “like a fad”. Lyte then claims that Roxanne is such a loathsome nymphomaniac that she flips a coin with her mother “to see who sucks dad”. Lyte makes reference to Roxanne as a drug addict who stinks:

“I heard you’re kind of funky

but then again, who’s heard of a clean junky”

and then Lyte proceeds to take a “douch break” in the middle of the song, really emphasising the point that Roxanne’s genitals smell.

The third verse continues as an attack on Roxanne, with Lyte using swear words far more frequently, as her anger accelerates. She talks of “fighting motherfuckers” and describes how Roxanne let her uncle have an orgasm while playing with her:

“You let your uncle get one off while you bounced on his fucking knee

now what’s my fucking name I left you so far behind

You can’t get back into the fucking game”

Lyte makes specific references to Roxanne's physical appearance, disrespecting her teeth and the size of her bottom, insulting not only Roxanne's actions but the way she looks as well:

“your teeth shits ain't been straight since you were eight”

“you'll be sitting on your fat ass”

## Bad As I Wanna B (1996)

### Keep On Keepin' On

In the first verse, Lyte talks about looking for her lover, using figurative language to describe herself as "hot peas and butter" - implying that she is so desirable she could melt in his mouth, persuading him to please her, to satisfy her.

Lyte talks about herself mainly, using personal pronouns, emphasising the importance of her man paying attention to what she wants and needs, particularly in bed:

"Can I get hot"

"I get loose"

Later on in the verse, Lyte implies quite explicitly that she gets quickly turned on by him, ready for penetration, and accentuates this by using words like "juice", "loose" and "boost". By using long "ooo" sounds she draws out the sexual oozing sound of what she is talking about.

This verse is concerned with Lyte's sexuality, and she emphasises this by repeating the word "body" four times in two lines:

"all over your body whose body your body

I can rock a party like nobody"

At the end of this verse Lyte stresses that her lover must pay special attention to her. By using both internal and end rhyme, she reiterates that he must focus on her needs:

"Now let me take sight when you're loving the Lyte

Life ain't all that unless you're doing it right"

Lyte uses the chorus to emphasise the importance of her lover being persistent, by using repetition of the word "keep":

"Keep on keep keepin' on"

She reinforces her lover's behaviour, by referring to him as "you", talking directly to him, and claiming that he has made her life better with his love:

"Cause you came and you changed my world

Your love so brand new"

Lyte also uses repetition of the word "right" to emphasise the importance of his loving her in the way she needs to be loved:

"Doin' it right right right"

In the second verse, Lyte refers to herself constantly, using the personal pronoun "I" in almost every line. This emphasises that she is in control, she is a strong woman who is not afraid to tell her man exactly what she expects from him to meet her needs:

"I got the need to be released"

"I found me a new this year"

"If I wanna yes I can can"

"I got a longing"

By using references to sugar and honey, Lyte implies that her loving is sweet and irresistible:

"more honey than a bumble bee"

"sweet like licorice, sugar for my booga"

The third verse then has a complete change of tone. Lyte becomes quite angry and defensive in the words she uses:

"Lazy motherfuckers get put on probation"

This verse is used as a warning to her lover, to men in general, that they cannot play around with her feelings. Lyte uses a lot of imperatives to emphasise that she will not accept being treated badly by men and does not appreciate him talking about their private life with others:

"You better work me"

"Never speak my info in the sheets on the street"

Lyte uses well-known phrases to back herself up, emphasising her strength and knowledge. She sees clearly and is smart enough to know when a man is fooling around with her. Placing the phrases side by side and using repetition to emphasise her point she states:

"Only the strong survive

Only the wise excel"

### **Have U Ever**

In the hook, the opening lines which are at the start of the song and are repeated intermittently throughout the text, Lyte has taken the words of a nursery rhyme and changed them to fit the subject-matter of her own song, emphasising her abilities as a rapper, and in particular, acknowledging that she is a female rapper.

In the first verse, Lyte establishes a comparison with the way she raps and the way in which others rap. Their songs are full of nonsense, with no substance:

"Why you talkin' that whoopied doo whoo"

whereas her raps have a flow, a fluidity to them, which she stresses with the rhyme scheme she uses. Lyte rhymes four lines in a row, incorporating internal and end rhyme, showing her capabilities as a skilful rapper:

"I'm makin' moves that's smoother than the cream  
or the sweat from a wet dream drippin' wit Vaseline  
my mabeline left a ring on the scene  
I got mad peeps down with the Tag Team"

Lyte makes allusions to combat, warfare and explosions to prove that her rapping will cause damage and it should not be messed with. She describes herself as a "ninja", and warns that she "might explode on the scene, like a nuclear bomb".

In the second verse, Lyte establishes that she is your average young woman off the streets, dedicating her song to "all the ruffnecks and hood rats". She also extends this idea further by using sentences which are grammatically incorrect - she is no well-educated snob who is concerned with using language which is correct; she is from the streets:

"I be the stage wrecker"

This also helps support the idea that her number one concern is with being a good rapper. What sounds pleasant to the ear may not always fit grammatically but that is not of concern. The aim is to get her point across to the audience, using a style and technique they will both understand and enjoy:

"let me know where you're at"  
"the shit that be kickin"

Lyte also makes reference to sight, establishing that she can see all things clearly. She reports things as they are, to inform her audience - unlike the fake rappers who are unable to see:

"you can't see, what I can see cause you're blind baby"

Again, Lyte identifies herself as not only an excellent rapper but also an excellent *female* rapper:

"it's the Lyte representing for the female species"

Lyte returns to making references about war and combat in the third verse. She is describing rappers who are fake and who do not rap about things they themselves have experienced. This angers her and Lyte alienates these other rappers by calling them "imposters", "perpetrators" and "fake players". Lyte's language is threatening as she challenges these rappers, warning them that she will:

"drop the bomb on 'em



blown to dust"

Lyte, on the other hand, maintains that she is an honest rapper, who only talks about what she knows. By asserting this, Lyte identifies with her rap audience, claiming that she speaks nothing but the truth to them:

"it's a must that I kick it  
like I hear it, speak it like I see it"

Lyte describes herself in terms of the weather, signifying that she can take on different forms depending on the situation, such is the power of her abilities as a rapper. One moment she can be "the rain in a storm", next she is "like the rays of the sun", and sometimes she is "like a hurricane".

Lyte ends the song powerfully with images of anger and destruction, claiming that time is running out for those who are ruining rap. Lyte affirms that she will be the one instigating the annihilation of all bad rappers:

"the clock is ticking, time is up, before the world destructs, or the universe erupt,  
I'm a be the one to lights this motherfucker up"

### **Everyday**

Lyte uses strong, commanding language right from the beginning of this song, demanding respect and utilising imperative language to gain her listeners' attention - "now look here". Her repetitive use of the personal pronouns "I" and "my" draws the attention to herself, she is the one in control, and expects to get everything she asks for:

"I gotta have everything done with no mistakes"  
"I demand my praise"  
"I got a wish list that must be fulfilled"  
"I need my car waxed and my floor shellac  
I need my back rubbed"

The chorus reiterates the fact that Lyte likes things done a certain way, every single day. She repeats one line twice, beginning the sentence with "everyday", and ending it with "everyday" to emphasise the point that she does not expect to get her way just every now and then, but all the time.

In the second verse, Lyte continues to demand that things be done in the way she expects them to be done. She admits that "all the lovey dovey yeah that is sweet" but at the end of the day she wants her man to work at their relationship; doing things for her, like washing her car, massaging her body and paying her bills. Lyte instructs him using imperatives: "Pick it up and bring it back" emphasising that she is in charge, and if he does not like

that then he can go elsewhere because she will not back down: "gotta earn your keep"; "respect whatcha got", and she describes herself as "coldharded".

In the final verse, Lyte affirms what she wants and needs, particularly in a man, and if she does not get what she wants then he can go:

"If it's too hot nigga then raise up out my spot"

She talks about getting her way and makes it clear what she desires:

"I need a man that understands me..."

"I want to live lovely..."

"I gotta make money..."

"I need it done in a special way baby..."

### **Cold Rock A Party**

Lyte introduces the song by spelling out her name, making it clear to those listening, who is the rapper, and that she is there to "rock the house", a line which she repeats three times, to emphasise her point.

The chorus, too, talks about Lyte and her ability to liven up a party. She refers to herself in the first person, directly addressing her audience, letting them know how good she is at her job:

"I cold rock a party..."

"I rock on the floor..."

"I be the shit..."

In the first verse, Lyte directly addresses her enemies - those who are in competition with her and warns them by making allusions to fighting. She reminds them that she has been rapping for a long time, calling herself a "veteran" and threatening other rappers with getting their "booty scarred".

Lyte makes a reference to one of her earlier recordings "Paper Thin", alienating those who were not around "way back then". Lyte maintains that she is, and has always been, "the baddest bitch on this side of town". She is confident and arrogant in her claims, and her manner of talking about herself is very much like that of the boxer Muhammed Ali. In fact, Lyte uses one of his phrases: "I float like a butterfly sting like a bee" to describe herself.

This first verse is full of references to herself, especially to her skills and abilities as a rapper:

"Spectacular on the mic, I go for broke"

"I get the paper so I don't care"

"Fly that's me"

"I guide the beat and I ride it well"

Lyte uses profanity to emphasise her points, swearing directly at her enemies, referring to them as "you", maintaining the idea that she is tough and untouchable:

"Fucking you up - everytime that I drop"

"Fuck a bullet baby - I done took your spot"

Lyte opens the second verse using an imperative sentence, taking control and immediately fending off imposters:

"Back off me and let my skin breathe"

Then she refers to herself in the third person, describing herself as "everlasting" and "next to none".

Lyte constantly affirms that she is in control, warning others not to go against anything that she says, even in the likely event that they do not really understand or appreciate what she is saying. This is emphasised by her frequent and repetitive use of the word "don't":

"Don't plan to get down..."

"If you don't understand just say you don't..."

"Don't wait for me to explain..."

Lyte mentions several different cities in this song, indicating how wide-spread her audience are; they are listening to her music all over America:

"Just Brooklyn is where I'm from..."

"I'm resting in Studio City..."

"From New York to LA..."

Her music is everywhere:

"West to east see east to west"

Lyte reiterates that she has been on the rap scene for a long time, as she mentions another couple of her songs from earlier albums:

"I got many witnesses that can back this Ruffnecks"

"Been down with me since Poor Georgie"

In the final verse, Lyte begins with an imperative phrase and is a lot more harsh in her language, emphasising that she is really angry now:

"Get out my shit"

Lyte reminds her audience that she is not just an awesome rapper, but an awesome *female* rapper whose music is the "shit" (a complimentary term for "the best"). She emphasises this using repetition of the word "on", to suggest that her music and abilities never end:

"I'm a woman in the land of hip-hop  
And the shit don't stop, it goes on, on, on  
You see the shit don't stop"

Lyte asks a lot of questions in this final verse, rhetorical questions which she uses to emphasise a particular point she has just made. Lyte uses this technique to point out to her listeners how ridiculous her enemies are in their attempts to compete with her:

"Why you gotta be all up on me like that?"  
"Who makes it liver than a hip hop scuba diver?"  
"What they've ever done for you?"

### **TRG (The Rap Game)**

Lyte opens this song with a warning. Speaking as a rapper with many years experience, Lyte says how rappers can be successful using the slang "making the cream" - but she warns that "it ain't easy as it seems".

As she begins her first verse, Lyte gives a description of how she started out rapping at the early age of sixteen. She tells her audience about the traps involved in the music industry, particularly talking about those who are out there to trick new artists and take advantage of them. Lyte refers to these people as "fake" and having "snake eyes". She makes several allusions to the rap industry as being a game - "a crap game" or "Russian roulette" - emphasising how things are based very much on chance and you can never be sure what to expect next.

Lyte makes allusions to drowning, talking about how rappers are often popular one day and then disappear the next. They get caught in the undertow, unless they defend themselves against the rough tide of the rap industry:

"Never do you know when you about to get wet  
So you should stay set so you don't fall and go under"

Lyte then looks back to when she first started out and how the clothes and image she had then, which were cool for that time, had to change in order for her to make it out there now:

"Those were the days  
Latin quarters my puma suit was cool  
Now let me be caught in that and I'll be damned a fool"

As Lyte points out, a successful rapper is one who, like herself, can adapt; someone who is smart enough to change with the times:

"Ya gotta change with the times like the weather  
MCs that lasts is the MCs that's clever"

And who can keep up to speed:

"You can't move too slow"

In the second verse, Lyte talks about those who have stayed in the rap game far too long. Lyte explains how they have continued trying to make hits and money when, in fact, they should have given up. Lyte maintains this idea by drawing out her rhymes to flow through five lines:

"Come back after come back  
Nigga came back more wack  
than the wackest wax on the rack  
What's up with that New Jacks  
are coming through taking no slack"

Lyte makes allusions to clocks and time, suggesting that when one's time is up in the rap game, one should get out; there is no point in hanging onto something that is no longer there:

"You better watch the clock"  
"It's time to let go of the rhyme"  
"It's about half past the monkeys ass"

In this way, Lyte talks directly to those in the audience who she feels should move on, referring to them as "you", acting as an advisor and speaking as one with a lot more experience:

"You should have been gone but you still trying to hang on"  
"Just as quick as you got large you can quickly shrink and sink"

In the final verse, Lyte uses rhyme to emphasise the flow and fluidity of rappers who remain in the rap scene, and who will last only if they increase their flow:

"To and fro they come and go  
You better change your flow  
And then switch up your show"

Lyte continues to advise others, based on her long experience. She suggests that one should have precautions set in place should things go wrong. Lyte speaks directly to her

audience, telling them to take charge of their situation, to be in control, so that they are not left empty-handed by the record company:

"You better tell an exec you need to be set"

"You better know how to survive"

Using repetition, Lyte stresses how important it is that they listen to what she has to say, if they hope to survive. Then Lyte personalises the advice she has given by talking about her own music career. She refers to herself as "L-Y-T-E" and describes herself as "stronger than an ox". By rhyming her next few lines, Lyte emphasises that she has the staying power, the ability to stick around:

"the octane that knocks in your brain

I sustain my mission is to maintain sane"

### One on One

In the first verse, Lyte is describing a gorgeous young man, who is famous like her, that she is looking at in a magazine. At first she refers to him as "he" and then she changes to speak directly to him, calling him "you". The whole time she uses the personal first person narrative when referring to herself, using "I" and "my". As the title of the song implies she is obsessed, talking about nothing else but this young man and her:

"He's all that and I'm all in"

"Now I'ma give ya something

So you could get into it,

I got the side view so I could watch ya do it"

Lyte makes several references to bottoms using various descriptions, emphasising that she is consumed with his appearance, how good he looks. Also she uses the colloquialism "ass" to get him to leave his woman and come be with her:

"Hollywood's got a hold on that behind"

"Make your woman put your ass out"

In the second verse, Lyte still continues to talk directly to the young man, mentioning how she saw him a long time ago, and how she still wants him, regardless of his status:

"You don't have to be a superstar for me and you to go far"

Lyte continues to describe parts of his body, making reference to having sex with him, emphasising this by using clever rhyme schemes, both internal and end-line rhymes:

"You got the body of an angel

Bango, bango watch the bojangle from every angle"

Lyte lists the parts of his body she wishes to see and touch, using sensual imagery to describe what she will do to him:

"I wanna feel your muscle flex off your backbone"

"I wanna rub your deltoid down to your bicep"

In the final verse, Lyte states that this is the longest that any young man has sustained her interest and she emphasises this by forming a rhyme scheme which is drawn out over the next four lines:

"Damn the only brother who make me look twice

Believe that baby, I wanna sacrifice, I'm on it

You couldn't shake me off if you tried

No sleeping on the job and I'm wide-eyed"

Lyte makes several references to sight, seeing and looking. This is a very visual experience for her listeners, as she describes the young man that she is obsessed with, his appearance, and the way he acts:

"I seen ya gleam in your eye"

"You was looking fly"

### **Druglord Superstar**

In the first verse, Lyte talks directly to her boyfriend, a drug dealer, who she is kicking out of her house. She has obviously put up with his dealings for a long time, and emphasises this by rhyming the first few lines together, drawing out the rhyme scheme, in the same way that he has drawn out her patience:

"Got a new gig, here you come again kid

Fresh out the dog, done did your bid

But you can't stay here no more, not in this crib

Not with the foul way that you used to live"

Lyte is really angry with her man, and this is made clear to her listeners as Lyte swears at him, describing all the things she has had to fix due to him and his friends, and all the disrespect she has put up with:

"I spent mad dough to get shit fixed cause of your fucking death wish."

"Cause a motherfucker like you just didn't care"

"Got my shit shot up...cause of your wild-ass friends"



Lyte tells how he started his dealings, by trafficking and couriering drugs with a friend. Then he got greedy and thought he could start his own drug-ring in order to make more money. At first, things went well, as Lyte describes all the things he had, placing emphasis on the word "new":

"You got a new crib, new truck, new car, trying to fit in  
Throwing parties for them big type rap stars"

But, as with most activities which are illegal, things eventually turn sour, certain members of her boyfriend's drug ring give evidence against him to the police, so he becomes a wanted man:

"I heard you're on the run now...  
ratted your ass out and gave that what, when and how"

Naturally, he turns to Lyte, looking for a place to hide out. But she is not having that. Lyte's tone, as she tells his story, is filled with anger. But more than anything, she is frustrated at his stupidity, and his lack of consideration towards her:

"I'm thru with you motherfucka...You put me  
thru too much heartache - too much shit"

She will not let this drug dealer ever step back into her life again. Lyte obviously cared for him, but refuses to put up with being mistreated by him any longer. She is a strong, independent woman who challenges other women, through this song, to stand up and demand respect from their men, instead of only being used by them when it is convenient.

## **Two Seater**

Lyte describes herself going out in her car on a Saturday night. She refers to herself in the first person "I", "me" and "my", as if she is telling her audience a story. However she speaks directly to a young man that she meets on the street, addressing him as "you". She takes control and tells him to "get out of your shit and come ride with me." Lyte describes her car, and all its accessories: "I got automatic locks, newly installed shocks" letting her audience know that she is a smart woman, who knows her cars.

Lyte talks a lot about herself, asserting her skills, what she is like and what she will do:

"Im scorching hot"  
"Im too much as I rock your knot"  
"I got the stuff that's good to go"

And she also emphasises that she is smarter than others, always alert and aware of what is going on around her:

"I keep 'em at a distance I know their resistance"

"I hit the high light to read"

"As I gab my gifts I'm ready for the type of action"

"I'm ready to get it on and do the do's"

Lyte constantly makes reference to the things she has, and how she is always in control - nothing gets past her:

"I got what you call an itching..."

"I got my shades down low..."

"I got a blackberry tree..."

This whole song is an extended metaphor for her sexual desirability and capabilities in bed. Lyte implies throughout that she wants to have sex with this young man and that she is an excellent lover.

## Seven and Seven (1998)

### In My Business

In this song, Lyte is talking about people who do not mind their own business; people who concern themselves with what she does, and in particular, look forward to seeing her fail. Her tone, right from the start, is one of anger and frustration. She speaks directly to those who are out to watch her fail. Using imperatives, Lyte shows that she should not be taken for someone who is weak and consenting - instead she directs her anger at her enemies:

“Never mind that nigga”

“Get out the crack of my ass”

Speaking in street slang, Lyte uses phrases which only her audience from the hood will understand. They are her peers, and she wishes to address in particular, the ones who are trying to keep her down:

“how the lyte get down”

“all up in my shiznit”

“drop the brooklyn bomb”

In the second verse, Lyte makes several allusions to the sea and going fishing:

“Got me taggin piranhas”

“Got me swimmin in waters gettin caught in fishnet”

“Got me hooked up”

Here Lyte uses these descriptions to imply that her enemies are out to, metaphorically, “drown” her, or “sink” her and her success. Lyte refuses to accept this however and fights back, using her own clever words and rhymes. She is fully aware of their tactics, and sees through them; Lyte describes herself as being “too quick” and “too swift” to get “drowned” by her opponents.

### Too Fly

Lyte opens this song using figurative language. She uses both simile and metaphor to convey to her audience a sense of her sexuality:

“juicy like a nectarine”

“My game is long and lean like a limosine”

“I told you from the get I was a wet dream”

Each of these images use long vowel sounds, drawing out her sultry, sexual attractiveness and the inability of anyone to resist her.

Lyte is speaking directly to a male, using the personal pronouns “you” and “I” when referring to herself and him. In this way, she is letting her listeners in on a conversation she is having with him, putting them a privileged position, as they listen to how she controls the situation. Lyte refuses to be played around with by this man; and she degrades him by calling him a “jackass” and a “dumbass” repeatedly. She also makes several references to “playin’” as if this is all a game to her:

“Now you wanna play like you hard to get”

“Should I play how easy you are to forget”

“Now you wanna act like we playin it”

Lyte makes up all the rules and is always in charge. She knows she is attractive to men, and will not settle for less with this man:

“I’m too fly for what you got to give to me

I got niggaz out there dying to live for me”

In the second verse, Lyte is still speaking directly to the young man. She indicates that she gave him a chance, but he blew it. So now she is moving on to bigger and better things. Lyte emphasises this point by repeatedly using the word “new”:

“I even got you new kicks”

“New show new day in New York forget you”

## **Woo Woo**

Right from the start of the first verse, Lyte affirms that she is always in control of her life. She describes herself as “naughty” and “nasty” and affirms that she is desired by many. Lyte asserts that she is “too fine”, “blessed” and “the best”. But she is not the only one who thinks that she is awesome:

“I’m twice as much as you thought I’d be”

“They still want me there I’m the star of the show”

Everyone, including herself, thinks Lyte is awesome and she ends the verse by asserting that:

“The party don’t jump til I get there”

Lyte is speaking in the first person directly to her audience referring to them as “you”. Lyte invites them to be a part of her rapping experience but warns them not to try and stand in her way.

She is on a mission, on a “quest”. Lyte uses destructive descriptions when talking of her abilities as a rapper:

“Causing a mess wherever I go”

“When I hit the scene all better beware”

In this way she affirms that she causes a lot of damage, and cannot be competed with; her skills are too dangerous, too lethal. She warns those who fear her abilities to keep away.

In the second verse, Lyte expands on the idea that she is a bad girl, a desirable vixen. She warns her audience, particularly the men in her audience, that she is “nasty” and full of “tricks”. She describes herself as “the girl your mama warned you about at night” and as “the bad habit you just can’t shake”. Lyte is fully aware of her sexual power over men, and uses it unashamedly. Lyte encourages men to pursue her, making references to lollies and other sweet temptations:

“I got the sugar for your sweet tooth”

“Got the yab yum to get you stuck like glue”

Lyte also makes several references to fire and flames, implying that if the audience are not careful, they will get burnt by her and her skills:

“I start the fire watch it go down

When it’s time to put the flame out I put the juice down”

Lyte makes an allusion to the singing group New Edition, and a song they released called “Candy Girl”. Her listeners will be able to think back to the lyrics of that song and associate it now with Lyte and the type of young woman that she is:

“Ask Ronnie Bobby Ricky and Mike

I’m that candy girl”

In the third verse, Lyte changes her narrative technique and refers to herself in the third person:

“Lyte got just what you like”

“Lyte to infinity like dusk to dawn”

Lyte distances herself and is able to comment on how others, not just her, consider her to be awesome, talented and skilled.

Lyte uses a lot of imagery throughout this verse :

“you wanna be the tiger roamin’ thru my woods”

“Not just any penny can get in my piggy”

Lyte implies that men prey on her, desiring her, pursuing her, like tigers in the woods. She also knows that men think that if they have money and great cars this will guarantee

they can get a woman. But Lyte stands strong and lets them know that material possessions are not going to win her over. She reiterates this point by saying:

“you just can’t tempt me”

Lyte makes references to other celebrities, Michael Jordan, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers:

“All up in your ear but I’m not like Mike  
Red hot be the brown chili pepper”

Here she implies that she is as good as these other famous stars, as skilled as them, as popular as them, even better. She has her own distinct style, her own technique and her own skills, which make her stand out. Lyte qualifies these comments by claiming that her audience recognise her songs and listen to them so much that they all know the words:

“Yall know my words now let’s sing it together”

### **Playgirls Play**

Lyte opens this song by speaking directly to her audience, addressing them as “you” and referring to herself as “me” and “I”. In this way she personalises the song; it is a message which she is sharing with her audience, her friends:

“You know my name”

Lyte immediately seizes control of what is being said, and speaks to her audience in imperatives, instructing them to listen to what she has to say:

“Watch me do my thing”

“Take it way past the limit”

“Go back 6 years”

Lyte uses several different images to describe herself. The first is that of an alcoholic beverage, implying that she is as potent and addictive as a drug:

“I’m the female chronic slash gin and tonic”

Next she refers to herself as Johnny Nemonic, a movie character from a Science Fiction film, who cannot be stopped, and who has both skill and power:

“Fuck johnny blaze I’m Johnny Nemonic”

Then Lyte refers to herself in the third person, distancing herself by talking about herself as another person:

“MC Lyte long as the money green collect”

She talks about how successful she is, and how much money she makes. Lyte qualifies her statement by talking about all those who support her and listen to her music, those

from “the projects” from both the “east side and the west side”. She is popular all over the place; her music and appeal are widespread.

