Frank Rochester is often described as a principled, fair and honest man to a fault. The 6'' 4'' 51 year old tenured anthropology professor at nearby University of Texas is a towering figure who you would best not to cross. There's a large number of people 1500 miles away in New York City aka The Big Apple who are about to find out the hard way.

Professor Rochester is one who embodies the stubborn resilient spirit of the Lone Star state who is quite willing to go at an opponent against all odds. After quietly raging a two year battle, Rochester finally may be getting his wish as he takes aim at the media conglomerates who he claims unfairly, undeservedly and erroneously attribute cultural trends to the New York populace.

"Because New York City is home to all the TV networks and big time media, important stories and perspectives from other parts of the country don''t get discovered until somebody from New York ''discovers'' or ''invents'' it'', Rochester said with pointed enthusiasm.

"It's now common knowledge that while New York City is often dubbed the fashion capital of the world, it really isn''t. The truth of the matter is most fashion trends start overseas in places like Japan and make then make its way to the states beginning with west coast cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco", Rochester noted. "However to listen to the so called big city pundits you would never know that. It's all about New York and it's completely false."

As a cultural anthropologist Rochester has discovered that big media have created a mystique around New York that simply needs to be shattered. By falsely attributing cultural trends to the Big Apple many regions in this country have suffered a talent drain. Some of our best and brightest from Texas have wound up going to New York for validation.

The Roots of Hip Hop Expression: Bull-Dancing and Bell Ringing

"New York City being the center of the cultural universe is a myth. It's one big urban legend that in many ways is harmful", Rochester stated. "One of the biggest falsehoods is that New York City is the birthplace of the music phenomenon called Hip Hop. For almost three decades we have been led to believe that a bunch kids from public housing projects went out and created

one of the most vibrant and certainly one of the most popular art forms in the 21st century. It sounds good on TV. It reads well in newspaper. It tugs at our heart strings", Rochester grimaced, "But the truth of the matter is this cultural expression is rooted in Texas sharecropping and cowboy culture.”

Rochester's research shows that long before kids in the Bronx were rapping on the mic, there were rhyme sayers working the cotton fields in Texas as far back as the 1700s. Rochester has in his possession old slave and sharecropping journals and even old African -American newspapers that are filled with rhymes and limericks.

"Black people in Texas have been using rhymes as a form of communication for hundreds of years.", Rochester noted. He continued by stating that it wasn"t unusual for groups of African descended men to get in a circle and recite rhyme against one another.

It's part of what many anthropologist have long called the "African Oral Tradition" In Texas it was known as "Hollaring in the Circle".

Rochester pointed out oftentimes the cowboys would join those hollars and their own 2 cents in terms of rhymes. It was slave hands and later, sharecroppers rhyming alongside cowboys. "This is history that isn"t recognized", Rochester said.

He went on to explain that break-dancing is actually a derivative of cowboy culture which started off in rodeos. He described how field hands would show off their toughness by lassoing bulls and allowing themselves to be pulled around. At first the cowboys would try and stand up and do fancy moves with their feet as a sign of being quick footed. As the bulls would become more agitated the cowboys would be dragged to the ground at which point they would do fancy spins on their backs while holding tight to the rope.

"This activity was called "back lassoing" or "bull-dancing" and it's been in existence at least one hundred years before New York supposedly discovered it.", Rochester quipped.

"If you look at what are described as power moves in Hip Hop dance, you will see that they are

no different then the bull dance moves which are still done to this day at Texas rodeos throughout east Texas and near the border towns.".

He added that bull-dancing was accompanied by quick witted wordsmiths who would serves as MCs (Masters of Ceremonies). These individuals would recite rhymes and make up limericks for the bull-dancers.

Often times a cowbell ringer would be in the back ground setting the pace by ringing the bells. At its best the announcer would say his rhyme to the beat of the cowbell.

"I guess a bunch of cowboys and sharecroppers inventing Hip Hop doesn"t sound as compelling as compared to some project kids from the Bronx.", Rochester said.

Connecting Texas and the Bronx

Rochester has been able to trace the roots of Cowboy and share-cropping culture and its connection to New York and what would later emerge to be Hip Hop. He explained that in 1970 the Texas rodeo teams went to New York for the first time and did and very well attended exhibit at Madison Square Garden. The teams stayed for several weeks and mesmerized Big Apple residents with their bull-dancing techniques and cowbell ringing. The showmanship captured the imaginations of a lot of people including several New York deejays.

Rochester said if you go and listen to the first raps they sound just like bull-dance calls. The rapper would reflect his voice as if he was throwing up. These deejays later brought that style to the airwaves and popular nightclubs.

Rochester steadfastly maintains that it was from Texas Bull-dancing that Jamaican born Kool Herc adapted what would later become Hip Hop.

There is no doubt in Rochesters mind that Herc as well as other pioneers like Afrika Bambaataa

and others all were inspired by the Texas rodeo.

Rochester pointed out two undeniable facts. First, during the 1970 Texas rodeo appearance in New York City, attending the event at Madison Square Garden was a popular class field trip for NY public schools. There's a strong Likelyhood that many of New York's pioneering figures saw first hand rhyming, bull-dancing and cowbell ringing.

Second, is according to migration patterns, many Black Texans fleeing racial discrimination and hardships landed in New York. The Bronx and nearby Westchester county were popular spots that when you do the research show its heavily concentrated with displaced Texans. This means that there is a strong possibility that during the summer months and holidays, Bronx born African American New Yorkers went "back home to Texas and got exposed to bull-dancing.

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Taking it to the Capitol

Professor Frank Rochester is absolutely convinced that Hip Hop emerged from Texas before New York City. He claims that one of the reasons that Texas Hip Hop now outsells and is more popular then NY is because when it comes from here the audience is experiencing the "real thing".

Rochester feels that the state of Texas is losing not only cultural recognition but also millions of dollars in revenue that could be generated if the world was to know the truth about Texas being the real birthplace of Hip Hop.

Rochester is currently working with lawmakers here in the state capitol to see about suing the city of New York for deceptive and misleading practices.

Texas lawmaker Tony Sanchez says he's in agreement with Rochester. He feels that a strong

message needs to be sent to all those complicit in this deception.

Ideally they want to get it legislated so that NY can"t officially call itself the birthplace of Hip Hop

"For years Texas has been overlooked and essentially victim to big city politics which has resulted in cultural theft. We can not allow New York City officials to erroneously lay claim to being the birthplace of Hip Hop. It's a lie that needs to be corrected", Sanchez wrote in a recent press release.

This amendment will be introduced to the floor of the Texas assembly next week and attached to Bill HR 321

http://www.capitolstatetxus/BillLookup/BillNumberaspx

Thus far New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has been silent on this but we suspect he"ll be speaking up in due time trying to defend New York's ill-gotten attributions.