

THE CITY SHE LOVES ME



the Los Angeles of the Red Hot Chili Peppers

Mike Pesses • California State University, Northridge

Boston • AAG 2008

Geographies of Media II: Musicscapes

**PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT LYRICS**



PLAYING WITH L.A.

Let me play with your emotions
For nothing is good unless you play with it
Yeah
Fly on
Fly on, baby

(“Mommy, What’s a Funkadelic” George Clinton/Funkadelic, Funkadelic 1970)

TRAD DIALECTIC

2 versions of same city (McClung’s lit. dialectic)

Beach Boys v. N.W.A.

Much like L.A. Noir

2 epistemologies - no play

HETEROGENEOUS L.A.

○ — Soja

— Postmodernity and play

— Multiple ontologies



METHODS

○ — Oh... ticky ticky tickita tic tac toe/I know... everybody's Eskimo
"Warlocks." Stadium Arcadium 2006

— Not just lyrics, but overall mythos



SUCK MY KISS (1991)

Sexually charged funk anthem

Not your father's dialectic

Playing 2 spaces of L.A. off one another

No judgement



BY THE WAY (2002)

Playing with space and place

Echo park to underground

Macho Bronco chase



TELL ME BABY (2006)

This town is made of many things
Just look at what the current brings
So high it's only promising
This place was made on you



CONCLUSIONS

If you let go and let this music take you by the hand it will take you flying through skies of sound. It will zoom you up well above outer space and it will show you around planes of existence that do not share the laws and conditions of this reality. And when it brings you down to earth it will dig deep into that shit. It will also teach you to fall back without landing on your ass and to fall forward without falling on your face. Let go and you can be two places at once, you can be as big as the whole universe and as small as an atom simultaneously... In the words of one of the supreme gods of funk, "Nothing is good unless you play with it." The Red Hot Chili Peppers... have played with light, darkness, sound, silence, form, air, and space to make music that plays with the listener (Frusciante 2006).