Next Lyte proceeds to break her name down, telling her audience what each letter of her name stands for:

“L’s for love me

Y for why front

T’s for truth

E’s the exotic flavour you bounce to”

Here, Lyte implies that she signifies each of these ideas. She is not just a rapper out there solely intent on making money. Lyte is on a mission; she is loved by her audience and does not put up any front to them. She speaks the truth as she spreads her messages, while entertaining them at the same time.

In the chorus, Lyte shows how both her honesty and skills pay off - she is rich, successful and constantly in demand. She is “fresh” and “is paid in full”. Lyte has a “coupe to push around the way” and so much money and so many offers that she has “grants stacking up everyday all day”. Lyte continues to assert what an excellent rapper she is, not only globally but on a universal scale:

“I’m the ultimate intergalactic spectacular”

Lyte uses a simile to describe her style of rapping, implying that she is smooth and sweet, like hot chocolate. She is irresistible and a constant temptation to all the senses:

“As creamy as Swiss Miss hot chocolate”

Lyte continues the idea of her supremacy over all others by constantly referring to herself in the first person, maintaining that she is the one in control:

“Im the topic go cop it”

“cause I rocked it”

“Im the perfect role model”

“Hypnotised by my Brooklyn vibe”

In the third verse, Lyte gives a non-stop list of all that she can do:

“I sit on chrome stake up chips run up charts

Break up schemes cause wet dreams”

Here she implies that she is on a roll, she is unstoppable, and capable of achieving anything that she sets her mind to and, at the same time, is desirable. These two lines run like a train, steadily moving, flowing along the tracks. Lyte refers directly to this:

“Engine engine number 9 on the ny transit line”

to reiterate that she is like a train, bound for a certain destination, moving at a fast pace.

Lyte makes several allusions to light, fire and heat when referring to herself and her abilities as a rapper:

“Lyte it up lyte it up lyte it up”

“Hotter than gun shots hotter than most blocks

Hot Hot Hot to the touch”

Here Lyte suggests that she will burn anyone who stands in her way and that her rhyming skills are untouchable. Lyte affirms that her rhymes and her skills are so destructive by claiming that the equipment she uses, and the CDs she records on, need to be protected from her:

“I throw the muzzle on the mic

Cuff up your CD”

“Rippin’ all the mics apart”

Lyte switches words around and uses repetition to show her power with words and her ability to rearrange them to make particular statements:

“I got what you like you like what I got”

“Nobody do the body better”

“Show biz your biz doe biz my biz”

Here she plays around with diction, manipulating the same phrases or words and juggling them around to emphasise that she is a clever and extremely effective rap artist.

### **Put It On You**

In this song, Lyte is describing what it is like to have sex with her, describing how parts of her body are sweet and sugary:

“some wanna crawl up my sugar walls”

“what a candy call”

“you wanna lick”

Using allusions to lollies and candy, Lyte implies that she is irresistible and sweet - men want to eat her and lick her like candy.

Lyte, however, is the one in control and lets any prospective lovers know exactly what she wants:

“I’m a greedy girl”

“It’s my world”

“Gotta make it last if you want this”



Maintaining the sense of being in charge, Lyte talks about herself constantly, what she wants and what she needs. She places emphasis on wanting lasting sex. Lyte tells her lover what she is going to do and what she expects of him:

“I put it on you like an ass whippin”

“I’m into multiples, ones don’t make it”

“I put you on the spot”

In the second verse, Lyte goes into greater detail about their sexual encounter. She maintains the idea that she is the one in control, as she instructs her lover to remove his clothing. Speaking in imperatives, Lyte commands:

“Kick your tims off”

“Get your buckle undone”

“Turn around let me see it”

Lyte promises to give her lover an experience he will never forget. Appealing to his sexual senses, Lyte claims to “keep it tight suction all night”, reiterating that she wants lasting sex. She maintains that making love to her will send him to “the moon” and that she will do things to him that “will make your toes curl up”. Lyte makes several allusions to heat and things associated with heat in the third verse, as she describes what it is like to have sex with her:

“Gotta make it sizzle like summertime”

“Make the four walls sweat in my bedroom”

“Not a care in the world not even the rug burn”

Here she suggests that making love to her is hot, sticky and perhaps even dangerous but he will enjoy it so much that he will not care about anything but how good it feels.

Lyte also talks about smacking, biting and getting rough during foreplay, but this does not concern her; if her lover gets a bit adventurous she will give back as good as he gives:

“Smack me and I smack you back nigga

Bite me and I bite you back quicker”

Lyte is not afraid to get rough. In fact, she actually claims: “I like it like that”. Here she asserts that she is a strong black woman who can stand her ground when it comes to sex and she is not afraid to get dirty:

“It’s all in the way”

## It's All Yours

Lyte starts this song by returning to the past, listing a series of things which she terms “old school”. These are things which represent the “good old days”, drawing a parallel between these happy memories and the relationship she is currently having:

“Our love is old school like mary janes

Boston baked beans and candy canes”

“Jackson 5 good times the Jeffersons”

Lyte speaks directly to her man, referring to him as “you” and herself as “I”, personalising the rap by making it a conversation between the two of them:

“I rub your shoulders if pressure you was under”

In both the verses and the chorus, Lyte refers to her man, and to their love, as something magical and supernatural:

“My magic man my brooklyn boy wonder”

“Our love is mystical”

“Our love is destiny”

“So surreal but yet picturesque”

“What I feel is unexplainable”

The wonder of their relationship has her stunned and amazed, to the point where it is almost indescribable.

Lyte makes allusions to other well-known couples, using repetition to draw similarities between them and her and her man:

“Our love is like romeo and juliet”

“Our love is destiny like bonnie and clyde”

Lyte emphasises that their love, like that of these other couples, is meant to be.

Using terms of endearment such as “baby” and “babe”, calling him her “companion” and her “best friend”, Lyte makes it clear that he is everything she has ever wanted in a man. She believes they will be together until the day they die; that their love is so strong, it will stand the test of time:

“We’ll die of old age side by side”

“I told my mom when our days are thru

If you have to go first bury me next to you”

“You been there from the beginning to the end”

Lyte gives herself completely to this man, claiming that “you got my heart now here’s my life”, promising to be “truthful”, stating that “I want you to get all I got to give”, and that “anything you want is done”, reiterating the title of the song and her feelings towards this man.

### **I Can’t Make A Mistake**

Right from the beginning of this song, Lyte asserts her skills as a rapper as she rhymes the first few words in the verse, using both internal and end rhyme schemes:

“Romancin’ in the dark I spark the light  
It’s alright tonight I gotta get the mic”

The whole song is a clever play on words, sentences thrown together, using a lot of street language yet, coherently. By using this language, Lyte emphasises that she is only speaking to a particular group of people - those who are from the streets and who are smart enough and quick enough to catch what she is saying:

“Baby got back see rollin’ like ten deep  
But you the for reala nigga swingin the expe jeep”

Lyte repeats the same words but changes the word, to show that she is in control; she manipulates the words to get her message across exactly how she wants to:

“I be we be bumpin the spot g”  
“to this song my song now sing along c’mon”

Lyte uses groups of similar sounding words to make her listeners aware of her ability to throw words together in a logical intelligent manner, while still keeping them entertained:

“Cell phone on roam Syl Rhone  
come home we double chrome”  
“Obstruct it abstract it  
My tactic fantastic”

Lyte maintains the idea that she is the one in charge by using imperatives, instructing her listeners to do as she says:

“Come here”  
“Come home”  
“Leave the dance floor now”  
“Sing along c’mon”

## Oogie Boogie

Lyte begins this song by talking to a young man who is obviously interested in her. She quickly puts him in his place, letting him know that she knows exactly what tricks he is up to and that she cannot be fooled - she is too smart for that. Lyte makes an allusion to him as "Romeo", as if he is some lovesick young man, obsessed with her in the same way Romeo was infatuated with his love, Juliet.

Lyte forms this rap into a one-sided conversation. She talks non-stop, using enjambment to roll from one line to the next, running one idea onto the next:

"If you wanna get your mack on keep  
Your cap on if not my brother then  
You can be gone - I made history and  
Yet I still remain a mystery with a  
Nugget full of gold that drips from  
My eyes..."

Lyte leaves no gaps, no room for him to get a word in edgeways, thus maintaining the idea that she is steering the conversation and controlling the situation. Lyte continues to show control by alluding to life having hard times and describing these hard times as a bumpy road:

"Whenever the road gets tough like rough  
Terrain I'll be there always like sun do  
For rain"

but with her arrival everything brightens as she shines like the sun and she smoothes out the difficult times.

Lyte goes on to give further examples of her capabilities, listing her abilities and constantly referring to herself as "I". She occasionally refers to herself in the third person as "Lyte", implying that others, too, talk about how great she is. This is used to qualify the statements she has already made about herself:

"Now I appeal to the masses"  
"I teach classes"  
"Tm all that though lyte is never given"

Following on with the idea that she is extremely popular and a huge success, Lyte emphasises that she is getting paid very well for her talents as a rapper:

"I spread  
Dimes like a waterfall ask city national who be  
Cashin' all those checks in large amounts from

Swiss bank accounts”

“Snatch the money bag”

This adds proof to the statements she made earlier about her skills as a rapper - obviously others think she is an excellent rapper as they are buying her records and making her rich.

### **King of Rock**

In this song Lyte tells the story of a young woman hooked on drugs. Speaking in the first person, Lyte claims:

“I knew a girl...”

In other words, her listeners can take this story to be true. Lyte is telling them about a young woman she really knew, therefore her judgement on the situation can be trusted. Lyte refers to the young woman in the third person and describes her desperate behaviour, her sad existence. Lyte does this using street slang. Lyte asserts that this young woman is from the hood, and that she wishes to address those who are also from there:

“She was out on the block slinging rocks

In pursuit of the cream cheese papers

Smoked mad lace and she swung many capers”

Lyte describes how this young woman thinks she has got it made when she meets up with a drug dealer, also from the hood, who provides her with not only money to maintain her drug habit, but also various gifts. The young woman thinks that things are great because she has an ample supply of money. Lyte however interjects, giving the reality of the situation that the girl is living in. The young woman thinks:

“Now all is well”

but Lyte comments that:

“Though her life is a living hell

She doesn’t know it

Cause her pockets don’t show it”

”She feels like a queen but looks like a fiend”

In the second verse, Lyte continues with storytelling, this time talking of a young man she knew, and referring to him in the third person as she talks about his situation. He is a drug dealer, also caught up in the idea that he is happy because he has lots of money. but looking in from the outside, Lyte is able to comment more realistically on his situation. She draws out the idea of his desire for money by using both internal and end rhymes:

“I knew a nigga had a car and some weed

He figured this was the only way that he could succeed

He proceed to let the greed

Prevail”

By emphasising the long “e” sounds, Lyte draws out their meaning, showing her audience how each of these words are a play on the human desire to do well, to have money and material possessions. This is also shown in the young man’s thought processes; Lyte uses rhyme to show how all that is important to this young man is having money and owning many cars, regardless of how he earns his money:

“Now he’s large and in charge

He got 4 5 6 6 6 cars

In the garage”

“It doesn’t matter how he got it

Long as his keys stay heavy and his pockets stay knotted”

In the third verse, Lyte brings these two individuals together and her audience realises that these two separate stories are connected. Lyte shows how they met and how the young woman feeds off the young man, who in turn feeds off those he sells drugs to:

“She get that nigga for everything he got

Cause she sniffin’ that and he sellin’ that”

Lyte talks about how she confronted the young woman directly, trying to help her see that she was wasting her life, but the young woman would not listen:

“I tried to tell her that the high won’t last

She wouldn’t listen”

The tone of the song is very sad and desperate, as Lyte uses words like “living hell” to describe the young woman’s life, claiming that “her world was shattered”. Lyte offers her listeners the chance to see what a wasted existence these two young people have, and that their lives are far from happy even though they are rich with pockets that are “full like tanks”, living with “money in the bank”. They have lost control of their lives and Lyte warns that their happiness is only temporary and “won’t last long”.

### **Better Place**

Lyte personalises this song, right from the start, by using first person narrative to refer to herself and to her listeners. Lyte is talking about those who lose a loved one and offers advice on how to remain strong during the difficult time after the death.

Lyte makes several allusions to God and heaven, suggesting that it was this loved one’s time to go. She claims he is an angel and that “it was his time to fly”, that it was him “that

God chose” and that “now he’s got a halo an everlasting glow”. All these images aim to soothe the sad ones, suggesting that the deceased is in a happy place, close to God.

However, Lyte does not try to pretend that this time of loss will not be difficult and she vividly describes the pain his loved ones must be going through, using words such as “struggle”, “sadness”, “woes”, “sorrows” and “painful”. In this way, Lyte empathises with his loved ones, showing that she understands the pain they must be going through at this time. But then she quickly changes the tone, offering them solace and support in the knowledge that he is in a better place, and that everyone must try to face their losses with courage and without fear:

“Keep in mind the sun will shine tomorrow”

“While you’re here you got to keep your head up

Keep movin’ on your life and never let up

Let the past be the inspiration to get up”

Lyte repeatedly uses the word “up”, suggesting that they will be lifted out of their sorrow and should never look down.

Lyte suggests that loved ones do not pass on by accident, and that everything happens for a reason because:

“only God knows what’s next on the agenda”

With these words Lyte encourages her audience to draw on their faith, to take comfort in the idea that God has everything carefully planned out and is watching over everyone at all times. Lyte draws strongly on these religious ideas, claiming that those in the audience who give in to the pain and despair are letting the devil win - he wants them to be sad and to doubt God’s bigger plan of love for all. Lyte warns:

“Don’t let the demons out there try to fool you”

And she encourages:

“Give it all to God he’ll pull you through”

Lyte seems to know what it is like to lose a loved one, describing vividly the sense of loss one feels when that special someone passes on:

“Sometimes you just wanna ball out his name

Seems like the sun don’t shine the same”

“Sometimes it’s hard to see what you got left

Now you feel lost don’t know what to do”

“There’ll be times when you just fall apart”

But Lyte strengthens and supports her listeners by reminding them that:

“God’s still there when your best friend dies”

Lyte gently explains the death in terms of a spirit peacefully being released from the body, emphasising again the idea that the person is returning to God and that there is no need to be afraid; they are safe:

“You’ve got to know there’s so much more than what’s right here  
Have no fear”



# Discussion

## Summary of Findings

In the male-dominated world of rap music, MC Lyte is one female rapper who has worked hard to gain respect and acknowledgement for her contributions to this musical form. Lyte is a skilled and creative artist whose unique and individual style of rapping has earned her a secure position within the rap industry (Perkins, "Rap Attack" 31; Perry 529; Rose, *Black Noise* 161; Valdes 353). Her lyrics are both witty and aggressive and clearly articulate the need for women to be fearless and self-possessed. Rhyming with intelligence and conviction, Lyte has created a space within rap music to empower African-American women. Lyte has manipulated a musical form which has tended to be seen as a predominantly male genre, and has given it a female representation. She has taken the style, bravado and lyrical rhythms which are characteristic of rap, and has used these to discuss issues which directly affect women. Her music supports black women and challenges sexist male behaviour; she is an integral and resistant voice in rap music (Costello and Wallace 5).

In the early days of rap, female rappers were often encouraged to take part in more commercially orientated, softer rap music (Toop 201). Right from the start of her career, however, Lyte refused to be anything less than strong, assertive and forthright. In her lyrics and using various language devices and literary techniques, Lyte presents issues which reflect the society in which she lives. She challenges the subservient role that so many women are delegated to, not only in rap music, but in society in general, countering the commonly held notion that women are only relevant to the extent that they serve as a source of male entertainment and pleasure (Ransby and Matthews 530).

Notwithstanding her main focus on female issues and the development of a female perspective, Lyte addresses concerns which are relevant to both males and females from the hood. From 1988 through to 1998, Lyte's lyrics show a developing maturity and depth evidenced by changes both in the complexity of her language techniques and also in the content and subject-matter.

Lyte's lyrics have always incorporated literary and language devices characteristically found in rap music; devices such as "naming", "boasting", "storytelling", repetition, imagery, first person narrative, and the use of slang. Over time, however, these have gradually increased in complexity. Her later album releases show an increased ability to

manipulate words, to juggle word order and to use imagery with multiple levels of meaning. While patterns emerged showing that certain language devices, such as rhyme and rhythm, were used consistently by Lyte, these devices became more sophisticated over time. Lyte deviated from the usual “safe” rhyme schemes used in rap, and successfully incorporated internal as well as end rhymes in her later releases. She experimented increasingly with various sound devices, such as assonance and consonance, and her words had greater coherency and logic. Her focus was no longer on merely finding words that fit a particular rhyme scheme. Instead, a greater emphasis was placed on choosing carefully calculated words and phrases that incorporated different levels of meaning.

### **Literary Devices and Language Techniques**

A key literary device is Lyte’s use of first person narrative. Most of her songs are written in the first person, indicating the importance Lyte places on speaking from her own point of view. Giving personal accounts of various situations, Lyte puts herself at the centre of her texts, often offering advice to her audience. She maintains authenticity in her lyrics by writing each rap as if from her own experience. She frequently gives her lyrics a personal touch by speaking to her audience in the second person. Lyte has a one-to-one conversation with her listeners, speaking to them openly, honestly and even intimately, about events she herself has experienced personally or has observed.

Lyte uses the first person narrative technique most often when she is addressing men directly, discussing various aspects of heterosexual relationships. By speaking in the first person to a current or past lover, Lyte is able to gain control over the man she is addressing (See “Paper Thin”; “Lil’ Paul”; “I Go On”; “Oogie Boogie”; “Everyday”; “Like A Virgin”; “Druglord Superstar”)<sup>4</sup>. By only presenting her half of the conversation, Lyte cleverly forces whoever she is addressing to be present, yet silent. In this way, she maintains a position of power, completely in control of what her audience will hear.

Lyte also uses first person narrative to frequently assert that she is a skilled and artful performer (See “Lyte Thee MC”; “Survival of the Fittest”; “Beyond the Hype”; “One Nine Nine Three”; “Cold Rock A Party”; “Can I Get Some Dap”; “Rhyme Hangover”; “Playgirls Play”). Lyrics which boast of the performing artist’s skills are an important part of any rap. They are particularly important in female rap, however, as they put

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout this Discussion section, song titles are given in double inverted commas and album titles are italicised. These are usually, but not invariably, placed in parentheses. Appendix 2a provides alphabetical listings of songs and the pages where the analyses and transcripts may be found.

female rappers on the same footing as their male counterparts. They show that they, too, can control the crowd and keep them entertained (Rose, *Black Noise* 163) and that they are at least as good at rapping as any male. By denying her competition a voice, and with the intrusive use of “I” and “me”, Lyte is able to focus the audience’s attention on herself.

As she weaves her complex lyrics into music, Lyte’s words of self-praise are filled with frequent references to her sexual desirability and commercial success (See “Keep On Keepin’ On”; “Woo Woo”; “Two Seater”; “Ain’t No Other”; “Oogie Boogie”; “Act Like You Know”; “Have U Ever”). These signs of status, however, are always presented as secondary to, and usually implied as being achieved by, her verbal ability. The ability to verbally express oneself well is greatly appreciated and highly valued in the poorer black areas and many African-Americans assert that they have a superior social status within their community due to their verbal prowess. This is a black tradition which dates back to the griots in West Africa (Shusterman 615). Lyte’s rap texts constantly affirm her ability to use unique and individual methods of word manipulation to entertain her listeners. Her lyrics frequently assert that she is an extremely talented performer, and that this is recognised by others as evidenced by her huge record sales and large bank balance.

The strength of a rapper’s assertions, especially when the rapper assumes the role of a storyteller, has helped rap become the central expression in hip hop culture (Rose, *Black Noise* 55). In many ways, rap artists can be viewed as oral journalists, giving accounts of their culture, environment and society. In her songs, MC Lyte often uses storytelling techniques to address her audience (See “I Cram To Understand U”; “Cappucino”; “Poor Georgie”; “I Go On”; “Druglord Superstar”; “King of Rock”). This is a variation on the early African-American skill of “toasting”, an oral tradition which originated in the poorer black areas. Like a lot of rap, it involves boasting and bragging about oneself in a manner that is often aggressive and violent both in form and content. Toasting and rapping both require the speaker to have control over the language, the ability to outdo any competition, and above all, the skill and mastery of being able to tell a story which will hold the crowd’s attention (Rose, *Black Noise* 55). As she narrates certain events and situations in her storytelling, Lyte often places herself at the centre of the song enabling her audience to share her experiences, but also to learn from them.

Rap music has always been very competitive and confrontational and is considered a type of verbal combat (Fernando 271). Rap lyrics continually allude to battles over status, prestige and group adoration (Farley 49; Rose, “A Style” 79). While Lyte often uses descriptions of violence and violent acts, these are simply metaphors for her skills as a rap artist; they emphasise her ability to conquer any competition (See “Brooklyn”; “Let Me Adem”; “Slave 2 The Rhythm”; “Throwin’ Words At U”). By challenging others, and

showing contempt for any efforts they make to defeat her, Lyte highlights her abilities and superiority over rappers that she regards as less authentic, creative or clever.

“Naming” is another characteristic of rap music which Lyte uses frequently as a technique for self-promotion. By taking on a new name, introducing herself early on in her songs and repeating her name throughout the text, Lyte uses naming to assert her chosen identity and establish her right to speak (Gilroy, *Ain't No Black* 216; Irving 113). In fact, several of Lyte's albums contain songs which have her name in the title (“Search 4 The Lyte”; “Lyte As A Rock”; “MC Lyte Likes Swingin’”; “Lyte Thee MC”; “I Am The Lyte”). Frequent repetition of her name adds emphasis to her talent and individuality, while simultaneously strengthening allusions to herself as a strong black female. By creating a new name for herself, a name with varying significations, Lyte is able to explore different facets of her female identity.

Lyte often plays around with the sound of her name, using simile and metaphor, in order to stress her own importance. Sometimes she defines herself as a “light”, a guiding force for her listeners. She implies that, through her raps, she provides an illuminating perspective that can lead others out of darkness (Roberts 147). At other times she draws on the idea of “light” in reference to weight or size, inverting its usual implications as something insubstantial or frivolous. By claiming that she is as light as a rock or, more specifically, a boulder, Lyte is actually maintaining that what she has to say has considerable substance and meaning (See “Kamikaze”; “Survival of the Fittest”; “Search 4 The Lyte”; “Cold Rock A Party”; “Playgirls Play”).

The use of black talk, or slang, is of central importance to any rap artist. Slang gives rap lyrics a sense of realism as the audience can relate to the euphemisms and common phrases being used. Due to its unique and changing nature, black talk gives rap artists the ability to be constantly new and original. MC Lyte makes frequent use of such language in all of her rap texts (See “What’s My Name Yo”; “One Nine Nine Three”; “Can I Get Some Dap”; “Have U Ever”; “In My Business”). This is highly effective on two levels. On one level she establishes a sense of community between herself and those whom she is addressing; those who, like Lyte, were born and bred on the streets, and can understand the references and phrases she is using. This empowers them and places them in a privileged position. On another level, the use of black talk alienates and excludes those listeners who cannot understand the speech being used. Like street poetry, it is difficult for them to fully appreciate the puns, metaphors, similes and poetic allusions or samplings of rap since they lack personal experience of the cultural context that has shaped the work that is being generated (Dawes 15). Often, slang terms are words whose meanings have been changed to serve a new purpose, whilst still maintaining their shock

value (Safire 41). Lyte seems fully aware of this, and uses slang frequently and even aggressively, often inverting the meaning of words to emphasise a particular point.

By filling their lyrics with hip-hop jargon, cultural signifiers and the easily recognisable dialects of African-American youth, rappers are able to place the street as the environmental norm from which they write (Brennan 684; Eyerman and Jamison 105). Rap lyrics derive much of their content and imagery from mass culture. Lyte often does this by referring to television shows, sports personalities and familiar name-brand commercial products (See “Let Me Adem”; “Cold Rock A Party”; “MC Lyte Likes Swingin’”; “Woo Woo”; “It’s All Yours”). Such items help provide the common cultural background needed for artistic creation and communication in a society where these cultural signifiers have importance (Shusterman 622). It also adds to the idea that it is necessary for the rap audience to have a common cultural background, not only so these references can be recognised, but also in order for the allusions to be fully appreciated (Oliver 9). Coming from the streets, Lyte knows which cultural signifiers her audience will readily identify with. She often uses these references to emphasise her talents as a rap artist, as well as to make her experiences relevant to her listeners.

Repetition is another language device which adds emphasis to a rapper’s statements, causing the audience to pay attention to what is being said. Henry Louis Gates Jr. has explored in detail the relation between the black vernacular tradition and the Afro-American literary tradition. He emphasises the importance of repetition in black artistic forms, claiming it is fundamental in both music and language use (*Signifying* xxiv). Lyte uses repetition frequently across all her albums. She takes key terms, particular phrases or ideas, and repeats them, often hypnotically (See “Don’t Cry Big Girls”; “Shut the Eff Up!”; “When In Love”; “Ain’t No Other”; “Keep On Keepin’ On”; “It’s All Yours”). By repeatedly asserting her talents and skills, Lyte also adds weight to her claims of possessing inimical abilities in both her writings and the performance of her raps.

