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Oral Presentation O7.2

**TOUGH LIKE MANDELA: CUBAN HIP-HOP'S STRUGGLE
TO KEEP IT REAL**

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In this study, I explore the history and development of Cuban rap leading up to its present social, political, and artistic situation in the hopes of illustrating the divergence of the movement into two groups: commercial and underground. While the groups share a history and have qualities that overlap in several instances, a marked division exists between those who seek opportunity for financial freedom, and those who reject the world of commerce in favor of a more pure art of protest. The two branches coexist with different goals, problems, and ideologies while still forming part of a movement that reflects the current social and economic circumstances of the country and a fervent, if complex, loyalty to Cuba.