Lyte’s manipulation of words, and the use of particular phrases to control her audience, have not changed dramatically over time. However, the way in which she uses the various language devices has. Lyte’s earlier albums, as in her later ones, show a consistent use of imperatives, slang, questioning, figurative language, incomplete sentences, enjambment, consonance and assonance, repetition and simile and metaphor. But as one looks closely at the literary techniques used in Lyte’s lyrics, there is a clear development across albums. The imagery and examples used by Lyte in her early albums were often very simple and basic, probably due to her young age and her inexperience with the rap music form (See “10% Dis”; “Slave 2 The Rhythm”; “I Am The Lyte”; “Shut The Eff Up”). However, as she has matured, both as a woman and as a rap artist, the



complexity of Lyte's language and the issues she addresses have become more apparent. Her words take on multiple levels of meaning and she is more adventuresome in her disruption of word order (See "Have U Ever"; "In My Business"; "Woo Woo"; "Playgirls Play"). She experiments with a greater range of sounds and convincingly incorporates new slang into her texts, subtly inverting the meaning of words in order to qualify what she wants to say.

## **Content and Subject-Matter**

Initially concerned with establishing herself as a competent rap artist, Lyte's earlier lyrics were dominated by assertions about her lyrical dexterity, her clever use of language and her ability to outdo any competition (See *Lyte As A Rock* and *Eyes On This*). But, as time passed, and her achievements in the rap world were recognised, her subject-matter changed from a focus on her credibility as a rap artist to specifically addressing issues related to the society in which she and her intended audience reside. Although Lyte's lyrics have always provided commentary on relationships between men and women, her later albums show an increased concern with offering specific guidance to women, advising them on how to be strong and independent (See *Bad As I Wanna B* and *Seven & Seven*).

As rap music became increasingly popular, it underwent big changes and developments in its themes (Guevara 55). One important change was that rappers became more aware of the content of their lyrics. Early female rap texts, for instance, were often simply complaints about men, concerned with rejecting male's dominant characterisations of women. Later female rap texts, however, provided distinctive female perspectives on various issues. Lyte was one of the first female rappers to do more than just try to defend herself or form lyrics around mere refusals of male constructions. Instead, she worked within this male-dominated genre in order to subvert it (Irving 116). Right from the beginning of her career, she constructed new texts which ran in direct opposition to commonly held notions of gender (See "Please Understand"; "Woo Woo"; "Put It On You"; "Keep On Keepin' On"; "Everyday"; "Take It Off"; "2 Young 4 What"; "Lil' Paul"; "I Go On"; "Paper Thin").

Like a lot of American music, rap music is pervaded by sex talk and references to sexuality (Perry 524). Unlike other female rappers who dress provocatively and use their sexuality to sell records, Lyte has always chosen to play down sexuality in her physical appearance, although not in her lyrics. She dresses in baggy clothes and baseball caps, yet sexuality and sexual boasting are frequent themes in her lyrics; yet only insofar as they add to any other issues she is addressing. Lyte's awareness of her desirability to

men enables her to gain a type of control, a power over her audience. She is very aware of her body, its function and its role in establishing identity (Perry 524). Her lyrics make it evident that she is not afraid of her sexuality and she often uses them as a vehicle by which to articulate power and self-possession (See “Ruffneck”; “Woo Woo”; “Put It On You”; “One On One”; “Keep On Keepin’ On”; “Too Fly”). She frequently changes the lyrics of her songs from an objectifying male description of what he will do with the female body to a statement of how she will manipulate *him* in order to fulfil *her* desires. In this way, Lyte gains the upper hand and refuses to be subjected to male domination; she allows for the development of alternative concepts of what it means to be a woman. She states views clearly that the ability and right to enjoy sex, even casual sex, belong as much to women, as to men. Lyte also offers her own slant on relationships.

Lyte uses insult to stake a claim on traditionally male characteristics in rap. She criticises male suitors, in a male style, thus revealing her competence, as a woman, in rhyming. She can give as good as she gets. But she uses this technique to call attention to the problems and issues which face young African-American women from the ghetto. Her strongest criticisms focus on men who manipulate and abuse women and often her lyrics are about men who take advantage of women and cheat on them (See “Lil’ Paul”; “Like A Virgin”; “Please Understand”). These raps are not sad or depressing in tone; instead they are smart, witty and often aggressive. Lyte has written them as a warning to men, as well as a caution to women who may fall victim to such abuse. These raps present women as smart, strong, and capable of resisting manipulation by men.

Lyte identifies the methods by which men gain power over the women in their lives; she exposes men’s tricks and offers women the opportunity to see clearly through their lies and deceptions (See “Paper Thin”; “I Cram To Understand U”; “I Go On”). Again, using first person narrative, Lyte frequently places herself at the centre of a rap song. She shows her female audience that she, like them, has had many experiences with men. But she, however, has learnt to outsmart men and is willing to share what she has learnt with her audience.

As Lyte focuses her raps on male dishonesty and infidelity, she outlines the tensions between trust and vulnerability in a relationship. Lyte identifies how men and women often fail to communicate effectively with one another, simply because they operate on different levels (Rose, *Black Noise* 160). For instance, men often criticise women and consider them flawed by their sensitivity, vulnerability and need for commitment. Lyte focuses on this in her rap lyrics and encourages women to see these so-called flaws as strengths and assets (See “Please Understand”; “I Go On”). Lyte remains committed to her own principles at all times and encourages her audience to follow suit. Through her

lyrics, Lyte is able to effectively articulate and elaborate upon competing interests between men and women within the African-American community (Decker 116), and she is able to achieve this without being stridently feminist in her approach.

Although it is obvious in her rap lyrics that Lyte clearly expresses her frustrations with men, she does not want her statements to be interpreted as denouncing all black males. In an interview with Tricia Rose, MC Lyte was asked whether she considered herself to be a feminist. Lyte expressed discomfort with this label, as she believed it signified a movement associated particularly with white women, and which often seemed to adopt an anti-male position (176). Instead, through her lyrics, Lyte endeavours to stress the importance of female independence but, at the same time, emphasises the need for female and male co-dependence (See “When In Love”; “It’s All Yours”).

An artist’s concern with defining and obtaining a sense of identity is an important characteristic of rap music. Identity in rap music seems deeply rooted in one’s attachment to, and status in, a local group (Rose, “A Style” 78). This seems particularly important in lower class black areas in America’s big cities where identity, pride and a sense of community are of fundamental concern (Hebdige 136). By placing herself in a particular location, Lyte is able to address distinctive themes, and look at core aspects of life in the ghetto. In this way she is able to consider the importance and role of women in many of her texts, suggesting that they should be both respected and protected. Although history is an important subject explicitly addressed in many rap texts, Lyte has <sup>not</sup> written an entire song specifically addressing black history or even black politics. Instead, Lyte focuses on specific current examples from the hood, interspersing her text with comments relating to black empowerment and black pride (see “Big Bad Sister”).

Identity for MC Lyte is importantly tied up in her association with her “crew” or “posse” (See “What’s My Name Yo”; “One Nine Nine Three”). Often these are members of her production team, those that assist in the creation of her music, but who are also her friends. The crew is a type of support system for many rap artists and their fans. By establishing neighbourhood crews and posses, alternative local identities can be formed. Most rappers define their local allegiances in quite specific terms, not just by city, but by neighbourhood (Shusterman 619; Street 256). Lyte affiliates closely with Brooklyn, often mentioning it in her lyrics or in the title of her songs (See “Kickin’ 4 Brooklyn”; “One Nine Nine Three”; “I Cram To Understand U”; “All That”; “Cold Rock A Party”; “Brooklyn”). By talking about where she lives, Lyte is able to provide a valuable and specific social commentary on the surroundings in which she, and many of her audience, reside. Lyte’s raps have a streetwise edge, a hardness, which comes undoubtedly from the fact that she is from the hood and that she has needed to maintain this edge in order to



survive day-to-day. Lyte provides an authentic voice for many facing the harsh conditions of black ghettos. Yet while her experiences and allusions centre around situations in the hood, they often transcend the particular time and place and provide a commentary on oppression, especially female oppression, that is universal.

### **Justification for the Method of Analysis**

The present type of literary analysis typically has not been performed on the lyrics of rap music. While texts have been commented on in a general way in the literature reviewed, an in-depth analysis has not been done across the range of texts of a single artist. Although rap is not often viewed as a form of literature, several critics have asserted that the best rap texts can be successfully analysed using traditional literary critical analysis, and that if rap is to be acknowledged as equal to already established modes, it is necessary for it to be examined using conventional techniques (Sexton 12).

Much of the content of Lyte's lyrics seems to be centred around self-promotion and boasting about her talent and ability as a rap artist; but these claims are not without merit. As with all skilled rappers, Lyte bolsters her statements by the clever use of various language techniques and devices, all of which can be critiqued using traditional forms of literary analysis. The sophistication with which she has used these techniques has perhaps been overlooked because of a dominant focus on the vocabulary and subject-matter. The present analysis has identified these techniques and has shown that they have been employed with considerable skill. With rap, it is important to consider not simply the content of the lyrics or even the musical rhythms by which it is presented, but also the language devices used to enhance the delivery.

### **Limitations and Further Areas of Research**

As has been reiterated many times throughout this thesis, Lyte has alienated a particular part of her audience, namely those who are not from the hood. It is accepted that an inherent limitation in analysing the raps of MC Lyte is that the researcher is not from the hood. However, the present research has attempted only a lyrical analysis using devices which have been used in traditional literary criticism. Many critics do not have any first-hand experience of the environment and experiences of the writer whose texts they examine.

Although this thesis provides a comprehensive study on the texts of MC Lyte using literary methods of analysis, it has some inherent limitations because it does not include other possible types of analysis. Either a sociological or a feminist perspective may have resulted in quite different, or at least additional, findings. For instance, conclusions might

be possible concerning the effect of Lyte's lyrics on her audience, and whether any actual change in behaviour occurs in her listeners due to the alternative solutions and advice she offers. Although Lyte does not explicitly define herself as a feminist, her works might actually reflect a predominantly feminist viewpoint, and a feminist reading of her lyrics might extend or even alter the understanding of her texts derived from this analysis.

The importance of the performance factor in rap music has been often discussed by rap critics (Brackett 123; Fernando 266; Sexton 11). Therefore, it would be relevant for a musicologist to conduct a detailed analysis on specific musical elements of MC Lyte's texts. A critique of the rhythmic textures, the use of melody and harmony, the sampled sounds of other forms of music, the timbre, and the vocal inflections of MC Lyte could all add to the meaning and significance of her texts.

An anthropological study could be conducted on the development of African-American language devices from the historical African-American oral tradition, through to the word games of the ghetto, up to the rap music of the present day. Analysis could identify common language devices used, and discuss whether these have remained the same, or whether they have altered over time, due to changes in the environment, culture or setting.

The present lyrical analysis could also be performed on the texts of a number of black American female rappers, comparing and contrasting the language devices used and subject-matter discussed. To do this, however, first a comprehensive textual analysis on each of these artists similar to the present one, should be performed first. This approach could be expanded even further to include female rappers from other countries. Many theorists claim that rap artists discuss issues that are relevant to audiences regardless of culture or race, as their themes are universal (D. and Jah 256; Longhurst 155; Shusterman 619). The lyrics could be compared and contrasted, looking at whether artists from different places *do* discuss similar issues and whether they use the same language techniques and devices. Further, the lyrics of female rap artists could be compared to those of males to investigate the role of gender on rap texts.

It has been asserted that rap and street poetry share a lot of common elements in regards to both form and content; so much so, that it is often difficult to tell the difference between the two (Dawes 18). Like street poetry, rap also requires the active participation of others; the audience is exceedingly important (Beasley 32). Therefore, research could be conducted on the works of a prominent African-American female street poet using the same literary analysis, to compare and contrast the techniques and language devices she uses, and the themes she discusses, with that of MC Lyte.

## Conclusions

Rap music focuses on areas of ghetto life that many would rather ignore (Shusterman 619) and Lyte's rap texts are no exception. Her songs speak unashamedly about drug dealers (See "Druglord Superstar"; King Of Rock"), drug addiction (See "Eyes Are The Soul"; "I Cram To Understand U"), venereal disease (See "Lola From The Copa"), the death of a loved one (See "Better Place"), teenage pregnancy (See "Eyes Are The Soul"), drunk driving (See "Poor Georgie"), and street killings (See "Cappucino"); issues which other forms of music so often choose to avoid. By looking at these issues, Lyte has expressed viewpoints that are so often overlooked, misrepresented, or even denigrated by mainstream music. She addresses problems which her main audience can relate to, and readily identify with. In this way, rap is actually being used both to highlight the desperate plight of many in the ghettos and as a potential cry for help.

Often rap lyrics are criticised and considered controversial by those listeners who hear expressed experiences that they simply have not had or cannot understand or appreciate. To them, rap music combines chaos, noise and power - all things which represent a threat to them and something they find both disturbing and uncomfortable (Walser 300). As Lyte typically addresses an audience largely comprised of those from the hood, her subject-matter and manner of speaking, particularly in her strong use of profanity and slang, may be considered to be lacking in morality or social value. Given the audience she is aiming to reach, however, one cannot make judgements on her morality or claim that her messages lack social significance. Her lyrics have an educational value as they speak to people from the poorer black communities about issues and in terms they can understand. By talking about situations which they can relate to, Lyte allows her audience to recognise the issues addressed as their own; her lyrics form a part of their own cultural history, a history which they value. Lyte offers solutions to problems in a manner which may seem inappropriate to a mainstream audience. However, she must work within the constraints of the environment in which she and her audience reside in order to effectively communicate with those she hopes to reach. To offer advice which her audience would find either impracticable to follow or simply unacceptable would only result in alienating her from the very people she is wishing to address and to assist in finding solutions to the great difficulties that they face.

Lyte is particularly concerned with offering advice to women, redefining their role within society and changing commonly held views of how a woman should talk or behave. Many of her lyrics stress the fact that women are entitled to have fun although Lyte warns that there are always lessons to be learnt and care to be taken. By speaking about issues which affect not only herself, but her audience as well, Lyte encourages her listeners to

learn from her mistakes; to take care and stay strong. Her frequent assertions of strength are to encourage and empower other black women from the hood.

But Lyte also addresses the men in her audience, providing them with an insight into how women think therefore offering broader advice on how to avoid or deal with some of the traps faced by all living in the hood, irrespective of gender. In this way, Lyte shows that she has a general concern for the state of all those who reside in these poorer communities, not just women. Her lyrics remain focused on trying to better the situation for everyone, stressing the need for her audience to work together to build a safer, happier and more informed community.

Rap music is at last becoming acknowledged as one of the most visible and valid forms of African American expression in today's society, particularly amongst youth (Boyd 38; Kitwana 150; Marks 114). This is why a rap artist's message can be so crucial to the formation of alternative identities for young people; what rappers say *does* matter. Rap is criticised for its violent messages, its use of profanity and its denigration of women but rap's defenders claim that this is merely a reflection of how people talk and act on the streets. Artists like MC Lyte acknowledge the realities of the hood but work hard to formulate more positive messages in their lyrics. By looking closely at how African-American men and women treat one another, Lyte forces them to examine their behaviour, offering them more positive, even uplifting, alternative solutions to their problems.

In particular, by looking at African-American women's roles within society and subverting male characterisations of them as victims, Lyte provides these women with a more powerful standpoint from which they can empower themselves and have a voice. Lyte stresses the importance of female independence and strength, particularly in regards to relationships with men, but she also emphasises the need for males and females to rely on one another and to work together to form healthy, happy relationships. Lyte is strong and assertive in her song lyrics and she sets up new social spaces for women. She does not use her lyrics to complain endlessly about being mistreated or to dwell on how women are constantly being wronged by men. Instead, she uses her words and various language techniques and devices to simultaneously articulate female desires and needs, while giving women the authority to stand up and be heard.

Certainly Lyte's rap lyrics are usually confrontational. But by being aggressive, she is able to stand out and provide a voice for African-American women in the ghetto, members of society who are so often marginalised in both society and mainstream music. And she forces people to pay attention. Lyte has successfully shown her capability to

incorporate the use of black talk into a traditional literary form closely resembling poetry. That Lyte has chosen to mainly express herself in this strident and provocative manner, seems to have been quite deliberate. However, she is capable of other forms of expression and this is perhaps best illustrated by her song "Better Place" which can be found on her latest album, *Seven and Seven*. In stark contrast to the usual manner in which Lyte raps, this song has a completely different lyrical composition. In content, Lyte addresses a common occurrence within the hood, the seemingly untimely death of a loved one. However, unlike her other songs which exhibit a rather condemnatory and angry tone, her song takes on an air of sadness and empathy. She alludes frequently to God and continually makes the point that He is in control of the situation, no matter how things appear to those who are grieving. Lyte is neither callous nor uncaring in her remarks. Instead, she realises the particularly sensitive nature of the topic that she is discussing for those concerned, and changes her tone completely, talking intimately with her audience, guiding them. Lyte seems to truly understand how it feels to lose a loved one and makes this point explicitly through her lyrics. This song stands out because it shows the potential Lyte has to educate and inform without needing to use slang, profanity or a harsh tone. It shows her breadth of talent and her ability to convey meaning on a completely different level to her other songs. It also demonstrates her ability to appeal to a wider audience if she so chooses.

In summary, Lyte is centrally concerned with addressing issues associated with African-American women from the ghetto because she can relate most strongly to their situation. Having grown up on the streets of Brooklyn, she naturally has strong affiliations with them. Lyte's messages, however, have universal themes and carry meaning across vastly different locations and cultures (D. and Jah 256). Lyte expresses herself in such a way that *all* women can gain strength and support from her words, not only those of African-American descent or from the ghetto. Many of the situations she refers to may be specific to the lower socio-economic class, but often her messages have a universal appeal and relevance. For instance, male-female relationships share commonalities throughout the world, regardless of age, race or culture. Although they are born out of a particular location and set of circumstances (the hood), Lyte's lyrics have an authenticity which is relevant to a diverse audience and to those who bother to really hear what she has to say. Notwithstanding the constraints that rap music imposes on literary form, Lyte has successfully used various language devices and literary techniques, not only to convincingly assert herself and to maintain a high profile, but also to educate her listeners. Perhaps, as she herself has affirmed strongly, one should "never underestimate Lyte thee MC".

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Release Dates and Distributors

1. Lyte As A Rock  
1988  
First Priority Music, distributed by Atlantic Recording Corporation
2. Eyes On This  
1989  
First Priority Music, distributed by Atlantic Recording Corporation
3. Act Like U Know  
1991  
First Priority Music, distributed by Atlantic Recording Corporation
4. Ain't No Other  
1993  
Eastwest Records America, distributed by Elektra Entertainment Group
5. Bad As I Wanna B  
1996  
Eastwest Records America, distributed by Elektra Entertainment Group
6. Seven & Seven  
1998  
Eastwest Records America, distributed by Elektra Entertainment Group

## Appendix 2 - Albums and Tracks

### **Lyte As A Rock (1988)**

1. Lyte vs. Vanna Whyte
2. Lyte As A Rock
3. I Am Woman
4. MC Lyte Likes Swingin'
5. 10% Dis
6. Paper Thin
7. Lyte Thee MC
8. I Cram To Understand U
9. Kickin' 4 Brooklyn
10. Don't Cry Big Girls

### **Eyes On This (1989)**

1. Cha Cha Cha
2. Slave 2 The Rhythm
3. Cappucino
4. Stop, Look, Listen
5. Throwin' Words At U
6. Not Wit' A Dealer
7. Survival Of The Fittest
8. Shut The Eff Up! (Hoe)
9. I Am The Lyte
10. Rhyme Hangover
11. Funky Song
12. Please Understand
13. K-Rocks Housin'



### **Act Like You Know (1991)**

1. When In Love
2. Eyes Are The Soul
3. Search 4 The Lyte
4. Act Like You Know
5. Mickey Slipper (Interlude)
6. Poor Georgie
7. Take It Off
8. Beyond The Hype
9. All That
10. Big Bad Sister
11. Like That Anna (Interlude)
12. Kamikaze
13. Can You Dig It
14. Like A Virgin
15. Lola From The Copa
16. 2 Young 4 What
17. Absolutely Positively...Practical Jokes
18. Another Dope Intro (Interlude)
19. K-Rock's The Man (Bonus Track)

### **Ain't No Other (1993)**

1. Intro
2. Brooklyn
3. Ruffneck
4. What's My Name Yo
5. Lil Paul
6. Ain't No Other
7. Hard Copy
8. F--k That M-----f--king Bulls--t
9. Intro
10. I Go On
11. One Nine Nine Three
12. Never Heard Nothin' Like This
13. Can I Get Some Dap
14. Let Me Adem
15. Steady F--king
16. Who's House (CD bonus track)
17. I Cram To Understand U - 1990 (CD bonus track)

**Bad As I Wanna B (1996)**

1. Keep On Keepin' On
2. Have U Ever
3. Everyday
4. Cold Rock A Party
5. TRG (The Rap Game)
6. One On One
7. Zodiac
8. Druglord Superstar
9. Keep On Keepin' On (Remix)
10. Two Seater

**Seven & Seven (1998)**

1. In My Business
2. Too Fly
3. This Emcee (Interlude)
4. Top Billin'
5. Give Me What I Want
6. Woo Woo (Freak Out)
7. Playgirls Play
8. Put It On You
9. Propa
10. It's All Yours
11. I Can't Make A Mistake
12. Want What I Got
13. Oogie Boogie
14. Party Goin' On
15. Break It Down
16. Closer
17. Radio's Nightmare (Interlude)
18. My Time
19. A\*\*aholic Anonymous (Interlude)
20. King Of Rock
21. Better Place

## Appendix 2a - Alphabetical List of Tracks Analysed

Track No	Title	Album	Analysis(pg)	Transcript(pg)
4	Act Like You Know	Act Like You Know (1991)	44	159
6	Ain't No Other	Ain't No Other (1993)	65	183
9	All That	Act Like You Know (1991)	50	166
21	Better Place	Seven & Seven (1998)	100	219
8	Beyond The Hype	Act Like You Know (1991)	49	165
10	Big Bad Sister	Act Like You Know (1991)	51	168
2	Brooklyn	Ain't No Other (1993)	59	178
13	Can I Get Some Dap	Ain't No Other (1993)	71	188
3	Cappucino	Eyes On This (1989)	29	141
4	Cold Rock A Party	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	81	198
10	Don't Cry Big Girls	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	26	137
8	Druglord Superstar	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	86	203
3	Everyday	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	80	197
2	Eyes Are The Soul	Act Like You Know (1991)	42	156
2	Have U Ever	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	78	195
9	I Am The Lyte	Eyes On This (1989)	37	150
11	I Can't Make A Mistake	Seven & Seven (1998)	97	214
8	I Cram To Understand U	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	23	133
10	I Go On	Ain't No Other (1993)	67	185
1	In My Business	Seven & Seven (1998)	89	207
10	It's All Yours	Seven & Seven (1998)	96	213

Track No	Title	Album	Analysis(pg)	Transcript(pg)
12	Kamikaze	Act Like You Know (1991)	53	169
1	Keep On Keepin' On	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	77	194
9	Kickin' 4 Brooklyn	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	25	135
20	King Of Rock	Seven & Seven (1998)	99	217
14	Let Me Adem	Ain't No Other (1993)	73	189
14	Like A Virgin	Act Like You Know (1991)	55	171
5	Lil Paul	Ain't No Other (1993)	64	182
15	Lola From The Copa	Act Like You Know (1991)	56	173
2	Lyte As A Rock	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	16	124
7	Lyte Thee MC	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	21	131
4	MC Lyte Likes Swingin'	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	17	125
11	One Nine Nine Three	Ain't No Other (1993)	69	187
6	One On One	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	85	201
13	Oogie Boogie	Seven & Seven (1998)	98	216
6	Paper Thin	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	20	129
7	Playgirls Play	Seven & Seven (1998)	92	210
12	Please Understand	Eyes On This (1989)	39	152
6	Poor Georgie	Act Like You Know (1991)	46	161
8	Put It On You	Seven & Seven (1998)	94	211
10	Rhyme Hangover	Eyes On This (1989)	38	151
3	Ruffneck	Ain't No Other (1993)	60	179
3	Search 4 The Lyte	Act Like You Know (1991)	43	157
8	Shut The Eff Up! (Hoe)	Eyes On This (1989)	34	147
2	Slave 2 The Rhythm	Eyes On This (1989)	28	139

Track No	Title	Album	Analysis(pg)	Transcript(pg)
15	Steady F--king	Ain't No Other (1993)	75	191
4	Stop, Look, Listen	Eyes On This (1989)	30	142
7	Survival Of The Fittest	Eyes On This (1989)	32	145
7	Take It Off	Act Like You Know (1991)	48	163
5	10% Dis	Lyte As A Rock (1988)	18	127
5	Throwin' Words At U	Eyes On This (1989)	31	144
2	Too Fly	Seven & Seven (1998)	89	208
16	2 Young 4 What	Act Like You Know (1991)	57	175
5	TRG (The Rap Game)	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	83	200
10	Two Seater	Bad As I Wanna B (1996)	87	205
4	What's My Name Yo	Ain't No Other (1993)	62	180
1	When In Love	Act Like You Know (1991)	41	155
6	Woo Woo (Freak Out)	Seven & Seven (1998)	90	209

### Appendix 3 - Transcripts of Texts Analysed

#### Lyte As A Rock (1988)

##### Lyte As A Rock

Must I say it again, I said it before  
Move out the way when I'm comin through the door  
Me, heavy? As Lyte as a Rock  
Guys watch, even some of girls clock  
Step back, it ain't that type of party  
No reply if you ain't somebody  
Get out my face, don't wanna hear no more  
If you hate rejection, don't try to score  
First base? You ain't got what it takes  
You smile, you wink, you big fake flake  
You're so pathetic you make my stomach turn  
You beg, you borrow, now you have to learn

I am the Lyte "a-a-a-a-a-as-as-a-rock L-Y, L-L-Y-T-E

Lyte as a Rock, or I should say a boulder  
Rolling down your neck, pounding on your shoulders  
Never shall I be an MC, called a wannabe  
I am the Lyte, L-Y-T-E  
This is the way it is, don't ever forget  
Hear the rhyme by someone else and you know they bit  
All in the way, just little obstacles  
Chew em up, spit em out, just like popsicles  
Suckers out of my way, we're not on the same wavelength  
I show stability, potential and strength  
On the other hand you are weak and unruly  
Could never be a spy, cause you're just a plain stoolie

I am the Lyte "a-a-a-a-a-as-as-a-rock L-Y, L-L-Y-T-E

I'm a slave, I'm a slave, I'm a slave to the rhythm  
Def rhymes on the microphone is what I'm givin'  
Yes I am a Rock and you are just a pebble  
Milk turn up the bass, and Rock adjust the levels  
If a rap can paint a thousand words then I can paint a million  
Wait, Lyte is capable of paintin a bazillion raps  
So when I say it, this is what I mean  
Audio 2 an alliance on the scene  
And I'd like to say whassup to my producer King of Chill  
Party people are you ready, jam if you will  
Never underestimate Lyte thee MC  
I am a rapper who is here  
To make the thing the way they're meant to be  
The World Ultimate, I'm here to take the title  
But I had a little trouble upon my arrival  
But I got rid of those who tried to rock me  
Lyte is here, no one can stop me

I am the Lyte "a-a-a-a-a-as-as-a-rock L-Y, L-L-Y-T-E

There are hip-hop leaders, this you know  
We also have hip-hoppers that follow  
By the tone of my voice, you can tell I am a scholar  
I'm also the leader of the hip-hop followers  
Now get this, I'm at a jam and I'm rockin it  
Suckers like a checkerboard, when black is clockin it  
The grace as I ease across the stage  
Bars around the audience, sort of like a cage  
They laugh cause they assume I'm in prison  
But in reality, they're locked in  
Once again I'll state that I can't be stopped  
Cause yo, I am as Lyte as a Rock

I am the Lyte "a-a-a-a-a-as-as-a-rock L-Y, L-L-Y-T-E

#### **MC Lyte Likes Swingin'**

I may come on strong but that's what you like

You like a female MC who can handle the mic  
How do I know, because you told me so,  
Your MCD for a pro, to supervise the show  
So that's why I'm here don't mean to make a case of it  
But this rap here, well it's just for the taste of it  
I like to rap to make the whole world sing  
And I'm the type of female, well I like to swing

MC Lyte Likes Swingin' (x 6)

Party people in the place since you started the case  
I'ma demonstrate ya, I need concentration  
So you can make a full examination  
Then you will agree that I'm the best MC  
And so is my DJ on the tables Rock  
This is the best jam that you could get  
The rap by Lyte and the beat by Stetsa  
Never turn it down cause it's what you requested  
In my own way you know the big man pressed it  
So believe it in the rap I say  
You believe it too that's why you never walk away  
You like the way I do it, you like my style  
Study it like a book cause you know I'm worth your while  
Expressions on my face show you just how I feel  
Add the wax to my gestures, now you know the deal

MC Lyte likes swingin' (x 6)

Cause, yo, I am the best and that I'll ghost  
Sit down, you be the guest and I'll be the hostess  
Rap for those that know and those that do not  
Like Coke is it I hit the spot  
Like good vibrations I'm like Sunkist  
The rap is smooth cause it's sealed with Chapstick  
Not gonna say that I been rappin since the date of birth  
But I've aquired the knowledge like Miss Butterworth  
Ask me what's important I'll tell you time and effort  
Ask me how I do it, it's like scratchin' records, yeah  
Right is good but Lyte is good for yah



I'm excited just like Toyota

MC Lyte Likes Swingin' (x 6)

**10% Dis**

Hot damn, hot damn, hot damn, hot damn  
Hot damn! Hot damn ho, here we go again

Suckers steal a beat, when you know they can't win  
You stole the beat, are you havin fun?  
Now me and the Aud's gonna show you how it's done  
You are what I label as a nerve plucker  
You're pluckin my nerves, you MC sucka  
I thought I oughta tell you, better yet warn  
That I am like a stop, and my word is bond  
Like James, killin everybody in sight  
The code's three-six, the name is Lyte  
After this jam, I really don't give a damn  
Cause I'ma run and tell your whole damn clan  
That you're a:

Beat biter! Dope style taker!  
Tell you to your face you ain't nuttin but a faker! (x2)

Hit me why don'tcha, hit me why don'tcha  
Milk's bodyguard, is my bodyguard too  
You wanna get hurt, well this is what you do  
You put your left foot up, and then your right foot next  
Follow instructions, don't lose the context  
Thirty days a month your mood is rude  
We know the cause of your bloody attitude

Beat biter! Dope style taker!  
Tell you to your face you ain't nuttin but a faker! (x2)

Your style is smooth, even for a cheatin mic  
You shoulda won applause as a Rakim sound-alike  
Here's a Milkbone, a sign of recognition

Don't turn away, I think you should listen close  
Don't boast, you said you wasn't braggin  
You fuckin liar, you're chasin a chuckwagon  
The only way you learn you have to be taught  
That if a beat is not for sale, then it can't be bought  
When you leave the mic, you claim it's smokin  
Unlike Rakim, you are a joke  
And I think you oughta stop, before you gets in too deep  
Cause with a sister like Lyte, yo I don't sleep

Beat biter! Dope style taker!  
Tell you to your face you ain't nuttin but a faker! (x2)

When I'm in a jam, with my homegirl Jill  
My cousin Trey across the room with a posse to kill  
So I step in the middle, shake it just a little  
Wait for some female to step up and pop junk  
Give my cousin a cue, treat the girl like a punk  
Now I'm not tryin to say that I'm into static  
But yo if you cause it, yup, we gotta have it  
Cause I ain't goin out like a sucker no way  
So I sit around the way for you to make my day  
We can go for the hands, better yet for the words  
Cause you'll be ignored, and at the same time, I'll be heard  
Throughout the city, the town and the country  
The beat is funky, my rhyme is spunky  
There is no delayin in the rhyme I'm sayin  
Neither are the flaws of what my DJ is playin  
So sit back Jack, and listen to this  
It's 10% Dis  
Cause I'm just about ready to fly this fist  
Against your lips  
But I'll wait for the day or night that you approach  
And I'ma serve then burn ya like a piece of toast  
Pop you in the microwave to watch your head bubble  
Your skin just crumble, a battle's no trouble  
Get my homegirls Dohni and Kiki to get stupid  
This thing called hip-hop, Lyte is rulin it  
I hate to laugh in your face, but you're funny

Your beat, your rhymin, your timin, all crummy  
On the topic of rappin, I should write a pamphlet  
Better yet a booklet  
Your rap is weak homegirl  
And it's definitely crooked  
Others write your rhymes, while I write my own  
I don't create a character, when I'm on the microphone  
I am myself, no games to be played  
No script to be written, no scene to be made  
I am the director, as far as you are concerned  
You don't believe me, then you'll have to learn  
This ain't hard as MC Lyte can get  
And matter of fact, you ain't seen nuthin yet  
So never let me step into a party hardy  
Talk to some people and then hear from somebody  
'You wanna battle'? Cause you know where I am  
You don't wanna come in the 90s and see me at a jam  
When a mic is handy, ten feet away  
I stretch my arm like elastic, head like a magnetic  
Set assure, you know I don't play  
When it comes down to it, the nitty gritty  
For a sucker like you I feel a whole lot of pity

Beat biter! Dope style taker!

Tell you to your face you ain't nuttin but a faker! (x2)

### **Paper Thin**

When you say you love me, it doesn't matter  
It goes to my head as just chit chatter  
You may take this egotistical or just or worry free  
But what you say I take none of it seriously  
And even if I did I wouldn't tell you so  
I'd let you pretend to read me and then you'll know  
Cause I hate when one attempts to analyse  
That I despise those who even try  
To look into my eyes to see what I am thinking  
That dream is over you gotta sink it  
And I tell all of you like I told all of them

What you say to me is just paper thin, word

I'm not the kind of girl to try to play a man out  
I take the money and the gear and then break the hell out  
No that's not my strategy, not the game I play  
I admit I play game but it's not done that way  
Truly when I get involved I give it my heart  
I mean my mind, my soul, my body, I mean every part  
But if it doesn't work out, yo, it just doesn't  
It wasn't meant to be you know, it just wasn't  
So I treat all of you like I treat all of them  
And what you say to me is still paper thin

In one ear and right out the other  
Hurt is mumbo jumbo lover  
I don't pay attention I don't concentrate  
You ain't got the bait that it takes to hook this  
Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh  
Sucker you missed, I put feelings aside I know who I am  
My name is Lyte is your name Sam?  
Cause if it is step off, grab your coat and get lost  
Wrap your scarf around your throat and go back and catch a rope  
And hit the road Sam don't you come back  
No more, no more, no more, no more  
Hit the road Sam, don't you come back no more

So now I take precaution when choosing my mate  
I do not touch until the third or fourth date  
Then maybe we'll kiss on the fifth or sixth  
Time to be me  
Cause a date without a kiss is so incomplete  
And then maybe I'll let you play with my feet  
You could suck the big toe and play with the middle  
It's so simple unlike a riddle  
It's as easy as counting to 1 2 3  
In other terms, letters L Y T E  
I'll tell you, you, you, and all of you  
In the back and in the middle in the front  
Yo, that's it paper thin word up

Lyte checkin out

Special dedication to my DJ K-Rock in the place to be

**Lyte Thee MC**

From now on it's not MC Lyte

Listen up everybody, it's Lyte thee MC

Tacklin' anyone who tries to stop me

From fulfilling the ultimate, the ultimate goals

Suckers taking up room on the microphone

I do not favour crowds, move over stop stalking me

I feel like drowning when fans are stomping me

Bigfoot show me that you're uncivilised

Not so tame I don't mean to criticise

But like sweat we don't go together

Especially in the muggy and the rainy kind of weather

Listen up everybody it's Lyte Thee MC

Competition I take it is good for the soul

Pull back the microphone let my arms unfold

Release all the anger all the aggravation

Convert it into word, just sorta like a conversation

I am the talker you're just the listener

Talk and I'll ignore you isn't that a pisser seeker

The problem is you can't understand

The logic in my rap you can't comprehend to

Merely step aside what go and call me weak

But you also step aside when I'm coming down the street

You give me lots of room to whistle and walk

Then everything is silent just in case I want to talk

But I, I never do small talk I like ya hear

Other girls rap and you say that I'm wack

Comin' from a female that is totally dedicated

Every rhyme I say, you ought to appreciate it

And if not, I tell ya like I told my neighbour named Betty

You ain't ready, for a fly female MC, you just ain't ready

Listen up everybody it's Lyte Thee MC

Competition I take it is food for the mind  
Passing spirits from the future is the best kind  
Best advice that you could ever receive from another  
Whether it's a stranger or your night time lover  
Sorry silly rabbit, tricks are for kids  
Brings back memories of the things I did  
Play jokes on suckers just for fun  
But now I'm much older those days are done  
Everything is business forget about games  
See cause once I'm finished you're gonna know my name  
It's Lyte in Brooklyn, Brooklyn's where I'm chillin'  
Better known as the MC Villain  
No I'm not good, but I'm not bad either  
I'll come into your life, it can't get no liver

Listen up everybody it's Lyte Thee MC

So now competition is taken out of my vocabulary  
I don't wary I vary  
Steppin' up is like diggin' your grave  
So sucker MCs you oughta save  
All the mess you be talkin'  
Meanwhile hawkin'  
When I'm on the stage, audience watchin'  
Suckers in the corner just keep on clockin'  
The way I hold the mic, the stance I use  
The rhymes I recite and the beat I choose  
But it's not your fault because you don't know better  
You see the green I wear, you go buy the same sweater  
You look me up and down, it's like the jeans  
You go to Macey's and for hours you stand  
On line just to buy what you saw Lyte wearing  
Don't try to lie homegirl I caught you staring  
Cause yo the beat is dope and the rhymes are kickin'  
I'm the chicken hawk and you are the chicken

Listen up everybody it's Lyte thee MC

### **I Cram To Understand You**

I used to be in love with this guy named Sam  
I don't know why, cause he had the head like that of a clam  
But you couldn't tell me nothin, cause Sam was number one  
Cause to me, oh my gosh, he was one in a million  
I shoulda knew the consequences right from the start  
That he'd use me for my money, and then break my heart  
But like a fool in love I fell for his game  
But I got mine, so I show no shame  
In Empire winked his eye, and then he kept walkin  
And all of those who live in Brooklyn know just what I'm talkin  
The roller disco where we all used to go  
Just to have some fun back in 1981  
You know the place, Empire Boulevard  
Is where I first saw the nigga, and he tried to play hard  
But I knew the deal, cause I knew his brother Jerry  
And Sam, he just broke up with his girlfriend Terry  
So Jerry introduced Sam and I that night  
He said "Hello, my name is Sam" I said, "Hi my name is Lyte"  
We dipped and we dapped and we chit and we chat  
About this and that, from sneakers to hats  
He said "Look, I'm in the mood for love  
Simply because you're near me  
Let's go to my house, lay back and get nice  
Watch television, Reunite on Ice"  
I said "Slow down, I know you wanna shake me down  
But I'm not one of the girls to go rippin around"

Just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
I cram to understand you

Next month I finally went to his house  
I walked into the door, there was a girl on the couch  
I said "Who's the frog, the bump on the log?  
You chump, you punk, how could you do me wrong?"

Singing sad songs about your love is so strong”  
You said “Wait Lyte, you’re confused, this girl is my cousin”  
Your brother agreed, but later said that she wasn’t

Just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
I cram to understand you

Forgotten, next month we went to the Deuce  
Well, I thought it kinda strange cause you had lots of juice  
You knew the dopes, the pushers, the addicts, everybody  
Asked ya how you met em, said you met em at a party  
Then these girls tried to tell me you were sellin the stuff  
I said “It’s not your business, so shut the fuck up”  
They said “OK Lyte, think what you wanna think  
But it’s gon be some shit when your man becomes a”  
I said “Look, to bust a move, I don’t even know you  
To put it Lyte, I really don’t care to”  
They got kinda mad and sort of offended  
They said “We only lookin out for yo best interest”  
I said “Thanks but no thanks” in an aggravated tone  
“When I wanna find out, I find out on my own”

Just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
Ju-just like a test  
I cram to understand you

Then my cousin said she saw you with this lady named C  
Well I’m clawin my thoughts, I wonder who she could be  
You’re spending all your time with her and not a second with me  
They say you spend your money on her and you’re with her night and day  
Her name starts with a C and it ends with a K  
I strain my brain lookin for a name to fit this spellin  
But I just couldn’t do it cause my heart kept yellin  
Burning, begging for affection from you Sam  
But just like a test I cram to understand you  
Thought I knew you well enough to call you a man



But

Just like a test

Ju-just like a test

Ju-just like a test

I cram to understand you

Then it came a time you started looking kinda thin  
I asked you why, you said "Exercise, tryna stay slim"  
I bought it, even though I knew it was a lie  
Cause it really didn't matter, you were still lookin fly  
But oh no oh no you started askin me for money  
Butter me up, beg me and call me your honey  
So I gave you 2 yards, and then I gave you one more  
You picked up your jacket and you flew out the door  
You came back an hour later, and you asked me for a 10  
I said, "I only got a 20", you said "Give me that, then"  
I said "Nope, I'll tell you now, you better stop slobbin  
Find you a job, or you better start robbin"  
So I stepped off with a giant step  
Picked up my belongings, and I just left  
And now I see you in Empire every Sunday  
Juicin the girls up for some money and a lay  
But every time I see you doin it, I just ruin it  
Tell em how ya on crack, smoke, sniff, and chewin it  
And as for this girl, Miss C, oh well  
I was shocked as hell when I heard, Samuel  
When your homeboys told me, I almost went wack  
That the girl you was addicted to, her name was Crack

#### **Kickin' 4 Brooklyn**

Kick this one for Brooklyn

Kick this one for the 90s

Now kick this one here for me and my DJ

Now I was rockin' this party in the 90s for Brooklyn  
You know where the people get hype and rock a party  
From Friday to Saturday night

48 hours done and I still hold the mic  
I try to put down and say that I'm through  
But they give it back to me and say continue  
That's the thing about Brooklyn, they never get enough  
Of the rap and the music and all the good stuff  
That makes your life worth living for  
Respect is the crowd, the crowd that I draw  
Never am I dissed and never ever shall I be  
Ain't an MC alive that can deal with me  
And if you think you're the one that can deal with this  
Well you aren't, best prepare for a big fat diss

Kick this one for Brooklyn  
Kick this one for the 90s  
Now kick this one for me and my DJ

Now I was chillin' in Flat Bush mindin' my own  
When a girl walked up with a chrome microphone  
She said Hey MC Lyte I heard about you  
So here's the microphone let's see what you can do  
So I took the microphone and I threw it to the ground  
Cause I need no assist when it comes to gettin' down  
When I start to rap she start to shake  
She knew to confront me was truly a mistake  
So she picked the microphone off the gray concrete  
And before I turned around she was down the street

Now kick this one for Brooklyn  
Kick this one for the 90s  
Now kick this one for me and my DJ

Now when I'm on the stage everyone starts staring  
Is it what I'm saying or is it what I'm wearing  
50/50 chance it's what I'm saying  
And at the same time what my DJ is playing  
If you can get hype and sorta like loud  
Yo KRock kick this one for the crowd  
I been to lots of parties mostly up town  
And one thing I know is young people get down

So hip hoppers hip hoppers from all around  
Get with the funky sound

Kick this for Brooklyn  
Now kick this one for the 90s  
Now kick this one here for me and my DJ

**Don't Cry Big Girls**

This is Lyte and I'm just here to say  
That I choose to express my feelings this way  
Always alone either with the microphone  
Or just plainly emphasis the tone  
In my voice cause yo, I know I'm your choice  
So when I am speaking, show your gratitude  
While I am teaching, I have no attitude  
I'm just here to get the job totally done  
85% work, 15% fun  
Sometimes I admit I get so excited  
Rhyme for rhyme I just can't fight it  
Can't stop the flow, it's just too persistent

Big girls don't cry (x 2)

Can't stop the flow, it's just too persistent  
The level is extremely low on my resistance  
By you or any other I'll never be beaten  
At a rap meetin' and all the words of battle  
Cause yo I'm like the farmer and y'all's the cattle  
Be a big girl about it don't you start crying  
That I mean I made you weep without even trying  
Lyte takes it like a big girl I'm no jive girl  
Comin' direct telling you that I'm a live girl  
I'm positive you've heard this expression before  
So next time you see Lyte shine through the door  
Don't talk behind my back confront me like a big girl

Big girls don't cry (x 2)

Don't talk behind my back confront me like a big girl  
So I can take you to all semis of the world  
Big girls, we don't fight over men  
Although there's one worth fighting for, every now and then  
But then I think again it's not worth my while  
And it's also not a big girl's style  
And I know you're thinking, wait, Lyte is slim and short  
While being brought up I was also taught  
Take it like it comes and proceed with the flow  
Lyte is the biggest of the big girls and now you know

Big girls don't cry (x 2)

This is dedicated to Milk-D from the Audio 2  
To Gizmo from the Audio 2  
The whole Alliance Crew, ya know what I'm sayin'  
And to all the big girls, also the small girls  
You got time to grow up to be big girls

Big girls don't cry (x 2)

## Eyes On This (1989)

### Slave 2 The Rhythm

Why is it that your watch stop ticking but ya still keeps clockin'  
And no matter how hard you jinx I keep rockin'  
Listen hoe cause I'm the Lyte one  
And if you're looking for a fight you found the right one

(They call me Lyte)

(And I'm a slave to the rhythm)

(Funky fresh, dressed to impress, ready to party)

I'm not a procrastinator or a instigator  
But when it comes to dope rhymes on the mic I'm the creator  
I never look for trouble but somehow it finds me  
But yo I just conquer it and leave it all behind me  
The L Y T E, very outspoken  
And when I rock a rhyme sometimes I leave ya jokin'  
MC Lyte comin' live and direct  
I never lose a battle cause I always come correct  
And any case I'll win again and again  
You see Lyte is at the top till the very end  
And even though I may be short believe I don't take none  
Try your luck and we'll see who will get gun  
I leave immediately like Quick Fast  
Don't turn your back cause this mic will be in your ass  
And don't take what I say too lightly  
I'll beat you, defeat you, so quietly  
Sneak up and hit you like a fuckin' tornado  
Cause in the rap field Lyte's the fuckin' AKAdo  
The capital L, the Y to the E  
Shit give me room and I'll slay an MC  
Whether it's in a crowd, or on the sneak tip  
I'll wax you and your posse, watch you trip and flinch  
As you drop the mic cause you don't have the gift  
To rip our style, fast or slow  
Too busy hoing it and sniffing up low

Don't get mad it's just the talent I was given  
What I'm sayin' I'm a slave to the rhythm

Funky fresh dressed to impress, ready to party  
And I'm a slave to the rhythm, they call me Lyte

Bein' that I'm dissin', I was reminiscin'  
You was at my show, yo you was on a mission  
(Yo watcha tellin' me Lyte)  
She was ass-kissin', no show ya hoe, no work ya jerk  
(Cool Lyte, I think her feelin's are hurt)  
Alright I'll chill, and I'll come to my senses  
But next time ya diss think of the consequences  
Yo I am no joke, I'm sharp like barb wire  
Try to touch me though, you're bound to catch a fire  
I never lose my cool but if I do yo you're lost  
I'll be forced to show and prove exactly who's the boss  
Who gets the income and then some  
I don't diss you for the money, I diss you for the fun  
Don't get mad it's just the talent I was given  
What I'm saying, I'm a slave to the rhythm

Funky fresh dressed to impress, ready to party  
And I'm a slave to the rhythm, they call me Lyte

It took a whole album for you to try and diss me  
Ha Ha Ha slum bitch, ya still miss me  
But yo I'm off the dissin' tip cause that take no creation  
I'm into other things that bring me commendation  
So I rap about fun things or issues that are serious  
Sometimes I rap a topic, that leave my people curious  
And other times I diss, to put one in their place  
If I don't diss you on wax then I will diss you to your face  
Some say I'm foul and they don't like the way I'm livin'  
But yo ask me if I care, I'm just a slave, I'm just a slave, I'm just a slave to the goddam  
rhythm

Funky fresh dressed to impress, ready to party  
And I'm a slave to the rhythm, they call me Lyte

### **Cappucino**

It was a Cafe on the West side, midtown  
Said they had the best cappu-cappucino around  
So I stepped in, and I ordered a cup  
Someone grabbed me by my throat and said "Shut the fuck up"  
And I did, pronto, quick fast  
How much longer would the torture last  
In the wrong place, at the wrong time  
It was a drug sale I could feel from behind  
Death, it was getting closer, right behind my back  
Ready to attack,  
I got shot in a shootout, and then I died  
I could feel it, I was on the other side  
In between lives, I'm so confused  
What do I do, oh what do I do  
Or was it really time for me to go  
Why oh why did I need cappucino

Why oh why  
Why oh why did I need cappucino

Why oh why did I need cappucino  
But then I calmed down, I spotted some friends  
That I knew in a past life, way back when  
A couple had died in a drug world  
And this one guy died fighting over his girl  
Another died driving while intoxicated  
Why do people make livin' so complicated  
But then I saw a girl, her name was Mary  
Introduced to drugs by her boyfriend Harry  
He sold crack to the kids on uptown corners  
A social worker named Hannah Smith tried to warn her  
But she wouldn't listen no one listens  
I saw the light, I awake and it was a dream  
Man oh man you should have heard me scream  
So glad to be given my life back  
So glad to be livin' or was dead better

I didn't have to run from the bullets or drugs  
And I didn't have to run from the murderers or thugs  
I didn't have to worry about falling from a plane  
But at this Cafe was death still calling my name?  
Or did this cafe even exist  
Or was my name just another on the death list  
I knew it couldn't happen even though  
On the bottom of my shirt was a spot of cappucino

Cappucino  
Cappucino

Bust it, to some of you that really don't know  
I break it down to you, the word cappucino  
It's somewhat like coffee then again not quite  
It's creamy and smooth and it goes down light  
They charge you three dollars, you ask is it worth it  
But when you start drinking, shit it be workin'  
I'm hooked, well I was cause yo it's the best  
But if every time I drink I voyage through death  
I leave it alone and just stick to tea  
Cappucino was fly but too fly for me

Why oh why did I need cappucino  
Cappucino

### **Stop, Look, Listen**

I'm rhymin and designin, also creatin  
The dope def rhyme that is always being taken  
By a sucker MC that wants to be like me  
No trait of originality  
But yo, I am not one to down another  
So like I said before, just go for yours, sucker  
I'm gonna take the time to drop a dope line  
Or maybe even two, for you and your crew  
So you can start shakin and movin all around  
To the Lyte thee MC and the King of Chill sound  
It's new and improved like a freshly cut diamond



Perfect timin' like a gem it's shinin'  
Or better yet a ruby, somewhat like a sapphire  
This jam you are forced to admire

Stop, stop  
Look, look  
Listen

Wanna battle me? Now that's strange behaviour  
Drink and drive, yeah, you're probably safer  
Cause when I start, I never give slack  
You feel like a 'kick me' sign was pinned to your back  
Yes I'm the supa dupa with the roper dooper  
Got the clean drawers on, yeah, I hope ya  
Do, because I'm gonna strip you of your peace of mind  
Now your piece is mine, damn, that's unkind  
Come on, admit it, the Lyte is too fly  
The rhymes that I say you can't deny  
Because 100% is what I give it (say what?)  
I haunt the house with the hip hop spirit  
I tear it, repair it  
Like a hand-me-down make you wear it  
Save all your crocodile tears, grin and bear it  
And with all your other brothers you're gonna share it  
You hear me, junior? Cause soon you'll  
Be a grown man with the mic in your hand  
And understand bitin's not part of the plan  
That's wrong, I thought I taught you better than that  
But that's what you get from a stabber in the back

Stop, stop  
Look, look  
Listen

MC - Master of Creativity  
Rappin is the activity  
Rhyme is the sport, let it be taught  
That Lyte Thee MC is takin no shorts  
In 88 I was great, but 89 is my time

Stop, look, listen - to the right rhyme  
K-Rock the DJ throws the cuts my way  
Put em on the reel-to-reel and let them play  
Leg 1 and Leg 2, they do the jumpin  
The dancin, the pumpin, always up to somethin  
But when it comes to the rap category  
MC Lyte headlines the story

#### **Throwin' Words At U**

Any competiton, checkers or chess  
Whatever the game, Lyte'll never 'fess  
But did you say rappin' cause I'm a bet it  
I hold the title, you might as well forget it  
You can put me to the test, I'll prove I am the best  
Yo people ask your crew to fly over the nest  
Try to diss this, nah, you'll be the only scarface in the place  
Cause I rip out ya eyes, cut your tongue off  
Ya can't talk no more and let the bullshit walk  
And it's Lyte time, you're no MC  
You're just label them ball black ink ass wannabe  
Now that I've pulled ya cord and I raid you  
I should punish those that mislead you  
Into thinkin' that you was just too good  
I beatcha ass in your own neighbourhood  
I have yet to threaten you with sticks and stones  
That'll hurt ya bones  
I'm just throwing words at ya

I step in the jam, they know who I am  
All I do is smile and the crowds go wild  
MC Lyte's on top of the pile  
Waiting to put a sucker in her place  
Won't hesitate, to diss a bitch to her face  
Cause you're a half ass MC, a part time hooker  
When talent was given out, they overlooked ya  
I'll rock ya blindfolded, better yet with no mic  
Hype it accapella, make your DJ go on strike  
This kind of comp I know you're not ready for

You're just an amateur, dyin' to explore  
Territory that is soon to be conquered by Lyte  
Tonight, alright, alright  
I'm just throwing words at ya

I think ya better leave now, your mommy is callin' you  
Rap is like a pit, and your whole crew has fallen through  
But once I'm gone there ain't no catching me  
I'm talkin' going for yours, I mean you're history  
I'm taking my fans to a new land  
If anyone can do it Lyte thee MC can  
Cause I'm hypin' my rhyme to a new height  
So get equipped now prepare yourself for the fight  
Cause yo, you're about to enter a new dimension  
Sit back and listen, Lyte is on a mission  
I'm takin' out those that attempt to oppose me  
And even those that try to get close to me  
I'm just throwin' words at you

#### **Survival Of The Fittest (Remix)**

Survival of the fittest overcomes the weakly

Never does one know the force that is in them  
Till some push jumps up and offends them  
Then I have to subtract, minus and eliminate  
Those that try to front, and try to perpetrate  
Like they know me well when they don't know me at all  
Sayin' Hi how ya doin, and I'll give you a call  
Then to top it off sayin' they'll visit  
When they don't know the zip code, much less the digits  
Like Shelly says, sometimes you have to get coofed  
Like MC Lyte says, yo you're gonna get boofed  
Each and everytime you try to play me  
I'm not the egg to be cracked  
The diggum to be smacked  
So when I see you, ya better be fully strapped  
At all times, cause it only takes Lyte one time  
And one time only

I'm the microphone controller, MC Sucker Fola  
Lyte'll take you places, you never would have seen  
If it was dark, ya know what I mean  
So show appreciation, gratitude it is necessary  
Cause when I hear weak rhymes I am quick to bury  
Those that try to know me before they meet me  
You can't grow on me so don't greet me  
I'm sick of the pretending and all the make believe  
Pronto, move back, give me space to breathe  
I'm not a pushover, so don't push up on me  
I'm not a sidewalk, so don't try to walk on me  
I see people taken advantage of  
In situations like money, trust and love  
I have no time for petty things that are trivial  
Like who will dance with me if I can't dance  
I'm not a dancer, that's what Lake 1 and 2 are for  
I master the rhyme that's what I get paid for  
They say 2 Ashley yo it's all in the rhyme  
But if you look hard you can see I work overtime  
This is a warning a D-Day is dawning  
I thought I oughta tell you, so you can start mourning  
So put your black on and your best black shoes  
And keep your ears open cause this is today's news  
Extra extra read all about it  
"It's about MC Lyte" the boy shouted  
First time in history you thought to buy a paper  
Cause I was on the inside picture on the cover  
Oopsadaisy, I should be more modest  
But hey what can I say I was brought up to be honest  
Like a reeker rides a caddy I'm wit dis beat  
The only time they complain is when it's too brief  
But other than that they long for me to go on  
On my birth certificate it states star is born  
Sap up the sound if ya will  
Raz by Lyte production, King of Chill  
So watch the solar system never stop lookin'  
Cause up in all the wires, is the planet Brooklyn  
You can compare me to crackers and cheese  
But don't compare me to a Sucker MC

See cause crackers and cheese, y'all, that shit is good  
But Sucker MCs ain't as good as they should be  
See they lack, so Lyte must tax  
Not much just enough to see if they can move it  
Show and prove that they can get into it  
Try your best and use full strategy  
And after practise if you're still raggedy  
Then and only then can you be called a Sucker MC  
Sucker  
I hate long goodbyes so I'll just say farewell  
Any last comments Lyte fans do tell  
I gotcha locked on, so now I'm gonna free ya  
OK here we go, stop, see ya  
See ya

Survival of the fittest, overcomes the weakly

**Shut the Eff Up!**

Gon' be some shit  
Hot damn ho

Before this jam starts I'm simply stating  
You have all waited, now you can stop waiting  
Shall I ease into the disses, go 20, then 30  
Or shall I go straight to 80 %?  
Aw, it doesn't matter, when you're dissed, you're dissed  
The party's not over, it's just beginning  
Because Lyte is winning (What are you winning?)  
Any battle in any competition  
'The Gangstress'? Ha, you're on a wack journey  
Headed for nowhere, with time to spare  
So I'ma kick this rhyme right now and right here  
I'd tell your name, but that would give you fame  
And I ain't out to give you what you don't have  
So I sit back and relax, cause it makes me laugh  
I could diss, call you names and make fun of you  
But me the Lyte, I'm into speakin the truth  
Like a watchtower, hour by the hour

Lyte is rhymin, perfect timin  
Milk keeps the beat  
With the tap of his feet  
When he count it down  
Lyte'll start the debate

The first thing you ask yourself is why do I bother?  
When you should really ask "Where is the father?"  
(Where is the father?) of your child, aren't we wild?  
You get around like a cab, now that's too bad  
Everyone has been in you, isn't that sad?  
Bodily vibrations? Don't make me laugh  
Weight Watchers is waiting, here's a free pass  
You ain't gettin loose, you fuckin jerk  
And you ain't gettin paid, you're just gettin laid  
Sexin and suckin, yeah, that is your trade  
Put on this earth just to distract me  
Get those to write rhymes and try to attack me  
You will get nowhere, the Lyte is too blinding  
Tell me, why must I keep reminding  
You to step back, let the Lyte shine  
Do not take shit till you write your own rhymes

Your mould is fake, crayola, crayon  
Don't dare to sleep or even prey on  
The Lyte is too wicked, too worthy, too strong  
And the rhymes I create are mad to last long  
Let me wise you up, rappin isn't a sport  
You either have to teach yourself, or you have to be taught  
And being that you are not wise enough to do it on your own  
The ones that write your rhymes might as well hold your microphone  
Dropped a little vinyl, now you think you're large  
Step aside, Lyte Thee MC is in charge  
Don't sleep on me, I'm far, far, far from dumb  
So roll correctly if you decide to come  
MC sucker, this is what you waited for  
I'm sick of the battle, let's go to war  
Why do you challenge me, Lyte Thee MC  
Did not you know that I am crazy?

My screws are quite loose, in fact I don't have any  
But when it comes to rhymes I've got many  
Like I said and will have to say  
Over and over, cause you disobey  
Here on this earth I reign superior  
One of these days I will have to get with ya  
Tear you up mentally, from limb to limb  
Cause I am the Lyte and you are just paper thin

I sensed it, predicted it, knew it would happen  
You plopped off fast on the scene and start rappin  
Now it is my duty, to all MCs  
To ask you to go elsewhere, pronto, please  
Now I was quite polite, nice I might add  
But you insist on stayin, that makes me mad  
But then again I don't mind, I've got someone to pick on  
Write rhymes to diss and even play tricks on  
You ain't really down, you wig-wearin clown  
Borrowin money to buy an outfit  
Not even good enough for a Sunday picnic  
I ask you: do you know who you're fuckin with?  
With those bubble gum jeans and those 2 for 1 skips  
I'm MC Lyte aka MC Payback  
Payback is a bitch, and I'm givin you no slack  
Unfinished Business, that shit was wack  
So Lyte made no attempt to strike back  
But here we go again, what is Light's Out?  
Let me ask what the bomboclut you a-chat about?  
Let me say next time that you feel pissed  
I suggest that you don't try to diss

You better watch what you say to me, cause I can get evil  
The things that I'm capable of are unbelievable  
In 10% I popped your head in a microwave  
I'm into blenders now, so you better behave  
Or put you in a toaster, because you're gettin toasted  
Better yet an oven, because you're gettin roasted  
Don't listen to your rhyme writers, cause yo, they souped you  
You ain't dope, you can't cope, they musta dooked you

You musta had some wack crack (real wack crack)  
Sent you on a mission, and now you're comin back  
But let me school ya, Lyte is runnin this show  
So yo, ho, I think you oughta go  
Before Lyte Thee MC gets into it (into it)  
But remember you forced me to do it

### **I Am The Lyte**

I am the Lyte

Examine the style used in this sequence  
The rhyme's the clue, the record's evidence  
To the fact that I'm hype in this episode  
Cold carrying the extra wide load  
The beat is phat and the rhyme is thick  
All over the town you hear the silent pick  
Me, the L the Y the T the E  
Me, and if you see the Rock I'm sure you'll see  
Me (Hey Lyte what will you be doing)  
Kickin' it, bashin' down competition  
And when I drop the bomb ya listen  
Boom  
Now that I got your attention  
I'm slammin' what you wanna hear  
I just thought that I should mention  
'89 is the Lyte year  
Now's the time to roar like a rhinoceros  
Step to Lyte, that's preposterous  
I'm heavyweight, though I'm lightweight  
My looks the hook, my rhymes the bait  
And when I throw the line you proceed to take  
The goodie, the treat that I hand you  
That you couldn't refuse  
Damn I cram to understand you  
Your love is too light to lose

I am the Lyte



I think you deserve this, you've waited long enough  
For a rhyme that's super duper extra tough  
Every human is lurking and looming  
Poopoo on the beat and you know this shit is booming  
Tasty like pastry fresh from the bakery  
First priority that's the way it has to be  
Feel the drum, I'll bet it makes your body numb  
One for all, and all for one I betcha come  
Hurry hurry step right up and see the show  
MC Lyte and K Rock are about to throw  
Get in line and purchase your ticket  
(Hey don't worry) Lyte is gonna kick it  
(Boom Be Happy) I put you up on a scoop  
Now come and watch the party whoop!

I am the Lyte

I am the Lyte and it is time for me to go  
You wanna beef, save that shit for the toilet bowl  
I use styles, styles and much, many styles  
I leave smiles, smiles and much, many smiles  
All the people who come to watch the Lyte perform  
(Word is born) The rhyme will kick and the brain will tick  
You can tell because the records sell  
Old styles and new styles formatted together  
Bolt the dough so it doesn't matter whether  
Which comes firsta, vicea versa  
It won't make a difference, as long as you rehearsea  
Get it down pat, come right and exact  
MC Lyte is comin' right, and I'ma say goodnight

The Lyte

The Lyte

The Lyte

The Lyte

### **Rhyme Hangover**

You've heard the hard side, the rough tough side

Now it's time to hype boy for a pleasure ride  
And, yo, I suggest you don't resist  
This voyage you don't wanna miss this  
It makes ya woozy and feel kinda dizzy  
Fantasy's wild and imagination busy

If there's a cure for this  
Why would ya want it (x 2)

Your head spin, the room moves around  
If it's faint ya feel then you oughta sit down  
And let the beat just seep  
through the cracks and crannies of your brain  
Ya can't remember your name  
Your feet are tip tapping, takin over your mind  
A cure for this hangover I doubt you can find  
So seek if you wanna for the magical magician  
If they said it's a poacher well then they're rhymin' competition  
Lyte has no fear because good overcomes evil  
My clan stands strong, not a one is feeble  
With no hesitation here's the incantation

If there's a cure for this  
Why would ya want it (x 2)

Open up your ears and wrap up your gears  
This is MC Lyte's lane not a sales pitch from Sears  
And like I said I knew you couldn't hack it  
So I'll pull out the stretcher and the white straight jacket  
You talk to the flies from morning to night  
When they ask you what you hear you tell em MC Lyte

If there's a cure for this  
Why would you want it (x 2)

**Please Understand**

I just want you to understand  
Understand what?

I met a guy named Tommy, damn he charmed me  
Met him at the mall but I knew he wouldn't harm me  
We exchanged numbers hoping to meet again  
We couldn't wait for the romance to begin  
The relationship grew strong  
I didn't wanna be right if this love was wrong  
But oh no came the problems the first segment  
The dumb kid went and got some girl pregnant  
The second segment started wheelin' and dealin'  
Didn't give a damn about how Lyte was feelin'  
But then he got wise started treatin' me better  
Cause all of his friends said I was a go-getta  
He knew he was usin' me, and abusin' me  
He also knew that soon he'd be losin' me  
First I clocked him, yeah I docked him  
But I rocked him and then I dropped him

I just want you to understand  
Understand what?

Then there was Dave, couldn't behave  
So I punished him and put him in my Lyte as a Rock cave  
Then he got bold tried to play insane  
So Bigfoot threw him off my paper thin train  
He tried to 10% Dis me but he pissed me off  
Cause I'm the boss and you know I'm not havin' it  
Lyte is too dope and you know I ain't crabbin' it  
Then there was Henry, way too friendly  
I needed a trip, he said he would send me  
Pay my airfare if he could come with me  
I said, listen honey, I don't need your money  
Believe me when I tell you I've got my own  
Cause I'm MC Lyte on the microphone

I just want you to understand  
Understand what?

Here's another story, a dude named Corey

When I used to work, yes I was a clerk  
At the World Trade Centre back in high school  
This little playa must have thought I was a fool  
He took me out for lunch, offered me a ride home  
When we got there he asked could he use my telephone  
I said yeah sure flipped him to the floor  
Cause he said what's up and tried to feel my butt  
I kicked him down the stairs and said what ya provin'  
Rolled him to his car and said Get movin'  
He tried to score it, I wasn't goin' for it  
Ya can't play me I'm Lyte thee MC  
Never saw his face again until last week  
All beat up and bleedin' down the street  
I looked to my left there was a girl with a pipe in her hand  
Sayin' why oh why can't you understand

I just want you to understand  
Understand what?

## Act Like You Know (1991)

### When In Love

You'll do some crazy things  
When in love!  
Those in love know  
What I'm speakin' of  
It could be crazy stormin' outside  
20 below but you hop in your ride  
Goin' cross town to see your baby  
Why because they drive you crazy  
Takin' the plane and the train and the bus  
I'm on my way baby ain't no fuss  
Talkin' for hours on the phone  
Cause now you can't stand to be alone  
Doin' it in places you never thought about  
Why because your baby makes you scream and shout  
Although you gotta go thru the good and the bad  
Pray to the one up above it's not a fad  
You'll do some crazy things when in love  
Those in love know what I'm speakin' of

When in love you do things that are strange  
Look back and say I must have been deranged  
I'm talkin' like pickin' your lover's nose  
Cookin' his food and washin' his clothes  
And if you thought that was going too far  
What about givin' him the keys to your car  
You could be partying and having a ball  
But you stop and check your messages to see if he called  
How 'bout sittin' in the house all night  
Waitin' for the phone to ring that ain't right  
But you do it anyway cause you love him to death  
And if he was dying you'd give your last breath  
Although you gotta go thru the good and the bad  
Pray to the one up above it's not a fad  
You'll do some crazy things when in love  
Those in love know what I'm speakin' of

When in love you go out of your way to please him  
Wait outside his job hope that you see him  
And guys buy girls some serious things  
Like two seater cars and diamond rings  
I know what happened she got you strung  
Guess it doesn't matter long as you're having fun  
Love'll make you do some crazy things  
Meet a married man and then have a fling  
Like Babyface said love makes things happen  
It's most important to hear what I'm rappin'  
So when in love better take your time  
Cause love sometimes makes one commit crimes  
Although you gotta go thru the good and the bad  
Pray to the one up above it's not a fad  
You'll do some crazy things when in love  
Those in love know what I'm speakin' of  
Love! Love! Love! Love! Love! Love!  
Love! Love! Love! Love! Love!

#### **Eyes Are The Soul**

He knows he's leavin' not much time left  
Holding onto his very last breath  
I saw him last week nervous and uptight  
Losing sleep stays up all night  
Wishing he would've used his mind  
And not rushed and pushed in the bush  
But took his time  
To get to know the girl he slap skins with  
Shared needles with  
Wish he could go back change the direction  
But now he's got the infection  
I spoke to him gave him inspiring words  
I'm sure he's heard  
Live by the sword die by the sword  
What's left pray to the Lord  
You can deny but the truth will unfold  
Because the eyes are the soul

Eyes are the soul - eyes are the soul

I look into his eyes he's so high  
From the crack he thinks that he can fly  
He has problems he doesn't like solvin'  
Takes one hit and thinks the world stops revolvin'  
19 his eyes full of tears  
He hasn't smiled at least for a year  
His Mum is gone cause he was high one night  
Robbed and killed her because of crack pipe  
He's wanted by the law  
Because he's robbed at least three grocery stores  
He's lost all control take a look  
Eyes are the soul  
Eyes are the soul - eyes are the soul

I look into her eyes she's so young  
But know where she's coming from  
I've watched her grow the little girl down the street  
White shirt and skirts with pleats  
She cried fear in her voice  
Not knowing she had a choice  
Oh so sad and oh so lonely  
If she knew that she's not the only  
One in school that didn't use precaution  
Facing raising a baby or abortion  
Her mother said she had to leave  
Who wants to be where their baby is not received  
No alternative  
She's going to the G Y M  
To put it to an end  
She's learned a lesson I suppose  
I can tell eyes are the soul

#### **Search 4 The Lyte**

One by one they fall in the darkness  
I'm glad that I can take part in this  
And I'm hoping that you just might

Get together and search for the Lyte  
Finding the Lyte means happiness  
It's the best and nothin' less  
So I'm waitin' at the end of the tunnel  
Where happiness comes in bundles  
But it takes time to get to the Lyte  
To get in the Lyte  
To be with the Lyte and I'm hoping that you just might  
Get together and search for the Lyte

How you get there is the question  
Honesty is my suggestion  
But first you must be awakened  
If you say you are  
You're fakin'  
One who has seen the Lyte  
Doesn't have to prove  
They've been moved  
They just let it be let it rest  
For that is the mental test  
Within this there's so much happiness  
Sort of like lastin' moments of bliss  
Everyone wants to be so happy  
Let me explain my theory  
Some type of grief you must experience  
in order to appreciate happiness  
Cause if you are always satisfied  
Life will just pass by and you would have never tried  
To get to Lyte  
To get in the Lyte  
To be with the Lyte  
And I'm hopin' that you just might  
Get together and search for the Lyte

If you're not ready the Lyte can be blinding  
And not worth finding  
So for this you must prepare  
Stay awake wake-up stay aware  
There are so many distractions



Those that see the Lyte just a fraction  
Those that don't remain blinded  
The Lyte is there but they can't find it  
One by one they fall in the darkness  
And it's sad to take part in this  
I'm hoping you just might get together and search for the Lyte

Now finding the Lyte is what's so difficult  
And you can bet the results are  
Splendorous, wonderful  
Oh what wouldn't you do  
Cause once you've seen the Lyte  
Been with the Lyte  
Got to the Lyte  
Got in the Lyte  
I know that you just might  
Never ever wanna leave the Lyte

**Act Like You Know**

Moonroof open on the BM  
Windows tinted they can't see in  
They now it's me though  
MC Lyte she's bigger than Bolo  
Gusto, Gusto I got so much so  
you can have some you just gotta lay low  
Do as I do don't try to fess  
Do whatcha wanna just clean up the mess  
I'm here kickin' in the rear  
Rhymes and rhymes and rhymes I gots to spare  
So act like you know  
The things that I do  
Just ain't for show this is my livin'  
So I am givin' everything I got  
If not a lot more  
For all the people, for the buyers  
For all of those that seem to want to try a  
MC Lyte tape in your Benzi Box  
What can I say

Hey thanks a lot  
Cause I flip and trip and do all that good shit  
That's why the brothers they can't get off my tip  
They know whose show this is  
Whose show is this  
This is MC Lyte

Like I said I'm in the Em  
Swingin' solo enjoying my freedom  
Turn the radio on  
Nothin' but weak rap slap a tape in that's where it's at  
Look up at the sign and I see Winthrop  
Can't hear nothin' so I turn down the hip-hop  
Window down  
Reggae hear the somethin' now  
Hear the little shottie go pow pow pow  
Brooklyn 90s that's where I'm at  
Reach to the back seat get the baseball hat  
Now I'm chillin' so act like you know  
This is my show  
This is MC Lyte

Abracadabra Hocus Pocus  
I got somethin' that'll make your eyes focus  
Takin' on the world  
Slammin' it and bangin' it  
Keepin' it hard but still I'm changin' it  
Breakin' all types of ground  
Here come Wolf and Epic with the new sound  
They get the job done  
The name of the year is Lyte 91  
So I'm chillin' in the BM  
Waitin' for those that might see in  
Straightin' my jacket fix my hair  
Turn up the system as I prepare  
To let the whole wide world know  
That this is my show  
Now that I've schooled you put you up on the scoop  
Posse Mosse solo or group

Take it in stride  
It's an inside top secret heavy duty type of thing  
That I'm swingin' I got the key to success  
But I won't press I'm sure  
That I could relieve you of the stress  
If you admit and just permit  
Me to go for mine  
Drop a line and exit  
Just agree with me and simply act like you know  
This is my show

**Poor Georgie**

I met him in a club hangin' out one night  
He said hello I'm George Hi Lyte  
How's everything going hun, how you doin'  
Hope everything's fine doh and huh  
Can I call you sometime can I get the digits  
And the address so I can come visit  
I gave him the digits that wasn't the problem  
If he caused any I would have to solve them  
Cause George looked good, mmm damn good  
And if I didn't some other girl would  
In my mind I hoped for the best  
Convincing myself that this was not a test  
Cause I heard many things about Georgie  
Nothin' kinky like no orgies  
I heard he knows how to make love  
Like an angel from the heavens above  
Who was I kiddin' I'd give him a try  
Lyte needs love too and that ain't no lie  
Keep your ears open  
Hope that you're listenin'  
Cause I'm about to take you  
On a Georgie Porgie mission

I gave him the number I saw it in his eyes  
She gave me the number, hmm I'm surprised  
Good conversation over the phone

He began to comfort me whenever I was alone  
George was sweet  
So nice and so neat  
With any other guy he didn't have to compete  
George was mature  
He made sure  
That he was the only man I'd ever adore  
Girls have you ever had a friend  
That you get with every now and then  
I know for a fact George had a lot of girls  
Spread out from State to State around the world  
As long as he was smart kept his girls in check  
Made sure I never saw them and showed me respect  
He didn't have to be loyal, like men should be  
I don't care about the other girls just be good to me  
But if I ever saw one that would be the end  
He couldn't kick that sorry line that she was just a friend  
The girls, didn't care, if I ask don't lie  
But see Georgie was into making young girls cry

George was clean no drugs and such  
But once in a while he'd drink too much  
Hangin' in a club where they played rockers  
Him and his friend drinkin' vodka  
I was lookin' for him and I found him there  
With his clothes messed up and his effed up hair  
I told him he was messin' up he wouldn't go far  
He got mad and asked his friend for the keys to the car  
I said don't drive use your head  
Drive while you're drunk and you'll kill yourself dead  
We began to argue, bad words were said  
Then he got kicked out by some long-haired dread  
He ran to the car as if in a hurry  
Started the car but his vision was blurry  
He didn't care he drove off into the night  
Riding for miles without his headlights  
Georgie Porgie had too much on his mind  
He was still young yet running out of time  
Last week he took tests and the doctor told him

George had cancer in his lungs and his colon  
See when he was 12 he started smokin'  
Paid no attention when he started chokin'  
Thoughts flashed through his head where they stuck  
Till Georgie Porgie crashed into a truck  
I wish I would've told him how I liked him so much  
How he made me feel with the slightest touch  
Now he's gone and I can't tell him nothin'  
Wish he was here so I could say somethin'  
This story is not to say that I'm in sorrow  
Just to say no one is promised tomorrow  
If you love someone you should say it often  
You'll never know when they'll be layin' in a coffin  
Wake up it's important that you know  
That no one on earth is promised tomorrow

**Take It Off**

Now you called my house and you said come over  
Your mother and your father are gone, and you're alone  
with Rover the dog, but now you're frontin  
You said if I come you'd give me somethin  
So don't start playin around cause I'm serious  
What did you call me for cause I'm curious  
Or did you call me just to look in my face  
Now I know I didn't come just to take up space  
The night is right, and the stars are bright  
So c'mon now brother just treat me right  
and just take it off, I mean everything  
Hurry up pretty boy so that we can swing  
I don't smoke and I don't get high  
but if I say I don't love well that would be a lie  
Because I do every chance I get  
But if I don't I won't fall I won't fret  
I'm no fool I got plenty of sense  
So I just be cool, and have patience  
Make up your mind, please let me know  
And when you give me the green that's when I'll go  
So please pretty boy don't hesitate

And entice me nice and cooperate  
You tried the rest and I tried the best  
And when the time comes boy no regrets  
and just take it off

Now take off your hat, untie your shoelace  
And after you finish, I want you to face me  
Now baby, don't get scared  
cause I'm not like the other girls so don't compare me  
Tender lovin care is all I give  
and if possible boy, well I would like to live with you  
And if I do it ain't everybody's business  
It seems to me ya just how you got into this  
Take it off, cause I'm ready to rock  
Like Maxwell baby, until the last drop  
Cruisin down the street in my SL  
when I see this dude who was built very well  
Face was handsome, body was fine  
How did I know, I was cruisin behind him  
Looked at the car, looked at me  
Then he asked me my name, I told him Lyte thee MC but  
I didn't want to outplay my hand  
So I talked so smooth he could understand me  
He was definitely the move  
I only said sweet things, that could soothe him  
Opened up the door, and he got in  
and automatically my mind just turned to sin  
I told him take it off - I mean everything  
Hurry up pretty boy so that we can swing  
I mean take it off, cause I'm ready to rock  
like Maxwell baby until the last drop

Met this guy at an amusement park  
He was good to go and it was after dark  
You can guess girls what was on my mind  
Let's go under the boardwalk and have a good time baby  
Instead the boy asked me my sign  
And I said, "Why?" and he said, "Never mind"  
When the time come and it's you I'm thinkin of

A sign don't make a difference only how you make love to me  
You make me feel so good you're a man  
Oooh baby I melt like cotton candy  
If I could predict the rest of my life  
I'd be a millionaire and I'd also be your wife  
So let's take a bout through the tunnel of life  
because you know what I'm thinkin of  
c'mon baby just take it off

Take it off  
Take it off  
That's right, now take it off  
Take it off  
Pal Joey, take it off  
C'mon now, take it off

#### **Beyond The Hype**

I am back on the scene  
I'm takin' it to the extremes new plan I been schemin'  
Raw type stuff I know you been feenin'  
Waitin' for such a long time  
For MC Lyte to drop another dope rhyme  
Well I deliver as quick as you call my name  
I'm beyond the hype beyond the fame  
So now I prove to you that I can shake you  
groove you and move you too  
I am too much to bare  
To touch and then share  
Once you had one taste one touch one bite  
All you want is MC Lyte  
And I'll deliver as quick as you call my name  
I'm beyond the hype beyond the fame

We gotta try and move beyond we gotta try to break on thru (Repeat)

Can't you see I'm beyond the hype  
And all that type of jazz and pizzazz  
I'm into reality forget the fantasy this is me

Beyond the hype so don't believe  
What you read cause they'll deceive  
So now come to you telling no lies  
the truth is in my eyes  
Unlike the broadcasters on the news  
That try to tell you the don'ts and the dos  
The media blows things out of proportion  
In the public's eye proceed with caution  
It's a dog-eat-dog world but we'll be alright  
All we gots to do is stick together and move beyond the hype

You must try when I say I'm here to stay and believe  
I'll never leave  
Haste makes waste  
The track is all that so pick up the paste  
Forget the rumours gossip cheap talk  
Besides that's old news and that can walk  
I'm beyond that you are also  
Release the negative vibe and let it go  
So now I come to you baring gifts that certainly uplift  
From coast to coast midwest I'm the most but still not on a high post  
I'm coming just call my name beyond the hype  
Beyond the fame  
Down to earth I'm just that type  
To take you and move beyond the hype

**All That**

It was a date a simple little date  
Or so I thought wasn't that my great mistake  
He picked me up at 8 from my crib  
We went to dinner and he ordered baby back ribs  
What a waste a waste of the mind and body  
And then he said Lyte would you like to go and party  
I thought about it and then I said no  
Pay for my food mother and let's go  
He said my aren't we aggressive  
Damned right and I'm also perceptive  
I know your kind you roam around the eff'n town



You wanna slap it flip it and rub it down  
You want some booty but you're gettin' none this way  
You better ask Suzie, Sally or that girl Fay  
You gets none you hear me you cheesy rat  
Because I'm Lyte and I'm havin' none of that  
(I'm all that yes I'm all that  
You ask how I'm all that now I'm all that  
Yeh I'm all that strollin' through your hood  
With a baseball bat)

First I hiddop into the Riddide  
Turn the AC on so it feels cool inside  
Step in the jam baring good news  
Although for some folks I bring the blues  
Always solo no relying on a posse  
I see what you see  
Do you see what I see  
I see suckers many puckeruppers  
Ass kissers as well butt lickers  
Many many that will do me good and plenty  
Don't know me from Adam but want to get with me  
Claimin' they will do, or have done, or have did me  
Talkin' that yang your ass will get slapped  
Because I'm Lyte and I'm having none of that

Way back when shit was funny  
I'm talkin' lo days your gold and your money  
If you wore gold your shit was gettin' taken  
Hardrocks don't even bother fakin'  
Cause they can sense a sucker as soon as they see them  
And oh my how I felt sorry for him  
Razor in my pocket for my protection  
Black jack in my bag for a little selection  
You got beef choose your weapon  
I sliced and diced and then I kept steppin'  
For me to go for that wouldnt've just been wack  
Because I'm Lyte and I'm havin' none of that

### **Big Bad Sister**

Ahh yeah

Brooklyn's in the house, so come on now

Brooklyn's in the house

Yo, Staten Island is in the house

Staten Island is in the house

and let me hear you say Queens is in the house

Come on now, Queens is in the house

Long Island is in the house, say what?

Long Island is in the house, yeah

The Bronx is in the house, uhh

The Bronx is in the house let me hear you say

Uptown's in the house one time

Uptown's in the house

Well they're falling falling but I can catch them

I just toot the whistle and you go fetch them

Bring them back into the real rap attack

Set the soft silly stuff back on the rack

45 (yeah baby) 45 (yeahhh)

Tell the silly mothers that we don't give a

I'm not a psychic but you can tell your sidekick

in ninety-one, Lyte is kickin some fly

Take it from me, or could you really take it?

And if you got away with it, would you really make it

in the world of hip-hop, frontin like you're me?

C'mon now Hobbes, that I could never see

So just step aside, and feel it tonight

Cause comin to a store near you is MC Lyte

(Who's that bad?)

I'm bigger than bolo, see I go solo

Broader than broad, see how I soared

The big bad sister from around the way

I'm not tall but I'm small don't matter what I weigh

I kick the copacetic rhyme from the down to earth mind

I get hip with the hop I'm the tip from the top  
I go all out, you never see me fall out  
Although you hear me yell out, you never see me sellout (No!)  
Because my rhyme's about a profit, no one can stop the one  
funky lyrics synced with MC Lyte cause I be droppin it  
The name the Lyte because my skin I'm blacker than black  
Comin right and exact for the rap attack  
Some say they don't like the words I choose to use  
I don't give a damn, Lyte will never lose  
I ain't no sucka and I ain't into pleasin  
some critic that criticises me for no reason  
What's with the opinion it's a stated fact  
I rule the pack, from the top of the stack  
so fuck the stocks and bonds I'm your new investment  
Pick up the album it's quite a refreshment  
compared to the day to day bullshit you hear  
Pay attention and listen I'm comin clear to the ear  
For all you non-believers, and you perpetrators  
that talk to me now but talk about me later  
It's time for you to grieve, grovel in your sorrow  
I'm the star of today and the star of tomorrow  
I'm takin out the old jacks, rippin up the new ones  
I don't care if it means I have to ruin  
I will and I shall and I get the job completed  
Those that don't belong they will be deleted  
from the rap roster, I'm not an imposter  
I'm comin to you live with the 45  
Straight from the studio with a view  
in New York City

(I love it)

I'm out

### **Kamikaze**

Outside of me you try to picture me  
Young and black that ain't no mystery  
But inside runs deep like an ocean  
You couldn't understand if I spoke in slow motion

I'm tryin' like hell to get some results  
But you can bet your ass  
It's difficult  
They try to keep me down because I talk to a beat  
In other words I try to teach  
But if I talk that Yang Yang shit  
Like you can't touch this that shit'll hit  
Don't we have any morals anymore  
Or did rap take the toll out the door  
Well if it did hardcore's back to claim it  
I'm a take it change it rename it  
I got the plan now let's make it effective  
You hip-hoppers you gots to be selective  
And stop lettin' that bull slide for rap  
Can't you see it's a brain wash trap  
I rap a cha cha cha and I sat and watch  
You like that you rock around the clock  
When I talk of education you fear that  
Drugs and such you don't wanna hear that  
First I pleased you now I teach you  
Don't you dare try to bite hand that will lead you  
To the pot of gold  
Under the rainbow  
Lyte'll guide you I know the way to go  
So just close your eyes and just take my hand  
Remember MC Lyte has the masterplan  
We can go thick in a posse  
You ain't said nothin' slick I'm going Kamikazee

Inside of me you try to picture me  
Can you detect can you see that I'm angry  
Well usually Lyte don't get upset  
When I see Wack shit being pressed I get vex  
Turn on the video what's this mess  
A disgrace to rap and I'm not impressed  
So just leave get out my domain  
You lame sucker you no name  
Takin' up my airtime  
with that weak wack full of bullshit rhyme

So step off roach or get stepped upon  
Because my thymes they spray like decon 4  
Do you want more  
Cause I'll floor any MC that wanna gets with me  
So pack your bags and scidaddle  
Just walk homes you don't wanna battle  
I got the button that'll get rid of wack MCs  
It's called the Brooklynizer have you beggin' on your knees  
Quit takin' up space on the CD rack  
You better prepare cause Lyte gives no slack  
Inside dwells 100 maniacs  
Waitin' for the kick off waitin' for attack  
Who gives a fuck bring your posse  
Cause in the 90s Lyte is going Kamikaze

Inside there's no flipside  
Outside there's more than meets the eye  
So now you know not because you guessed  
But because I told you so I never fess  
Everyone wants to rap what's this a wagon  
Bring your band and hope it starts draggin'  
All you rappers you impersonators  
Sayin' I'll rap now and learn how to rap later  
No time for that time is too short  
And the rappin' gift it can not be taught  
A solo artist you can't be  
Maybe you'll look better with a posse  
But all that you talkin' you ain't sayin' shit  
So while you're where you're at I think you oughta quit  
Posses don't matter in the 90s  
Here's a warnin' I'm goin' Kamikaze

### **Like A Virgin**

Fifteen years old, thought I was in love  
I was never told, sex is like drugs  
Too much'll drive you crazy - in fact  
the brother was so good, had me comin back  
Took my virginity, like he took my heart

I had to find the Lyte, he left me in the dark  
All alone, no one to be with  
And the brothers they ask me why I ruff  
I got hard, grew a shell upon my back  
I had to get a grip, to keep my life intact  
I had to let em know, Lyte is not fragile  
Cause if they think this, brothers can get foul  
They'll use, bruise and abuse  
Dump your ass and be sure to choose  
the next fresh fish that steps into the place  
If they desire, they forgot your face  
Lovin them and leavin them, that was their reasonin  
Thinkin he was pleasin you, when he was just teasin you  
Summer was over, back in school  
He said come over, that would be cool  
I said OK, it's been a year now  
Some even asked why, some even asked how  
could you wait that long, for me to be with it  
Some said yo Hobbes, you're never gonna get it  
But then the time came, you and I both came  
Things would soon change, never would they be the same  
Before this afternoon, took place  
I was in love, I walked around in space  
I'd rush home from school just to speak to you  
Talk for an hour, maybe even two  
We'd just laugh though, nothing serious  
I guess back then, you were just curious  
to see what I was like, just to touch my flesh  
I could be wrong though, that's my first guess

You was in your house, I was in mine  
As long as we were chattin on the line, it was fine  
All alone, yet talkin on the phone  
If you got bored you felt your bone  
and as bad as I am, I talked you through every stroke  
Lyte ain't no joke  
You've been beggin for some time, for me to come visit  
You never got mad though, if I wasn't widdit  
But this day was different, I was feelin in the mood

for some slow type of groove or some soul food  
In other words sex, yeah that's better  
I threw on the Jordache, the Izog sweater  
That was in style then, come on don't laugh  
Sergio's, Lee's, you wore those in the past  
Anyway I arrived, twenty past five  
He'd been hypin himself, sayin he was quite live  
I said here's your chance, show me some romance  
We begin to slow dance, off with his pants  
Boom it was over, damn that was quick  
Too bad little homey had a widdle widdle  
The only one I've seen, cause yo he was the first  
But since I've had others, damn he was the worst  
I was in love though, that didn't matter  
Nothin you could say, could ever shatter  
my world, take it away, just a young little girl  
Oh well  
He stepped, jet, family moved  
Leavin me in the mood for some soul food  
Damn I felt hurt, just like a jerk  
Would somebody please just mush my face in dirt  
so I can hide, from the whole fuckin world  
What the fuck is love, such a naive girl  
Suppose I got pregnant, damn I'd be lost  
My mum woulda kicked me out to live with Jack Frost  
I guess I'm lucky though, lonely for sure  
Waitin for the fucker to come knockin at my door  
I didn't hold my breath though, I might be dead  
Yo 45, next time I'll use my head

#### **Lola From The Copa**

Lola hopped into a cab, she went to work  
As she walked into the club, the fellas went bezerk  
They screamed her name out - Lola, Lola  
Yeah, she was the star of the Copa  
She smiled and danced til morning  
Lola took uppers, to stop her from yawning  
For the finale, she got an applause

Lola was gracious, she didn't do tours  
She felt appreciated, just like a star  
But for the meanwhile, she got a drink from the bar  
Lola had no kids and lost her mother  
Her lover used drugs and left her for another  
But little did she know that she would make love tonight  
She'll do it willingly without puttin up a fight

Lola she was a showgirl  
with yellow ribbons in her hair  
and a dress right up to here

At the bar, his name was Zeke the Freak  
He just moved in down the street  
He introduced himself and bought her a drink  
Before she could refuse, she didn't stop to think  
More and more alcohol, now she was intoxicated  
He picked her up off her feet, as he escapaded  
down the block then he opened the door  
as he struggled to get in, then put her on the floor  
He went to the door to make sure that it was locked  
As he bolted all of them, he looked up at the clock  
It said one, or maybe he'd be done in two  
or two and three, eventually, how freaky could he be?  
He began to think what should I do firstly?  
I'll get a little drink, because I'm very thirsty  
He got a little OJ, to make it really OK  
Grabbed a wad of Hubba Bubba, but didn't use a rubber  
They did it for three hours, he jumped into the shower  
Got out and towel dried, and screamed, "I've got the power!"  
He came out of the bathroom, she was still on the floor  
He said, "Heck I've got to wreck," then he jumped on for more

Lola she was a showgirl  
with yellow ribbons in her hair  
and a dress right up to here  
She met this guy named Zeke  
who was truly a freak  
And she didn't stop to think



before she took that sunrise drink

She finally awoke, eight o'clock in the morning  
Not remembering a stroke, as she began yawning  
Zeke the Freak thought he was thick and slick  
But what Zeke did not know  
is that little Lola, little Lola  
from the Copa used to be a hoe  
Now he's paid, thought he had it made  
But Zeke the Freak got AIDS

Lola she was a showgirl  
with yellow ribbons in her hair  
and a dress right up to here  
She met this guy named Zeke  
who was truly a freak  
And she didn't stop to think  
before she took that sunrise drink  
He caught a bad one  
while he was havin fun  
Took Lola to his bed  
And now the freak is dead

## **2 Young 4 What**

I'm the dopest female  
I'm the dopest female that you've heard thus far

I'm too old? What's with that crap?  
Come on now brother, age is just a number  
Anyway what matters is your state of mind  
and if you give me some time I'll make your heart all mine  
I don't like pushin and I don't like rushin  
But most of all I don't like fussin  
So come on now sweetie why don't ya stop frontin  
Besides older folks come equipped for good lovin  
Are you really serious? Age really matters?  
I thought telling you this, you would be flattered  
Well I guess I was wrong cause you still ain't widdit

oh well, forget it, nope nope  
But don't you dare touch me, you said you wasn't widdit  
You waited too long now, Lyte is not havin it  
I coulda showed you things, taught you how to explore  
My question is, what are you too young for?  
I coulda shown you things that you never seen before  
Took you all around on my wild world tour  
But you're too young, too young to have fun  
oh well, I'm done  
I'm the dopest female  
I'm the dopest female that you've heard thus far

It may sound nasty and it may sound mean  
but I'm into little boys that are about seventeen  
I don't know why, but they put up a fight  
and hot damn that excites the MC Lyte  
Cause yo I love a young buck, that give a firm fuck  
But once in a while, they become lovestruck  
But that's okay though, cause I can handle them  
I love young boys on the brink of being young men  
I mould em, shape em, make em then I break em in  
They get the job done, I make em get the job done  
well, swell, make em kiss and tell  
all of their friends around the neighbourhood  
that Lyte is good, soul food good  
So tell my honey, are you ready to score?  
Again I'll ask, what are you too young for?  
I'm the dopest female  
I'm the dopest female that you've heard thus far

Last but not least yo here's a description  
Hard workin, not one that sells prescription  
So if you're in school, that's okay  
Get straight A's and I'll be back on Friday  
You won't miss me, you know where to find me  
And these words I will say finally  
Never let age, restrict you from whatcha wanna do  
Whether you're young or ninety-two  
So if you're seventeen or around that age

baby come to the stage  
And if I didn't change your mind I'd find that odd  
So when I ask this, think hard

## **Ain't No Other (1993)**

### **Brooklyn**

I got the intro along with the cashflow  
Make all bad boys seem like nymphos  
Yeh I'm hard I get sexy like veronica  
I use sex as an instrument and like the philharmonic  
And no I ain't tall but I'm small and I'm slender  
Ask him who's been in shit is like tender  
If he didn't like it he returns to sender  
He didn't do that it's too phat he remembers  
Never ever have I ever said I was good lookin'  
Just one bad ass bitch from brooklyn  
Not here to steal your loot, your coat, your rocks  
Makin' niggas drop whenever we hit the block  
They hear brooklyn and we up to no good  
Well here we come so there goes the neighbourhood  
Timbos, scuffed up  
Ces bein' puffed up  
Mess with the wrong one kid you get roughed up

I got the rhythm that'll rip up shows  
Blow down foes  
They kill at will to get a taste of my flow  
Vocally I rock locally and worldwide  
Those that got bad wish they would've never tried  
Cuz when you come from where I come from you gotta be tough  
Cuz niggaz'll call your bluff quick enough  
Cuz if your hood is like my hood you gotta think quick  
Shit's thick niggaz are slick  
Have you turnin' tricks  
I got to give it up to mr cool j  
For givin' up the props to the girls around the way  
It ain't safe after dark to throw a jam in the park  
You wanna get naughty bring your forty to the arc  
Cuz we get down when it comes to a jam  
Just watch your back pocket keep your eye on the man  
If your town is like my town you don't wanna mess around

Wind up gettin' bagged up beat down

Everywhere that I step, they know my rep  
Cuz I'm sayin' and doin' shit they won't forget  
Breakin' down doors although I never break laws  
Come to a town that's yours and I'll be rippin' the whole tour  
Coming hard for your section slow up  
Live in the flesh and about to blow up  
So yo come down and then get the fuck up  
Looks are hooked  
You lucked you're booked  
But you gotta be hard cuz I ain't with softies  
Hit then you miss got to get off this so come wit your game  
Cuz you can't be lame  
As soon as you walk I'm forgettin' your name  
As long as you know all that enter are equal  
Straight from the Lyte I send peace to my people

**Ruffneck**

Gotta what yo gotta get a ruffneck (repeat)

I need a Ruffneck, I need a dude with attitude  
Who only needs his fingers with his food  
Karl Kani saggin' timbos draggin'  
Frontin' in his ride with his home boys braggin'  
Lying bout the Lyte how he knocked boots last night  
But he's a Ruffneck so that's alright  
Triple o baldie under the hood  
Makin' noise with the boys up to no good  
C-low on the down low cops come around so  
Ruffneck front like he gotta go  
Evil grin with a mouth full of gold teeth  
Startin' beef is how he spells relief  
Actin' like he don't care  
When all I gotta do is beep him 911 and he'll be there  
Right by my side with his Ruffneck tactics  
Ruffneck attitude, the Ruffneck bastard

I need a Ruffneck, I need a man that's quick and swift  
To put out the spliff and get stiff  
Boxer shorts and everything is fitting large  
But he don't gotta be large to be in charge  
Pumpin' in and out and out and in and here we go  
He knows exactly how I want my flow and that's slow  
Never questioning can he get buck wild  
He's got smack it, lick it, swallow it up style  
Drinkin' a beer, sittin' his chair  
Hands in his pants fiddlin' with his dick hairs  
He's a rudeboy, a raggamuf  
Ready to bag another brother that he ranks ruff enough  
Cause if it ain't ruff it ain't right  
And if he ain't ruff, well then he's all wrong for the lyte  
I love my Ruffneck and ain't nothin' going down  
Or going up if my Ruffneck ain't in town

I need a Ruffneck, I need a man that don't stitch like a bitch  
Shed tears or seitch  
Doin' whatever it takes to make ends meet  
But never meetin' the end 'cause he knows the street  
Eat sleep shit fuck, eat sleep shit  
Then it's back to the streets to make a buck quick  
Quick to beg even though gimme gottem here  
Hit 'em wit a bit a skins then he's out of there  
On the avenue girls are passin' thru  
Too much of Ruffneck so they ain't havin' you  
Hard boppin' always grabbin' his jock and braggin' about his tec  
That's the rep he'll pull the plug on the tour  
Pissin' in corners  
Doing 80 by funeral mourners  
Showin little respect  
Now that's a Ruffneck

#### **What's My Name Yo**

In comes the boom to the bam hit my fans  
Make them understand I got the master plan  
Ready for work I go berserk

I listen to kid capri and the one red alert  
Ready for the showdown  
What's the lowdown  
I'm in a rude mood honey you're goin' down  
Licket split swallow that spit  
You may get a tidbit more than you expected from the clique  
Or the group of the people that I hang wit rather my crew my posse my mosse  
It's a big thing when we hang cuz we rip when we wreck  
When we hit what the heck  
We be puttin' brawny niggers in check  
See what I reap follow you'll learn or get burned  
I'm not afraid to work and earn  
My cashflow, I kick ass though, fast or slow I got the massive flow

I rip shop, I never flip flop I take flight  
From the tip top I rule hip hop it's I lyte  
I just want it to be well understood I'm here to do good  
And not to bite on somebody's wood  
Years and years gone by  
I'm prepared to be paid for the rest of my decades  
I set up investments  
And never will you ever see Lyte a contestant  
On Jeopardy game show  
Cuz that's lame though, what's my name yo  
It's the l to the y to the t you know the rest  
I'm truly blessed  
I know the root to express  
My inner thoughts and now you're caught  
But I'ma let you proceed cuz I'ma succeed  
With or without you because I don't need  
The negativity nor do I need the bad energy  
That you're trying to give to me

Here comes the wagon, you know I'm never raggin'  
So what I'm xx my pants are still saggin'  
Boots still stompin' ravin' and rompin'  
From ny to should I say compton  
And back cuz I'm all that  
I flip a tack

Cuz I'm so damn phat  
I get loose I got juice I spread it  
I'm the best there I said it  
Now the 411 is out  
All the hiphoppers know just what I'm talkin' about  
Underground I rock my sound  
Up top I still wreck shop  
So don't even talk about I went commercial  
When you need to take your ass to rehearsal  
Your show is torn, ripped  
So until you get your show down pat don't pop no lip  
Settle that noise don't be rowdy  
K-Cut, scratch yo Mike I'm audi

**Lil Paul**

Hey yo bust the move when shit get type critical  
Fuck all of that gettin sentimental  
Yeh we fucked and you didn't even call  
But it's alright cause I'm doin' your boy Paul  
In and out scoop troop yo he rocked it  
He could have put my pum pum in his pocket  
That's how dope shit was  
You need to give him a buzz learn somethin'  
Cuz not sayin' that you didn't hit it cause you did it  
But lil Paul he did me off so well  
I couldn't wait to call just to tell  
How he did the poka poke with the long strokes  
I guess that's meant only for the strong folks  
Two can play at that game that's how you wanna act  
Now that I came right, fuck it I ain't coming back  
Yeh we did it you didn't call that's alright I'm doin' your boy Paul  
(repeat)  
He did the poka poke with the long strokes

It's for sure Paul he ain't no amateur  
Cold freaked my cheeks from the bed to the kitchen floor  
I thought it would be hard doin' your friend in the sack  
But now I got the knack and guess what he calls back



Now me and Paul we be buttin' it all the time  
Don't know his last name don't give a fuck about his sign  
Me and him we got this opp thing  
It's just a fling  
He ain't tryin' to push up a ring  
On my finger cause that shit is dead  
Have you heard what I said if not ask the dread  
When you talk of marriage honey you just ruin it  
I'm not goin' to be able to do it  
They say lil Paul is small  
That's not true at all  
In fact as I recall  
Paul is quite tall  
What's sad and also the downfall  
Is you my brother was the smallest one of all

I've said only bad things here goes another  
I was too thru with you I was ready to do your brother  
He's so young he ain't dumb but he's cute though  
But in the end my friend I decided to take this route so  
Never ask Paul where he's going Friday  
Cause nine times out of ten he's comin' around my way  
Even though Paul and I remain friends  
Every now and then he'll come and spend the weekend  
Forgive me if it seems I'm rubbin' it in your face  
Far be it from me to put you back in your place  
You shouldn't have tried to play me cuz I'm not like any other  
Come home from work and I'll be doin' your little brother  
Shame it had to happen like this we had to part  
But you did me like that now I got no heart

#### **Ain't No Other**

When I begin to define my wicked and wild style  
It's somewhat difficult to explain to a child  
So if you're not skilled with the quickness  
We best just forget this  
But I proceed indeed for the ones that can hang  
The ones who appreciate the way I do my thang

Go all out with no doubt I flip and rip MCs up  
The style that I use may confuse cuz I'm that tough  
Because the track is tick I never slack cuz I'm quick  
I'm not wack, I'm slick  
I been known to flick mcs like bic  
And continue  
What's next on the menu  
Who's at the venue  
Grab your steel and maybe then you  
Can hang out with the pros  
Not the hoes at the real show  
Come smell my aura  
Lana Moorer, it's the smell of dough  
I keep it rockin' and I'm rollin' over small things  
Pockets are full  
I got pull and ain't down with no drug ring  
Illegal funds I choose to live the right way  
I'm not jerkin' but I'm workin' 24 night and day  
Ain't no other this is me and this is it  
Got to get the crowbar to get you up off my tip

So let me in rin tin tin  
Or I'll huff and I'll huff and I'll puff  
And blow the mother-fucker in  
Games can't be played  
So fuck the charade  
Recess over done it's time to be payed  
Ounce for ounce I want no checks that bounce  
Signature for sure cash in large amounts  
Fuck the smilin' profilin' money ain't on time Lyte start buckwildin'  
You ask my partners in crime  
About my rhyme  
It ain't fiction line for line  
Check the diction  
Cuz I'll be kickin' it back yo  
I keep it rockin' and I'm rollin' over small things  
Pockets are full  
I got pull and ain't down with no drug ring  
Illegal funds I choose to live the right way

I ain't jerkin' but I'm workin' 24 night and day

Quick to draw, no flaws I got the raw shit  
They pop bad wish they never had and forfeit  
I look out for mine duke da moon I ain't braggin'  
I ain't for that droop along hoppin' on the band wagon  
I ain't down wit no tipsters  
Highpost like most but I ain't no dipster  
In other words I like him when I meet him  
I just ain't the type to be lovin' 'em and leavin' 'em  
I give any and all and everything I got  
Your fuck up once shit is shot hops  
I'm too compatible to be take for granted  
You'll be left alone if you try to do me damage  
Illegal funds I choose to live the right way  
I'm not jerkin' but I'm workin' 24 night and day

#### **I Go On**

Now dig it you flap your tongue and talk about this and that  
But all of that wrong rap is real wack  
I'm on a roll of my own you can't play me  
So when you talkin' 'bout the Lyte  
Get it right baby  
Because I think I'm all that  
Makin' niggaz crawl back  
They hit the cat and I refuse to call him back  
It ain't worth it for the moment or the minute  
You was in it then you won it but no now you're done kid  
I'm only takin' shorts if it means I'm wearin' 'em  
Some of these guys yo I'm only scarin' 'em  
Some of these guys yo I'm only scarin' 'em  
They can't handle what I got to give and always will  
I'm not the run of the mill I got skills  
I go on and on ask your boy K-Born  
But I had to kick him out for the dawn turned to morn  
I go on and on an on and on let it flow you don't stop  
(repeat)

A night owl on the prowl here's a victim  
Soon as I spot badadada stick 'em  
Now I got him where I want him and he's all mine  
No crime but now he's on primetime  
We hit the doo did the bootie in the slow mo  
I like the spankin' gave him thankin'  
On the down low  
But that's all that's it see you later hops  
I gave you props but I'ma drop you at the bus stop  
Cuz you was on it like a horny dog on it  
Got me heated then you beat it  
Now you know just how to treat it  
You're kind of slow though when it comes to brain cells  
But you can go cuz I came and I did it well  
Sorry to hurt you but honey I'm a real one  
You gotta go cuz I ain't the funky feel one  
And when I'm audi I hope that you're not torn  
Because my brother life goes on

Now let's swing back on the topic  
Brothers wanna pop it knock it and lock it  
I'm not havin' it 'cause I control my destiny  
I'm never lettin' a punk get the best of me  
So ease up if yo you're on the jealous tip  
I'm not about to be the victim in the news clip  
Cause unlike some girls I fight back  
Get the boys double up and do a headcrack  
I'm only here for the liking not to be hit not smacked  
No slapped or kicked  
So if you're coming my way you gotta be strong  
Enough to know that hittin' a woman is wrong  
Cause just like you I can find other brothers  
That'll do the do quicker than you  
So if you're lookin' for a straight up relationship  
Keep lookin' cause I ain't stayin' kid because  
I'm audi and I hope that you're not torn  
But never give up cause life goes on

### One Nine Nine Three

Here we go once again round the track  
As I kick butt I also kick the facts  
#1 on the list as long as I exist I'll be kickin' just like this  
And like that so hey check my data  
I'll be rippin' it from alpha to the omega  
Hifi, why lie you're not fly  
So why should you even try  
You can't come close you can't even tangle  
My little sister can handle and dismantle  
From brooklyn and we sure to cause scandle  
One nine nine three can you wreck it  
One nine nine three

Huff puff ego schmego  
Yeh but do you wanna be my amigo  
Si yeh I thought you would  
You understand good it's well understood  
That I'm the only rap star in this here game  
So fuck your lame name  
As you grow attached to my slow flow  
Here's a new batch for the hoe stroll  
As I stomp in your grill like dough loot  
As your face oozes up around my boot  
I ain't been here this long for nuthin'  
I'm never stuntin' frontin' and I'm never bluntin'  
So you can ride me and my skills from brooklyn to beverly hills  
And then back to your busted up crusty ass grill

Solo I stand but the posse is mega phat  
Cover quick slick chicks they got my back  
Negroes I suppose they know how we go  
One and tee and two less the afro big Drew  
Vaughn and Moe they check my sound  
At the venue they know how shit be goin' down  
Thru thick and thin they been there  
He say she say they don't let it wear and tear

My boys from the jump since the bump they know how we be  
Fuck what you sayin' if you ain't with the family  
Yo K you was the jock so keep rockin' too bad to be forgotten  
Too fresh to be rotten  
In '93 I'm on some new shit  
About to evict any nigger that wanna pop lip  
Laid back or hyper active  
Whatever the action I gotta keep you active  
And I intend to ascend never will I pretend  
I'm the type to now and then start a funky trend  
And those that follow well they know how I operate  
Lyte is good, fuck that, lyte is great

**Can I Get Some Dap**

On a regular basis  
I visit many places  
See many faces  
All ages and races  
What I'm tryin' to say is  
Usually the case is  
I'm the topic of chases  
Cuz I hold all the aces  
Some rappers are tasteless  
Nameless, faceless  
Got it so bad they can't afford shoelaces  
But when it comes to hits I covered all bases  
Leavin' no tracks or clues or even traces  
Who am I to judge I hold no grudge  
I got my spot I won't move or budge  
You gotta come equipped if you plan to flip the script  
If not you'll be whipped  
Some just wanna come along for the ride  
But me myself I want some dap on my side  
Can I get a little dap on the side  
Can I can I get a little dap on the side

What I'm trying to say to you and your crew  
What I want is my dap when dap is due

I'm from Brooklyn  
And I won't be mistaken for slut or a stunt  
That be smokin' booty blunts  
I'm a goody two shoes  
I pick and I choose  
The best fuck the rest I refuse to sing the blues  
Talkin' like this you might be confused  
But pass over the dap that ain't being used  
Scram kid shit is getting too tight  
It's about time that I bogart the spotlight  
Gimme mine all that is due to me  
You disagree there's nothin' you can do me honey  
I get loose I got what it takes  
To make you quiver and shake cause I'm causing earthquakes  
Some just wanna go along for the ride  
But me myself I want some dap on the side

Don't be shady and stingy with the rap dap  
Come around lookin' for my paps no haps  
I can't be played suckered I ain't busted  
Lyte is the type that you just can't fuck wit  
When I say dap I ain't talkin' bout no leather suit man  
When I say dap I ain't talkin' bout no pound in my hand  
I'm talkin' respect that's what I'm out to collect  
And if you try to disrespect I may just spit on your neck  
I know that's your homie but I still deserve dap though  
Pushin' out the messages that crack is a no no  
Guns and violence get you into a mess  
And condoms I strongly suggest  
Since '86 I been cold gettin live  
And you should know by now I'm not along for the ride  
I'm here for a while and I got my pride  
And my pride says I want some dap on the side

**Let Me Adem**

Fee fi fum I smell a sucker  
Come get your lashes, you punk motherfucker  
Get beat up, beat down, beat around how that sound

Teach you chumps how to treat a clown  
Come get it if you think you're full fledged  
Or you'll geronimo and slide off the edge of it  
I get props non-stop  
I gotta shake 'em off of my juggy jock backspin, spin it back  
We're under attack, but lyte'll never slack  
I come hard let it pour, let it rain  
No pain no gain  
I came prepared armed with a kick and fat ass snare  
Let me adem adem I get in it like Bennett  
Cold stole the show and be the first to say I did it

Fee fi foe fum I smell a pissy sissy  
A wussy what is he a pussy  
I rip shop and leave shop torn  
Hey yo tee that's my word is born  
Hear how I flow I be tearin' down the walls  
Awaiting the funk of the cattle call  
I don't front, perpetrate  
I ain't no stunt and I don't buy blunts  
Cuz I bash and I smash hey  
Hops you kinda little I bust that ass  
You're from Brooklyn or you're Brooklyn bound  
You know the sayin' you lay around you're fucked  
So don't come with no mush mush soft like a baby's tush  
You'll get rushed plain ole crushed kicked in the bush or maybe ambushed  
When in love, lyte ain't tough no more, buyaca  
Buyaca I still rock the hard core  
They like to question can get raw  
Lord I can't take it no more

Fee fi foe fum I smell a chinese dish  
Some young fuck that wants to get dissed and I'ma do it proper  
What you say proper  
In 93 there's only one showstopper 20 mcs and only one microphone  
Shit is hot, shit is on-pushin, swampin', crampin', get off my back  
I thought you knew I'm too large for that  
But in case you forgot I'm here to remind you  
Run you can't hide cuz my posse will find you



No tellin' the damage that can be done  
If you're caught while you run

**Steady Fucking**

dirty bitch, you dirty, dirty bitch  
dirty bitch, you dirty, dirty bitch  
dirty bitch, you dirty, dirty bitch  
dirty bitch, you dirty, dirty bitch

Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking (repeat 6x)  
Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking

You done insulted me  
And I got to kick your ass right now so what's up big bahama mama?  
You know where to find me you could never climb me  
So why do you persist to be placed upon my fucking hit list  
You're a low down dirty loser next time I see you,  
I'ma hit you with my land cruiser you's a poo putt,  
Lyte don't give a fuck I u's saying he laid pipe in that butt  
And in case you don't know  
I've been known to fuck up a hoe during a show  
So now you want to play miss hard rock don't test me  
I put up career road blocks I heard you're smoking crack lady  
You just had a kid, I guess that makes him a crack baby  
What do you think  
The fifty-fifth nigga you fucked said your poom poom stinks  
Slow down you're moving too fast now you think you're hot shit  
Steppin' to lyte wit a limp, tryin' pop shit you're still a loser  
No joke when I see you, I'ma hit you with the cruiser

Let's set the bitch on fire your fucking days are over  
Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking  
(repeat 2x) Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking

From upstate new york to way down south  
I heard you do a mica checka with a dick in your mouth  
You ready for the showdown  
the lowdown lyte strikes again, another hoe down

Fuckin' to you Shante, is like a fad  
Flipping coins with your mom to see who sucks dad  
But wait a second I heard you're kind of funky  
But then again, who's heard of a clean junky  
How funky of a smell can one woman make  
Yo fellas, I think she needs a douch break

Douch, douch it out, douch break douch, douch it out, douch douch, douch it out  
Douch break douch, douch it out, douch, douch, douch douch, douch it out,  
Douch break douch, douch it out, I think you need a douch

Tsk, tsk, what a relief it is not to be, not to be, not to be you, not to be,  
Not to be you, not to be, not to be you or one of those pussy eatin' members of your  
crew

Cause if your crew was cool, they would have schooled you  
But instead you let them fool you  
Into talking that bullshit you been talking  
Walking that stank strut you been walking  
I don't play that ring around the rosie  
pocket full of posie redrum you dumb dumb

We could all be some fighting motherfuckers in here this evening  
Bring your ass nigga, bring it on  
Come on Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking

Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking now let's talk about the grill (the grill)  
Now let's talk about that grill  
We'd all be dead if looks could kill  
Now let's talk about your teeth shits  
Ain't been straight since you were eight  
When you bit into a bad piece of beef and even for a small fee  
You let your uncle get one off while you bounced on his fucking knee  
Now what's my fucking name I left you so far behind you can't get back  
Into the fucking game you must like putting dough in my pocket  
Since 86 my career skyrocketed where you at?  
(Laughter) I got this rap shit locked, sewed, hemmed  
While you're hanging from a booda stem  
I do this and that, baby pop, I get residuals  
I'm liable to just fuck up your schedule

You'll be sitting on your fat ass another ten years  
Until the coast is clear  
So next time they push a rhyme in your hand  
You better fully understand who the fuck I am

But at least now we know it's all about Lyte  
Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking  
Roxanne Shante is only good for steady fucking  
(repeat 4x)

## **Bad As I Wanna B (1996)**

### **Keep On Keepin' On**

B-boy I've been looking for your ass since a quarter past  
Hot peas and butter baby come and get your supper  
Before I make you suffer that's when you had enough of  
Can I get hot when you hit the jackpot  
Surely you can if you the man  
I get loose and produce large amounts of juice  
Can you get loose to that or do you need a boost  
Of energy to enter me and get it on  
You're getting warm and I can feel you getting closer  
Now baby down this mimosa  
You better believe it's time to give a toast to  
The woman of the decade too bad to be played  
Get vex and I'm bound to throw shade  
All over your body whose body your body  
I can rock a party like nobody  
Leave in time to take home the loot  
Choosy about who I let knock my boots  
Now let me take sight when you're loving the Lyte  
Life ain't all that unless you're doing it right  
Keep on keep keepin' on  
Cause you came and you changed my world  
Your love is so brand new  
Doin' it right right right

Beware of the stare when I step in the piece  
I come in peace but I got the need to be released  
Now who from the chosen shall I choose  
Yeah now you wish you were in his shoes  
I found me a new this year  
That knows how to handle this here  
Now I look forward to going home at night  
Brother does me right under the candle light  
Wax upon my back can I handle all of that  
Yes I can can and why not if I wanna yes I can can  
More honey than a bumble bee has

Pulling 69 ways out of my archives  
Sweet like licorice sugar for my booga  
Juicy like Hi-C or an IC  
I got the shit to make your ass write a bad check  
Cause like I said I'm not afraid of the sweat  
Beat on my drums if you feel the need to  
As I proceed to open up and feed you  
I got a longing to put you where you want to be  
Ven aqui and I'll get rid of all company

Many have tried strict regulations  
Lazy motherfuckers get put on probation  
Those that didn't perform well  
They gets no answer when they ring a ringa my bell  
You're playing with my time trying to jerk me  
Hurt me then desert me you better work me  
While you get the opportunity to be in the midst of the L-Y-T-E  
Only the strong survive only the wise excel  
Once said by my born in hell  
Only the lonely die slowly left all alone trying to control me  
Easy does it never asked how was it  
Never speak my info in the sheets on the street  
Cause that ain't cool and that ain't cute  
To talk about who knocked the boots on a video shoot  
But it's all good though you gotta get it when you want it  
Site your prey make your move and hop up on it  
It's natural never be ashamed  
To fame get the name and kick the game

#### **Have U Ever**

Have you ever, ever in your long living life  
Seen a woman rock the mic  
Like the one called the Lyte

As I zoom with the Z down the  
Avenue, who it be, me less the crew  
Why you talkin that whoopied doo whoo  
I'm makin moves, that's smoother than

The cream or the sweat from a wet dream  
Drippin wit Vaseline  
My mabeline left a ring on the scene  
I got mad peeps down with the Tag Team  
Listen you couldn't front it you want to  
Trying to escape now I'm the one that you're running to  
Looking at my tag it's about that time  
For you to get yours, for me to get mine  
I got our shit poppin wheelies like a ninja  
The inner of my center, keeps you warm in the winter  
My placenta is on high overload, my complete context  
Can get so complex, I might explode  
On the scene, like a nuclear bomb  
While the children scream, I'll yellin ring the alarm

This is going out to all the ruffnecks  
And hood rats, Jermaine hit me off with the track,  
Yo Brat if you're wit me, holla let me know where you're at  
I be the stage wrecker, rhyme  
Manifessa, feel the pressure, coming  
Straight off Elektra, the shit that be  
Kicking is off the wall crazy,  
You can't see, what I can see cause you're  
Blind baby, born a slave die a slave  
Representing from the cradle to the grave  
Cause we living in the last day  
Coming through your TV in 3D  
It's the Lyte representing for the female species  
Letting 'em know that they can't even

What do we have here, an imposter  
Perpetrator, fake player  
Trying to get on the roster  
I keep trying to warn 'em and drop it all on 'em  
Rap may collapse, when they attack  
And drop the bomb on 'em  
Blown to dust, either roll with us  
Or get rushed, in God we trust,  
Cause it's a must, that I kick it

Like I hear it, speak it like I see it,  
It's the spirit, I ain't got to see it to believe it  
I take the form of the rain in a storm  
As I get warm, like the rays of the sun  
Here I come, like a hurricane, ready to  
Be reborn, let me be the first to welcome  
You to the terror dome, the unknown zone  
A million miles away from home,  
The clock is ticking, time is up, before the world destructs,  
Or the universe erupt  
I'ma be the one to lights this motherfucker up

### **Everyday**

Everyday I need my shit done in a special way everyday

Off the top niggas see me and want to serve  
Just thinking about what they need  
Ain't that some nerve  
Now look here 24 hours and 7 whole days  
I demand my respect I demand my praise  
Everyday that I wake  
I gotta have everything done with no mistakes  
I take it incredibly slow don't try to rush me  
No means no, I never said a no that meant yes  
Other women get taken for granted  
I guess I got a wish list that must be fulfilled  
And you gets none until I get my toes sucked  
And my eyebrows plucked  
I need my car waxed and my floor shellac  
I need my back rubbed and da bubbles in the tub  
That float to the bed so that we can make love

It ain't much to ask for when  
I come off tour to have my truck washed  
Or my body massaged  
All the bills paid I send home all my dough  
And you being my man it just ain't for show  
All the lovey dovey yeah that is sweet

But honey bunny yeah gotta earn your keep  
But don't sleep cause I need a lot shit done  
And cold harded yeah check out whatever is clever  
And get to stepping if you know something better  
If not then respect what'cha got  
Meanwhile I got a new ride at the lot  
Pick it up and bring it back to the spot  
This how we do it this is how we do it everyday  
I need it done a special way baby  
Tell them how it goes

On the real I need a man that understands me and  
Realises the reality I'm in the MC industry which  
Means I want to live lovely, I gotta make money  
Listen so never ask me to give it less than what I got  
If it's too hot nigga then raise up out my spot  
It's my trade I made up the black ace of spade  
Alone in the world it's me ya can't fade  
It's my life, I do it my way  
You don't like my way hit the highway  
See I'm special not because I'm MC Lyte but  
Because I'm a woman with the gift to bear life, it's done  
Yes I've rested my case now run pick up my dermalogica  
For my face this is how it goes down everyday  
I need it done in a special way baby

### **Cold Rock A Party**

To the L, to the Y and the T to the E  
So get ready cause I want everybody to say this with me  
Rock the house, rock the house, rock the house

Now I cold rock a party in a b-girl stand  
I rock on the floor make the fellas wanna dance  
I be the shit and it's all good and if you understood

Would you stop scheming and trying to look hard  
I get my bodyguard you get that booty scarred  
I'm a veteran which means that I've been in the game too long



Since the days of paper thin way back when I've been putting it down  
Ask your homies who's the baddest bitch on this side of town  
I float like a butterfly sting like a bee  
Spectacular on the M I C  
I go for broke never giving it less than the best  
Lots of years in the game at your request  
You like the rhyme bite if you dare  
I get the paper so I don't care  
Fly that's me the epidemy  
Of what a real MC is supposed to be  
Fucking you up everytime that I drop  
Fuck a bullet baby I done took your spot  
I guide the beat and I ride it well  
And if you take a look it ain't hard to tell that I

Back off me and let my skin breathe, Lyte is everlasting  
It's hard to believe I shall prevail cause I'm next to none  
Cause I'm claiming no set, don't plan to get down  
Just Brooklyn is where I'm from but I'm resting in Studio City  
For the fun, if you don't understand just say you don't (nah)  
And don't wait for me to explain cause I won't  
You see it's in my nature to be the best, west to east  
See east to west, ready or not I have arrived and I'm live  
Showing an MC how to survive, cause its crazy how I  
Get you captured with my tactics, I got many witnesses  
That can back this ruffnecks from New York to LA  
Been down with me since poor Georgie  
It's '96, it's all about show and prove and I'm about to  
Make the ill type moves, I guide the beat and ride it well  
And if you take a look it ain't hard to tell that I

Get out my shit, please let me be, I don't see why you KGB  
Why you gotta be all up on me like that, trying to get over  
Like a fat rat, but I understand, I'm a woman in the land of hip-hop  
And the shit don't stop, it goes on on on on  
You see the shit don't stop till the break of dawn  
And now who makes it liver than a hip hop scuba diver, chillin with  
A pina colada, kidada hooked me up with tommy now I gotta  
A lot of gear from everywhere that I'd like to share (yeah right)

But I'd rather do Kani, don't ask why, 5001, my son gets shit done  
All on the catwalk, what they've ever done for you  
You betta get down with your real crew, cause I ride the beat  
And I ride it well and if you take a look it ain't hard to tell that I

To the L, to the Y, and the T, to the E  
Rock the house and rock the house

**TRG (The Rap Game)**

TRG we making that cream  
People get fooled it ain't easy as it seems  
You can rock on till the break of dawn  
But one by one your ass is gone

I got trapped in the rap game at sixteen and saw  
It's no more than a crap game, know what I mean?  
Like when you feel you shake em right they fake roll snake  
Eyes in the this industry thats how quick niggas die  
Through my eyes it's like Russian Roulette  
Never do you know when you about to get wet  
So you should stay set so you don't fall and go under  
Have people saying I wonder what happened to him or her  
It's sad when you begin to think you can be gone but you  
Can be gone in the blink of an eye, don't ask why cause you try  
Somebody came along that was twice as fly  
I remember when I hit the scene it was the second faze  
Rope chains two finger rings, those were the days  
Latin quarters my puma suit was cool  
Now let me be caught in that and I'll be damned a fool ya  
Gotta change with the times like the weather  
MCs that lasts is the MCs thats clever  
You can't move too slow cause when  
It's yo time to go, you see it's yo time to go

Come back after come back, nigga come back more wack  
Than the wackest wax on the rack, what's up with  
That New Jacks are coming through taking no slack  
They hungry and they looking for a spot to cop a squat

You better watch the clock it can be awfully embarrassing  
To not know when it's time to let go of the rhyme  
It's about half past the monkey ass  
You should have been gone but you  
Still trying to hang on, what happens when you  
Chilling at the label on the 10th floor nobody  
Knows your name anymore, aren't you?  
Wait and let me think,  
Just as quick as you got large you can quickly shrink  
And sink into the crates and collect dust  
Don't be mad cause it happens to the best of us

To and fro they come and go  
You better change your flow  
And then switch up your show  
I seen some come with the booming ass hits  
Then they gone but then they don't leave with shit  
You better tell an exec you need to be set so when its over  
You ain't living out your Land Rover  
When your rap life dies and you still alive  
Nigga, you better know how to survive  
It ain't easy and it ain't supposed to be  
Letting niggas know what time it is  
When it comes to me the L-Y-T-E  
Stronger than the ox the octane that knocks in your brain  
I sustain my mission is to maintain sane, know what I mean  
Keep doing my thang, you can't move too slow  
Cause when it's your time to go you gotta go, gotta go

### **One On One**

Yeah! Uh! Uh yeah! Wooh!  
Smooth, better than I've ever seen him look  
As I flip the Vibe book, he's on the front page  
Never looking his age, he's all that and I'm all in  
So let the games begin, now I'ma give ya something  
So you could get in to it, I got the side view so  
I could watch ya do it, you've been on my mind  
But you're so hard to find, Hollywood's got a hold on

That behind, I ain't ashamed to play the game  
Listen here I won't say no names  
Put your ass out, make your woman put your ass out  
If you knew that I was talking to you  
You would pass out, cause I gave you no type of  
Indication and if I did I was probably on some medication  
I got the hots for you daddy and I just begun  
Lets do this - one on one

One(8x)  
I wanna play that game  
One (8x)  
Just you and me baby one on one

Half way across the world, I seen you at my show  
Wit your girl, back in Italy but are you still into me  
Cause if you are I'm here to let ya know  
You don't have to be a superstar for me and you to go far  
Now I ain't never lied, you got the body of an angel  
Bango, bango, watch the bojangle from every angle  
I'm clocking you honey, we could sign a prenup  
I got my own money, I just wanna get to know you a  
Little better in the lyte, after dark, on the DL, whatever  
I wanna feel your muscle flex off your backbone  
I got the jones and I can't leave you alone, I wanna rub  
Your deltoid down to your bicep, better late than never  
And I'm sorry I slept but now I'm well awake and  
I'm ready for the fun, let's do this - one on one

Damn, the only brother make me look twice  
Believe that baby, I wanna sacrifice, I'm on it  
You couldn't shake me off if you tried  
No sleeping on the job and I'm wide-eyed  
I like the video you got out, the song is butter  
Try to keep a clean head and my mind out the gutter  
But it's hard, you bring out the best and the worst  
If I knew you way back when I would've let you hit it first  
Love, it's like water on the brain, only you can tame this  
Runaway train, last time I seen ya, gleam in your eye

You was looking fly with your girl by your side  
Shit, I ain't trying take her place  
I just wanna have your face all up in my space  
I got the hots for ya and I just begun  
You and me baby - one on one

Ha! Yeah!

Just you and me baby  
One on one

### **Druglord Superstar**

Got a new gig, here you come again kid  
Fresh out the dog, done did your bid  
But you can't stay here no more, not in this crib  
Not with the foul way that you used to live  
I remember you would take long trips on the first of the month  
Not giving a fuck about what I want  
Break - uhh Breathe lyte breathe  
The day that you left I spent mad dough  
Trying to get shit fixed cause of your fucking death wish  
Broken glass everywhere  
Cause a motherfucka like you just didn't care  
Got my shit shot up  
Had to buy a new body for my Benz  
Cause of your wild ass friends  
Years ago when you started on the scene  
Back and forth smuggling shit from Caribbean  
It was you and your boy Dunn, making them suicide runs  
But it was all in fun till Dunn tried to run with half of your cut  
Now your boss is looking at you saying "What the fuck is up"  
What's up? But you say "Fuck him"  
You could start your own ring and things  
Besides you got a lot of peeps to swing  
Now you got eight men working  
7 days a week  
2 be the runners, 5 on the street  
1 be the side kick, the right hand  
You know the one that ride shotgun thinking he the man

They'd kill to be where you are  
Oh yeah! The druglord superstar  
You got a new crib, new truck, new car  
Trying to fit in, throwing parties for them big type rap stars  
But on the other side of town, shit is getting hot  
Your man got shot and they blew up your tree spot  
On 125th and St Nick shit is getting thick  
Your boy got caught in St Martin with a brick  
Now he's exile you down to 6 motherfuckas  
And 3 of them motherfuckas is nothing but suckers  
I got feds at my door wanna know do I know a black  
Now I ain't never called ya no shit like that  
I'm fed up, I can't take it no more  
You see I'm blazing at the next nigga knocking at my door  
I heard you're on the run now  
D is in the penile  
Ratted your ass out and gave that what when and how  
They'd all kill to be where you are  
The druglord superstar  
They found a body in the sand, it was Poppi your man  
With his eyes dug out and black engraved in his hand  
What's up with that?  
Looks like your crew is going down  
Word around is you're the ass in the biz  
To let them kill your men off, you must be soft  
Heard they shot up your car and ransacked your loft  
Now you need a place to hide  
Cause your man done snitched on the inside  
You was on the run like a slave back in the days  
You must have been nodding when they said "crime don't pay"  
I got a new gig here you come again kid  
Fresh out the dog, done did your bid  
But you just can't stay here no more not in this crib  
Not with the foul way that you choose to live  
Motherfucka you know what?  
Just just take your shit all right  
Just take it cause I'm sick of this shit  
I can't take it no more - just take it  
I don't know who the fuck you think you are

Thinking you could just come back here and try to enter my life  
Like I need you, I don't I'm thru with you motherfucka  
Just get out, you put me thru too much heartache  
Too much shit I had to go thru, I can't do it no more

#### **Two Seater**

If you wanna ride good life baby, you can't smoke the weeda in my two seater (repeat  
4x)

I'm starting out early on a Saturday night  
It's sic my gear is fixed and I'm feeling all right  
My profile from my Z as pretty as can be  
Get out your shit and come ride with me (yeah)  
What's up baby you headed my way  
I'm off to the west side to hit the highway  
So park your jeep here and get in my ride  
You'll be well taken care of once you're inside  
I got automatic locks, newly installed shocks  
To take care of the bumps as we ease over the rocks  
I got the what the boomin sound system  
To take you and your ears to another dimension  
As I listen to whatever you got to speak  
I'm pumpin you over smooth out beats  
Now rock the boat suga but don't you tip it over  
I used to get busy in the back of my Mum's Nova  
But now it's all about you, still you can't smoke the weeda in my two seater

They all know that I'm scorching hot  
I'm too much as I rock your knot  
They try to keep in touch but I keep 'em at a distance  
I know their resistance is low cause I got the stuff  
That's good to go  
You can come and see me and observe  
How I kick a h'ordeouvre first come first serve  
In the twilight I hit the high light to read  
The captions to see exactly what I'm waxin  
I kick it all the way to 5th before I down shift  
4,3,2,1 as I gab my gifts

I ready for the type of action  
That can only happen in my ride while I'm rappin  
I'm ready to get it on and do the do's too  
You can't smoke the weeda in my two seata

Now riding down the ave it's about that time  
Rain and grime my shit still shine  
I got what you call an itching for a scratch  
Ready to be attached then lock my latch  
I got my shades down low as I listen to the beat flow  
And I let down my window  
I got a blackberry tree hanging from my rear view  
Uhh baby put there to tempt you  
When in LA I hit the 110 in my friend's Benz  
Cause the ride never ends  
But right now I'm chilling in the east  
Where the only horror is beauty runnin from the beast  
As I dip dive down to I 95  
Hit Phatlanta do you wanna take a ride  
I'm fixin to get with you but there's only room for two  
Got to leave behind the crew  
Lookin good your eyes twinkle like a star  
Have to say it - you remind me of my car  
As I play it Mary J CD singin "I wanna be happy"  
But not with KC  
I need a man that don't mind riding shotgun  
Let me control this, it can be fun  
You keep it real  
I'll let you touch my steering wheel  
Still you can't smoke the weeda in my two seater

Bentley, drop top, ridin good life baby  
In the two seater you can't smoke  
I know you're jealous  
I know you wish you had this  
Yeah, riding the good life



## Seven & Seven (1998)

### In My Business

On the regular they guessin how the lyte get down  
Never mind that nigga you better watch your mouth  
Keep snoopin and you bound to hit a brick  
Get out the crack of my ass all up in my shiznit  
To you nosy nikkis and you peepin toms  
So you know I'm about to drop the brooklyn bomb  
7 and 7 is 14 1 and 4 is 5  
But none of that matters if your shit ain't alive  
You could care less about the records I sell  
You just wanna know I tried but fell  
But even on your best day and on my worst  
I'll still be first, without the need to rehearse

Why you up in my business find something better to  
Do why you talkin' about me I ain't said shit about you  
Forgive me for my attitude I got something to say  
Y'all better not fuck with me cuz I'm having a bad day

Y'all must really think I'm the host of the freakshow  
Got me taggin piranhas I don't even know  
Got me swimmin in waters gettin caught in fishnet  
Got me hooked up with folks I ain't never even met  
How y'all so busy trying to market this  
I guess you stupid ass forgot who started this  
But I'm about to ransack you make your memory  
Come back to you - let all my true niggaz jack you  
Talkin about the Lyte like you gettin paid for it  
Better wish for your own and get out my busy ness  
Besides I'm too quick and pigeons oughta know  
By the time you get the info it was two years ago  
Aside from that I'm too swift to catch  
Don't pay to chase the joint you can't light the match  
Everybody knows I'm quick to flip the latch  
It ain't many that can even say they been attached

### Too Fly

Juicy like a nectarine when I hit the scene  
My game is long and lean like a limousine  
I told you from the get I was the wet dream  
How simple did it seem to smudge my maybeline  
Now you wanna play like you hard to get  
Should I play how easy you are to forget  
My girls told me I was out to prove em wrong  
They said you was a jackass and wouldn't last long  
Trust me on this one before I let you hit it  
I knew your dumb ass would last about a minute  
I'm too fly for what you got to give to me  
I got niggaz out there dying to live for me  
Now you wanna act like we playin it  
Like I'm supposed to run and catch your dumb ass bitch  
You was foolish now to let this one go by  
C'mon admit it the Lyte is too fly

Had you drivin' my yukon on my motorola  
Now you at the payphone downin a corona  
All dried up trying to chase the blues away  
Not another like me will ever come your way  
I even got you new kicks but it'll be no more of that  
And you'll be wishin you had this  
Besides that I treated you well  
But your ass was just too jacked up to tell  
Your boy around your way your arch enemy  
Ask me for my digits wanted to get with me  
New show new day in new york forget you  
Had me wastin' my time as well as my money  
Tell your lil sister ain't a damn thing funny  
Next time I see her I'ma poke her in the eye  
C'mon admit it the Lyte is too fly

How you gon' game me I made the rules  
An ass like you only playin to lose  
Next time be leery of which one you choose

Pickin' somebody out thinkin' you bout use  
They say you only meet the true love of your life  
Once throughout your years better make her your wife  
Now you picked the wrong one to let go by

### **Woo Woo**

Naughty but you like it nasty but you wanted  
I'm the chic that never fronted - picture that  
Me wearing a pager so you can be down my back  
It ain't happenin jack - am I too fine if so I can leave  
Have somewhere to go you better believe - I keep a  
Tight schedule not many are blessed - still on a quest  
Not knowing I'm the best - causing a mess wherever I  
Go but they still want me there I'm the star of the  
Show - your ride is sweet but mine is much sweeter  
Come take a ride with this senorita - there's more to  
Me - that the eye can't see - but I'm twice as much as  
You thought I'd be - when I hit the scene all better beware  
Cuz the party don't jump til I get there

Come on this party's under way  
Midnight is when we like to play  
Kick back do what you want to do  
You know we're doing it just for you

You took too long to ask now I don't know  
If you can hang with my flow and keep it on the d-low  
I start the fire watch it go down  
When it's time to put the flame out I put the juice down  
When you woo woo so nasty it's sick  
Wanna know my tricks studying me like a flick  
I'm the girl your mama warned you about at night  
Ask Ronnie Bobby Ricky and Mike  
I'm that candy girl I got the sugar for your sweet tooth  
Coming in your crib in my birthday suit  
I'm that bad habit you just can't shake  
What I want I take some of y'all can relate  
Got the yab yum to get you stuck like glue

It ain't over til we all come through  
When I hit the scene all better beware  
Cuz the party don't jump till lyte get there

So you wanna be the tiger roamin' thru my woods  
Huh baby boy you got to bring the goods  
Not just any penny can get in my piggy  
Bentley or empty you just can't tempt me  
Lyte got just what you like  
All up in your ear but I'm not like mike  
Red hot be the brown chili pepper  
Y'all know my words now let's sing it together  
Keep on keep keep on  
Lyte to infinity like dusk to dawn  
When I hit the scene all better beware  
Cuz the party don't pump and jump till I get there

**Playgirls Play**

Ain't a damn thing changed you know my name  
East coast represent watch me do my thing  
I'm the female chronic slash gin and tonic  
Fuck johnny blaze I'm johnny numonic  
I'm a floss with it take it way pass the limit  
Go back 6 years and throw some g funk in it  
MC Lyte long as the money green collect  
This is for my dogs hittin switches in the projects  
East side and the west side  
Indeed I spit it with finesse right  
L's for love y for why front t's for truth  
E's the exotic flavour you bounce to

Lyte is Brooklyn flavour that'll always be fresh  
Lyte is paid in full I keep my benjamins  
Flippin' outfits twice a day  
Plus a miled out coupe to push around the way  
Grants stacking up everyday all day  
That's just the way playgirls play

I'm the ultimate intergalactic spectacular  
Funk mistress as creamy as swiss miss  
Hot chocolate I'm the topic go cop it  
Broken microphones cause I rocked it  
Who that Lyte true that right  
I'm the perfect role model for keepin' your game tight  
After this I'm spending four g's tonight  
Cuz money made in the dark comes to the Lyte  
Recognise through them blood shot eyes  
Think my lyrical skills ain't ill you be surprised  
Hypnotised by my Brooklyn vibe  
Or we can take it out to queens where  
Cool J resides

You're transparent incoherent oh you don't  
Know that word let me make it more apparent  
I sit on chrome stake up chips run up charts  
Break up schemes cause wet dreams  
Engine engine number 9 on the ny transit line  
If you want that flavour back  
Lyte it up Lyte it up Lyte it up  
Who am I Lyte how fly oh I'm real jiggy  
It's no puzzle how I throw the muzzle on the mic  
Cuff your cd make it spin all night  
I got what you like you like what I got  
Hotter than gun shots hotter than most blocks  
Hot hot hot to the touch pop the clutch I won't  
Stop larger than life the most jiggiest rippin all the  
Mics apart I'm gettin' busy it's all about the cheddar  
Nobody do the body better  
Never sour but flow like an amaretta  
It's the Lyte yall I'm about to take flight  
Brooklyn zone got it locked up tight  
Show biz your biz doe biz my biz  
There it is

#### **Put It On You**

I got the nookie that's hooky like a chorus

You wanna winnie my poo and get lost in my forest  
Some wanna crawl up my sugar walls  
Down my waterfall, what a candy call  
I put it on you like an ass whippin, it's kinda sick  
You wanna lick like Todd do his lips  
Well, well, well what the shit  
Gotta make it last if you wanna hit this  
I'm into multiples, ones don't make it  
Tried before but I just can't fake it  
Hey it's a greedy world, I'm a greedy girl  
Between the sheets it's my world  
I gotcha what you like, believe it or not  
Bottom of top I put you on the spot  
It only takes a sec for me to get into it  
Come on baby let's do this

I wanna put it on you and make it hot  
Can I put it on you and hit the spot  
Can we get together and make it hot  
Let's do this

They ask how'd you get so freaky Lyte  
How I keep it tight suction all night  
Experience and imagination  
Now kick your tims off get your buckle undone  
That's sweet, now turn around baby let me see it  
All that I want you can be it, sexual tension just free it  
Have you done it on the moon yet, ahh shucks  
Where we about to go will make your toes curl up  
I'ma shake this money maker  
Get your knot ready for the earthquaker  
I'ma do you like they do in the Olympics  
Flip after flip do you like your best trick  
It only takes a sec for me to get into it  
Come on baby let's do this

It's like a missile causin' you to jiggle to rhythm of  
My button, when it comes to lovin' I'm a glutton  
Gotta make it sizzle like summertime June

Make the four walls sweat in my bedroom  
Gotta get mines no concern  
Not a care in the world not even the rug burn  
But smack me and I smack you back nigga  
Bite me and I bite you back quicker  
It's all in the way, hey is that a sixpack  
Yeah yeah you know I like it like that  
Now I'ma ease these off and you slip this one on  
Enough of the foreplay let's get it on  
It only takes a sec for me to get into it  
All it takes is you for me to wanna do it  
Come on baby let's do this  
Come on baby let's do this

#### **It's All Yours**

Our love is old school like mary janes  
Boston baked beans and candy canes  
Exchange a look on the #2 train  
Run catch kiss sunshine or rain  
Jackson 5 good times the Jeffersons  
Yeah baby you know I liked it better when  
You lived closer but then you moved  
But that couldn't stop our groove  
My magic man my Brooklyn boy wonder  
I rub your shoulders if pressure you was under  
Late night rides out to sunrise  
Catch a flick or two and then back to bedstuy  
You in a bubble goose me in a sheepskin  
Cold as hell back then it wasn't matterin'  
Long as we were hand in hand you my man  
I'm your girl ready to conquer the world

This is for all the years you been  
My companion as well as my best friend  
So tonight babe I'm givin' you  
What you want it's all yours

Our love is like a romeo and juliette flick

So surreal but yet picturesque  
There were problems I must admit  
But we handled it and still the candles lit  
So glad that we didn't just jet  
Cuz now we reapin' the benefits  
Who would've thought the cute little boy  
From down the street would fall in love with me  
It's like a #1 dream come true  
To have somebody you love love you  
And that's all that matters  
Is that we grow together make sure we never shatter  
You're the reason I live  
Because I want you to get all that I got to give  
Long as we're hand in hand you my man  
I'm your girl ready to conquer the world

Our love is mystical like galaxies you can't touch  
Around the world and back again I love you that much  
Our love is destiny like bonnie and clyde  
We'll die of old age side by side  
Throughout my days I'll remain truthful  
I'll keep it tight for you sexy and youthful  
I told my mum when our days are thru  
If you have to go first bury me next to you  
What I feel is unexplainable I love you just  
Ain't enough to say to you  
You been there from the beginning to the end  
My companion as well as my best friend  
You got my heart now here's my life  
Yes I'm ready to be your wife  
From here on know that you're the one  
Anything you want it's done  
Long as we're hand in hand you my man I'm  
Your girl ready to conquer the world

**I Can't Make A Mistake**

Romancin' in the dark I spark the light  
It's alright tonight I gotta get the mic



As I scope the crowd I spot red eyes  
Grippin them hynnikins they don't know where they been  
Baby got back see rollin like ten deep  
But you the for reala nigga swingin the expe jeep  
I mean no harm but that lucky charm  
You need to ditch it quick get with the Brooklyn bomb  
I be we be bumpin the spot g  
Where ever we be we hit correctly  
It's been so long we gotta get it on  
To this song my song now sing along c'mon

I can't make a mistake missin' the dance floor shake  
I gotta get to the floor I gotta get to the floor

Come here let's rap a taste a little  
Floors too hot not to jiggle in the middle of the  
Tender vittle  
Cell phone on roam Syl Rhone  
Come home we double chrome  
But I can't make a mistake  
Leave the dance floor now uh uh no no  
I'm on to somethin' he bubblin' the suga baby  
Shoulda woulda coulda that ain't me baby  
When I step into your Mizrahi frame  
I change the game it'll never be the same  
Obstruct it abstract it  
My tactic fantastic  
It's been so long we gotta get it on  
To this song my song now sing along c'mon

Here he come lookin like he twenty one  
Knowing damn well he too can get done  
But he got a partner that ain't too hard to fix  
Once I slide up in the mix  
Juggin it from right to left  
Jigged out gotta pick out of what's left  
It's no mystery the way you humpin' and bumpin'  
I want you comin' home with me  
I'm goin' get some satisfaction

The way you comin' at me with the action  
You better know it when you dealin with the poet  
Whatever craft you got you better show it  
It's been so long we gotta get it on  
To this song my song now sing along c'mon

**Oogie Boogie**

Romeo romeo when will you learn  
When I flick the bic lick it's my turn  
If you wanna get your mack on keep  
Your cap on if not my brother then  
You can be gone - I made history and  
Yet I still remain a mystery with a  
Nugget full of gold that drips from  
My eyes you say ruin I say why try  
What was that did I hear it come from  
The back is my portable affordable  
The winning team knows me better  
Than that and the losers all know cause  
They never come back ruffnecks b boys  
And all the etc got my back represent  
Whenever the road gets tough like rough  
Terrain I'll be there always like sun do for rain

Now I appeal to the masses though I never go to mass  
I teach classes every time I kick some ass  
I'm all that though Lyte is never given extra  
Personable but difficult to get next ta  
They try to label me but yo my label is elektra  
Fuck wit me fuck amagedon I'm a getcha  
Old school but my shit is always type new  
It'll take a whole crew for me just not to fly thru  
Not the one to lie to or the one to cry  
Catch me on the dock of the bay near the bayou  
I come for my accolades kids know my lingo  
Bingo I never played but I whip your ass in  
Spades chills on the west but hey I'm from the  
East side long as making ends no matter where

I reside when the road gets tough like rough  
Terrain I'll be there always like sun do for rain

Crazy eights got me seeing 64 still it ain't enough  
To get me out the front door when I'm tour do  
Velvet or valor mecca echo nike verso que pasa  
Mi casa sus casa don't matter if you rude boy  
Ragga muffin or rasta get down baby do the oogie  
Boogie right place right time might give up the  
Nookie ahh suki suki can you misbehave get it  
Up and movin' in my tropical koolaide when the  
River banks run low who do you call I spread  
Dimes like a waterfall ask city national who be  
Cashin' all those checks in large amounts from  
Swiss bank accounts I be the one to throw up the  
Red flag shank him in the tank and snatch the  
Money bag when the road gets tough like rough  
Terrain I'll be there always like sun do for rain

#### **King of Rock**

I knew a girl that couldn't tell time without a digital clock  
She was out on the block slinging rocks  
In pursuit of the cream cheese papers  
Smoked mad lace and she swung many capers  
Trying to make a dollar out of 15 cents  
But before she made a twenty ten cent got spent  
She smokin' but bad times got good  
When she met an OG from the neighbourhood  
Now all is well  
Though her life is a living hell  
She doesn't know it  
Cause her pockets don't show it  
They're full like tanks  
Got money in the bank  
Big up all the crackheads by saying thanks  
Cuz she rolls lexus's she ain't doin' no dishes  
Her nigga complies with all of her wishes  
She feels like a queen but looks like a fiend

Know what I mean  
She couldn't get her lips off the pipe not yet  
And it won't last long wanna make a bet

She smokin' that rock  
Sellin' that rock  
Smokin and sniffin and sellin that rock  
Smokin that rock  
There is none higher higher

I knew a nigga had a car and some weed  
He figured this was the only way that he could succeed  
He proceed to let the greed prevail  
Not long ago he made his very first cracksale  
Now he's large and in charge  
He got 4 5 6 6 6 cars in the garage  
It doesn't matter how he got it  
Long as his keys stay heavy and his pockets stay knotted  
What he didn't know is he would meet a ho  
Who would smoke sun to sun  
I call her verse one  
She get that nigga for everything he got  
Cause she sniffin' that and he's sellin' that

He met her around the way  
Smoother as oil of olay  
He didn't know what to say  
Eventually they would lay  
She wanted a hit and I ain't talkin' bout no smack on the ass  
I tried to tell her that the high won't last  
She wouldn't listen  
Mind over matter  
But her world was shattered  
So the matter ruled over her mind  
Every time she's trippin ain't a figure of speech  
She trippin everyday of the week  
Not only does he want in now he wants to be down  
So he sniffin blow to now

### **Better Place**

I know you keep him in your heart that special part  
Didn't care to share thought he'd always be there  
But he had to go it was his time to fly  
Though we struggle to live see we all gotta die  
Don't question why that's just how life goes  
It just happen to be your number one homie that God chose  
Your sadness shows your woes your sorrows  
But keep in mind the sun will shine tomorrow  
Now he's got a halo an everlasting glow and it's painful  
But only God knows what's next on the agenda  
Either way you got to return to sender  
But while you're here you got to keep your head up  
Keep movin' on your life and never let up  
Let the past be the inspiration to get up  
Tell the devil he's a liar and you're fed up

Have you ever had someone close to you die  
I know you wanna cry but keep your head up high  
And remember they're in a better place  
And they'll be waiting for you to join them one day

Release and let go the fault wasn't ours  
She was called upon by a much higher power  
What's important for us all to understand  
Is we're just little pieces in God's big plan  
So hold on when I tell you hold on  
Stay strong and it won't be long  
Till you see your little boy again your mommy again  
Your brother again your best friend  
Sometimes you just wanna ball out his name  
Seem like the sun don't shine the same  
But you gotta maintain remain sane  
Know you're not the blame  
But while you're here got to keep your head up  
Keep movin on your life and never let up  
Let the past be the inspiration to get up

Tell the devil he's a liar and you're fed up

I know it's odd living life after death  
Sometimes hard to see what you got left  
Now you feel lost don't know what to do  
But don't let the demons out there try to fool you  
Give it all to God He'll pull you through  
Jehovah will make a witness out of you  
You know it's true but it's hard to realise  
That God's still there when your best friend dies  
And there'll be times when you just fall apart  
Just remember to keep him always in your heart  
Let the tears fall it's ok to cry  
Try to understand it's his time to fly  
There's a time when a spirit has to say peace  
And release from a body that's left deceased  
You've got to know there's so much more than what's right here  
Have no fear

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